[BACKGROUND CONVERSATION 00:00:00-00:35:00]

CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: Let's get started. I want to go ahead and get started. I want to thank everybody for coming today. My name is John Stefanski. I'm the Chairman of House and Governmental Affairs. We run in this meeting today. We are doing what we're calling a legislative roadshow in an effort to get as much public participation in the redistricting process as possible. And so we thank you for coming out today. I look forward to hearing from each of you who wishes to speak that the process is basically going to be this. You're going to hear a presentation from staff who are going to go over a number of things, going to go over a number of different maps, a number of different numbers and also the legalities and those things that come with redistricting. And so we're going to do that first then we're going to open it up and take questions and have the public give an opportunity to come give their testimony. If you wish to participate in that testimony, please fill out one of the cards that are outside so that we know who you are and we know when to call you up. Again, this is an important part of the process. Thank you for being here today. I'm excited to hear what you have to say. And you do play a pivotal role in what these

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1 districts ultimately look like, both from the members
2 of the committee and myself. We take this seriously.
3 We take what you say to heart, and when it comes time
4 to submit maps and consider those pieces of
5 legislation, what you say has an effect on that. So
6 thank you for being here. With that said, I'll ask
7 Madam Secretary to please call the House role at this
8 time.
9 LAUR-EN CIMINO: Chairman Stefanski.
10 CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: Present.
11 LAUR-EN CIMINO: Present. Vice Chairman
12 Duplessis.
13 VICE CHAIRMAN ROYCE DUPLESSIS: Present.
14 LAUR-EN CIMINO: Present. Representative
15 [INDISCERNIBLE 00:39:35]. Representative Wilford
16 Carter.
17 REPRESENTATIVE WILFORD CARTER: Here.
18 LAUR-EN CIMINO: Present. Representative
19 Deshotel. Representative Farnum.
20 REPRESENTATIVE LES FARNUM: Here.
21 LAUR-EN CIMINO: Present. Representative
22 Gadberry.
23 REPRESENTATIVE FOY BRYAN GADBERRY: Here.
24 LAUR-EN CIMINO: Present. Representative Hodges.
25 REPRESENTATIVE VALARIE HODGES: Here.

LAUR-EN CIMINO: Present. Representative Horton.

REPRESENTATIVE DODIE HORTON: Here.

LAUR-EN CIMINO: Present. Representative Ivey. Representative Jenkins.

REPRESENTATIVE SAM JENKINS: Yes.

LAUR-EN CIMINO: Present. Representative Mike Johnson. Representative LaCombe. Representative Lyons. Representative Magee.

[00:40:05]

REPRESENTATIVE MAGEE: Present

LAUR-EN CIMINO: Present. Representative Newell?

REPRESENTATIVE NEWELL: Present

LAUR-EN CIMINO: Present. Representative Thomas?

REPRESENTATIVE THOMAS: Here.

LAUR-EN CIMINO: Present. Representative White?

REPRESENTATIVE WHITE: Present.

LAUR-EN CIMINO: Present. The house has 12 and a quorum.

CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: And the Senate roll please.

LAUR-EN CIMINO: Chairwoman Hewitt?

CHAIRWOMAN HEWITT: Present.

LAUR-EN CIMINO: Present. Vice Chairman Milligan?

VICE CHAIRMAN MILLIGAN: Present.

LAUR-EN CIMINO: Present. Senator Allain? Senator Foil? Senator Harris?

SENATOR HARRIS: Present.

LAUR-EN CIMINO: Present. Senator Price?

SENATOR PRICE: Present.

LAUR-EN CIMINO: Present. Senator Reese? Senator Tarver? Senator Womack? The senate has four members.

CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: Thank you. I want to also recognize we have some members of the local capital area delegation who are here as well. So, I'm going to recognize them as well. We have Representative Rick Edmonds. We have Representative Tony Bacala. We have Representative Barbara Carpenter. We have representative Barbara Freiberg. We have Representative Denise Marcelle. We have Representative Paula Davis. We have Representative Buddy Mincey. We have Representative Ken Brass, and if I missed anybody, please tell me. Any current reps? No. We also have some former representatives in attendance. We have former Representative Raymond Jetson. We have former Representative Mitchell Theriot. We have former Representative Melissa Flournoy. Also, we have a number of staffs who is here today to help us to put this whole thing on. And so, I will start with the House Redistricting Staff. We have our Senior Legislative Analyst, Patricia Lowrey-Dufour. We have our HNGA Attorney, Lorraine

Lucas. We have our committee administrative assistant, Rosie Ammersbach. We have staff Attorney Claire Stevenson. We have Division Director, Brian Vincent, our Clerk of the House, Michelle Fontenot. We have our Demographer, Dr. William Blair, and we have our Student Intern/Committee Clerk, John Harrington with our Sergeant at Arms, we have Assistant Sergeant at Arms, Danny Leming, and then we have also an extensive legislative communications office staff that help put this together. We have Guillermo Cordon, Jeremy Hall, Anthony Long, Stephen Moe, Eric Shield, Jason Young, and our Chief Communications Officer, Cory Stewart. With that said, I will now turn it over to my counterpart, Chairwoman Hewitt.

CHAIRWOMAN HEWITT: Oh, thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you all, everyone, for being here with us in Baton Rouge. As Chairman Stefansky said, I think this is our fifth of ten road shows. It's been great and it's an opportunity for us to hear directly from you all as to how you want to be represented and basically set the stage for the next ten years. So, this is very important to us and we're working very hard to make it a very public and transparent process. We do have significant participation on the

1 legislative side from the senate as well. You heard
2 the senate committee members as we took roll. We have
3 a few others that are here with us here locally that
4 you all recognize. Senator Lambert. He is here.
5 Senator Fields right back here. And Senator Ward up
6 on the front row. We appreciate you all coming. And
7 Senator Barrow, where are you? There you are. Thank
8 you. Over here in the corner by the camera. Also, I'd
9 like to introduce our redistricting staff as well. We
10 have Yolanda Dixon, our secretary of the senate, J.W.
11 Wiley, our first assistant secretary, Sue Moran, our
12 second assistant secretary, Matt DeVille, our
13 committee attorney, and [PH 00:44:40] Laurel Cimino,
14 our secretary. You probably saw her outside at the
15 table. And we have our sergeant at arms folks here as
16 well, John Keller, our sergeant at arms, sitting in
17 the back. Louis Coreil, our assistant sergeant at
18 arms, and Mr. Mitchell our assistant sergeant at
19 arms. Thank you all for helping us here tonight.
20 [00:45:00]
21 I want to recognize also the state troopers. You
22 all have been with us for a lot of these road shows.
23 Some of you, I think, have been at all of them. We
24 couldn't do it without your help as well. Trooper
25 Jackson, Sergeant Jefferson and Lieutenant Guidrows.

So, thank you very much. We appreciate you helping out. And I think that's everything that I needed to introduce Mr. Chairman, thank you.

CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: So, as you can see, it's an extensive process. A lot of people involved in this because obviously, it's very important. At this time, we're going to let the staff give a presentation. They'll be discussing the 2020 census population and population trends. They'll be discussing redistricting terms, concepts and the law, redistricting criteria, malapportionment statistics and illustrative maps and the timeline. So, with that, the first step is Dr. Bill Blair, our demographer.

DR. BILL BLAIR: Thank you. Good evening, members and the public, it's my job to give a brief introduction to Louisiana's census data and demographic trends. Now, historically, the Census Bureau has two releases of the data after each decennial census, a reapportion data apportionment data, which is for the allocation of congressional seats among the states, typically released around December 31 of the year of the census, or in this case, would have been December 31, 2000. And then a second release later called the PL 94-171 data, which

is used to accomplish redistricting of the state's jurisdictions. Now, because of the unique circumstances during the past year and a half, that data was not released on that typical schedule. Instead, the apportionment data was released five months late in April, and the PL 94-171 data was released six to seven months late in August and September of 2021. Regardless, let's have a look at Louisiana's population data. The apportion of population data of 4,661,468 which includes 3,711 overseas military and civilian personnel and their families. This population allowed the State of Louisiana maintain its six congressional districts. The resident population you see next the 4,657,757, this is the population number used for statewide redistricting plans, such as Congress and the state legislature. It is also used to determine the, "ideal district population" for each district. This is a concept that will be explained a bit later in our presentation. So, given this information, how do we compare to the rest of the country and our Southern region? From 2010 to 2020, Louisiana grew at 2.74%. As you can see on the slide, that is well below the nationwide 7.35% growth rate. And by the way, that 7.35 growth rate is an 80-year low for the country's

growth. Secondarily, we also grew significantly behind our fellow southern states and region. Now let's have a look at Louisiana's redistricting data. This PL 94-171 data is named after the federal law that enacted its standards. This is the population by race and ethnicity that jurisdictions around the state will use to conduct its redistricting. Think of this as your precinct's year census blocks, year census places that data by race and ethnicity. It is used by everyone from Congress to school boards to send to municipal city councils. Everyone uses the same data. It was released in two formats a legacy format on August 12 and a more user-friendly format on September 16. Now this easier to use format released on September 16 can be found at the www.data.census.gov website you see on the slide.

[00:50:00]

And this is data that you can go to from the web and actually look at the same data that we use to do redistricting for the state. Next slide. Next, we're going to have quick look at the population changes around the state and the demographic changes in trends that we've seen in the last decade. This is a map of numerical change by population from 2010 to 2020 by Parish. And it's also the first of many maps

you're about to see showing you population change in the last decade. If it's red or orange, you have lost population. If it's green, you've gained population. Now, there are three main takeaways from this map from the last decade. First, significant declines in population in the northeast and northwest of the state. Two, population gains along the I-10 to I-12 corridor from St. Tammany Parish to Calcasieu Parish, and growth in suburban areas around the state. These trends you see on this map are not new. As the next slide will show us this is the trend in population for the last 40 years in the State of Louisiana. And while there are unique trends that have occurred in the last 40 years in the state, such as in the bottom left, where you see Hurricane Katrina affects significantly reduced population around New Orleans, and in the upper right, where you had widespread growth around the state in the 1990s. Despite these trends, there is a generalized trend that has existed for the last 40 years in this state, and it remains declines in the northeast and northwest gains along the I-10, I-12 corridor and growth in suburban areas. So, the things we're experiencing now are the same things we experience for the last four decades. Now let's have a look at some more particular data on

parishes. These are the largest 12 declining parishes by population. It's fairly evenly distributed around the state, with a notable exception of Southeast Louisiana. Now, as we can see from our next slide, Southeast Louisiana is significantly over represented in the growth of parishes in the state, again along the I-10, I-12 corridor. And finally, here are our largest census places and the relative growth or decline in the past decade. Finally, let's have a look at how our population composition has changed for the last decade. Now, while you have a look at these numbers, I'm going to give you two points while you examine it. One, be advised that the Census Bureau reports race and ethnicity separately. First, ethnicity is reported in two categories, Bean, Hispanic or Latino origin or not. And two, race is categorized in one of six broad categories white, black or African American, American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander, or six some other race. Now, people are able to indicate multiple races when they respond to the census. This can lead to hundreds of combinations. So, in an effort to aggregate all of that information into a usable form the legislature has combined those categories to the categories you see on this slide.

We have an aggregation document on the legislative website, redistricting website named Allocation of 2020 Census Population for database and reporting. She can see exactly what we did to get to these categories. Second point, be aware that the Census Bureau refined their questions on race and ethnicity for the 2020 census.

[00:55:00]

The Census believes these changes produced a more thorough and accurate depiction of race and ethnicity self-identification by respondents to the census. So, without further ado, given those two points, the first two sections of this last slide show you the race and ethnicity composition of our state from 2010 to 2020. The bottom third shows you the change over the decade. I think there are probably three main takeaways from this slide. One, a fairly significant drop of 6.03% and self-reported white only in the state. Two, increases in other groups proportion of our population in Louisiana, and three, a very large increase in those self-identifying in the other category. Now, what's this other category? It's either white plus one of the race or Hawaiian single races or another race that is not black, Asian, or American Indian. So, based on all of this data, I

1 think the conclusion you can come to for Louisiana as
2 well as the rest of the country, is that we become
3 more diverse as a state. Now I'm going to turn over
4 to Michelle Fontenot the Clerk of the House, for
5 discussion of redistricting terms and concepts.
6 CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: Madam Clerk, before you
7 start, I did recognize I saw a Representative Ted
8 James walk in late, so I just wanted to recognize
9 him. I got Ken earlier. It was Ted that walked in
10 late. Oh, Representative Barry Ivey walked in late as
11 well. Thank you.
12 MICHELLE FONTENOT: Good evening. So, tonight
13 I'll talk to you briefly about redistricting terms.
14 So, the terms apportionment and redistricting are
15 sometimes used interchangeably, but it is important
16 to remember that these are actually two distinct
17 terms. Reapportionment or apportionment is the
18 process of allocating seats in the legislature. For
19 example, in the US House of Representatives, the
20 State of Louisiana is presently entitled to six
21 Congressmen in accordance with the US Constitution
22 and the formula established by federal law called a
23 method of equal proportions. We have been apportioned
24 six seats following the 2020 census, and now the
25 legislature must redraw those congressional districts

1 or redistrict in accordance with the 2020 census.
2 Districting is the process of drawing those lines of
3 each district, with districts being the geographical
4 territories from which officials are elected. Why do
5 we redistrict? We do it because we're required to do
6 so. There have been illegal requirements involving
7 redistricting, including Article III, Section 6 of
8 the Louisiana Constitution that provides for a
9 deadline to complete the state legislative
10 redistricting for this decade. That deadline is
11 December 31 of 2022. There are also various other
12 statutes that contain redistricting duties and
13 deadlines that are applicable to local governmental
14 bodies like parish governing authorities,
15 schoolboards and municipal governing authorities.
16 Further, there are two general legal requirements
17 that you must take into consideration. Equal
18 protection and the Voting Rights Act. And those will
19 be discussed in further detail later by my
20 colleagues. So, who is redistricted by the state
21 legislature? Those entities are the House and the
22 Senate, Congress, Public Service Commission, State
23 Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and the
24 courts. In terms of how that is accomplished, it
25 takes place through legislation. Like any other

1 legislation. It begins with a bill that's introduced
2 in either the House or the Senate. And generally
3 speaking, that bill follows the same constitutional
4 procedure and requirements that any other bill comes
5 before the legislature. Your local governmental
6 entities such as parish governing authorities,
7 municipal governing authorities and school boards are
8 not redistricted by the legislature and each of those
9 bodies are responsible for redistricting themselves
10 in accordance with the law. So, let's talk a little
11 bit about state law. The constitution of Louisiana
12 has many requirements relative to legislative
13 redistricting. For example, Article III, Section 1
14 requires single member districts. Article III,
15 Section 3 of the constitution provides for a maximum
16 number of members in the House and the Senate with
17 that being 39 senators and a 105 House of Members.
18 [01:00:01]
19 MICHELLE FONTENOT: Article III, Section 6,
20 provides a deadline for the legislature to complete
21 this legislative redistricting work. And again, we
22 mentioned that earlier that deadline is December 31
23 of the year 2022. The constitution also requires that
24 the use of that census population data for such
25 redistricting. Census population data is the PL 94-

171 data that was previously mentioned by Dr. Blair. And now I'm going to turn over the presentation of my colleague Claire Stevenson, attorney for house judiciary committee, to discuss population requirements based on federal law.

CLAIRE STEVENSON: Good evening. My name is Claire Stevenson, and I'll be going over the concept of equal population. One person, one vote. The starting point of the one person, one vote concept is the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment, which states that no state shall deny to any person equal protection of the laws. The concept was further developed through a series of court cases in the 1960s in which the courts held that there must be substantially equal legislative representation for all citizens of the state. Therefore, a state must have legislative districts of roughly equal population. Population equality. How is it measured? It's measured by determining the ideal population, which is equal to the total population of the area being redistricted divided by the number of districts. Deviation is the amount by which the district's population differs from the ideal. There are different standards for equal population regarding congress and state legislative districts.

The standards are based on different legal provisions. For congress, the standard is as nearly equal in population as practicable. Again, that is based on Article I, Section 2, of the 14th Amendment that says representatives shall be apportioned among the states according to their respective numbers. The deviation for congressional seats must be as close to zero as possible and again as nearly equal in population as practical. States must make a good faith effort to avoid deviation and be able to provide a legally acceptable nondiscriminatory justification for any deviation. The standard for state and local legislative districts is different. That standard is substantially equal as possible in overall deviations of 10% or less is generally not enough to make a prima facie case for discrimination, but this is not a safe harbor. States must be able to support the need for deviation with the justification showing a significant state interest. In Louisiana, we try to keep that deviation to plus or minus 5%. So again, talking about equal population, equality of population must be the overriding objective of districting, and any deviation from this principle is permissible only if incident to the effectuation of a rational state policy. We have provided some examples

of state policies that have been referenced in court cases and those include allowing representation to political subdivisions, compactness, preserving courts of prior districts, and avoiding contests between incumbents. With respect to the courts, the one man one vote standard does not apply. Although the concept of one man one vote does not apply to judicial districts Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act still applies, and I will turn it over to my colleague, Lorrianne Lucas to discuss the Voting Rights Act.

LORRIANNE LUCAS: Thank you. In discussing discrimination against minorities when redistricting, there are several legal considerations involved that one should be aware of. The 14th and 15th Amendment, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and vote dilution issues in regards to racial gerrymandering. I will first discuss the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment prohibits states from purposefully discriminating between individuals on the basis of race. The 15th Amendment, adopted in 1870, declares that the right of the citizens to vote shall not be denied abridged by the United States or by states on the account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude. The

amendment was ineffectual after adoption in eliminating the problem of voting discrimination, and the Voting Rights Act was enacted in 1965 as a means to ensure that all citizens have the right to vote regardless of their race, color, or membership in a language minority such as American-Indian, Asian-American Alaskan natives or persons of Spanish heritage.

[01:05:02]

Specifically, Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act prohibits any state or political subdivision from imposing any voting qualification, standard, practice, or procedure that results in the denial or Bridgeman of any US citizens right to vote on account of race, color, or status. Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act was amended in 1982 to clarify that a violation of Section 2 is established if based on the totality of circumstances. It has shown that the election processes are not equally open to participation by members of a protected class and that its members have less opportunity than other members of the electorate to participate in political processes and to elect representation of their choice. The extent to which members of a protected class have been elected to office is one circumstance

which may be considered. However, nothing establishes the right to have members of a protected class selected in numbers equal into their proportion of the population. In 1986, those amendments were reviewed by the Supreme Court and Thornburg versus Jingles. The court imposed three preconditions that a plaintiff must prove before a court proceeds to a detailed analysis of a redistricting plan and to establish a prima facie case. Those three preconditions are the minority population is sufficiently large and geographically compact to constitute a majority in a single member district. The minority population is politically cohesive and that, in absence of a special circumstance, black voting by the majority defeats the minority's preferred candidate. Once the preconditions are established, the court will then proceed with several other objective factors in determining the totality of circumstances, including but not limited to the extent of the history of official discrimination touching on the class participation in the democratic process, racially polarized voting, the extent to which the state or political subdivision has used unusually large election districts, majority vote requirements or other voting practices that enhance

the opportunity for discrimination. Denials of access to the candidates selecting process for members of the class, extent to which members of the minority group bear the effects of discrimination in areas like education, employment and health. Whether political campaigns have been characterized by racial appeals, the extent to which members of the protected class have been elected, whether there is a significant lack of responsiveness by the elected officials to a particularized need of the group, and whether the policy underlying the use of voting qualifications, standards, practices or procedures is tenuous. The plaintiff must show that the totality of circumstances will support the court's findings that contested voting scheme is dilutive of the minorities electoral power. When drawing a minority district to avoid a violation of Section 2, the line drawer must take care to not create a racial gerrymander that runs the file of the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment. As stated earlier the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment prohibits states from purposefully discriminating between individuals on the basis of race. A racial gerrymander is a deliberate and arbitrary distortion of district boundaries for racial purposes. A

1 redistricting plan that expressly distinguishes among
2 citizens because of race must be narrowly tailored to
3 further a compelling governmental interest. That
4 means that the plan or the individual districts drawn
5 were drawn narrowly to satisfy the compelling
6 governmental interest. What is the compelling
7 governmental interest? In this case it will be
8 considered remediating past discrimination, avoiding
9 retrogression, avoiding a violation of Section 2 of
10 the Voting Rights Act and these interests must be
11 strongly supported in evidence. This applies not only
12 to the plan that expressly distinguishes citizens
13 because of race, but also to plants that although,
14 race neutral are on their face inexplicable on
15 grounds other than race. Courts have said that the
16 legislature is always aware of race when drawing
17 district lines just as it is aware of age economic
18 status, religion and variety of other demographic
19 facts.
20 [01:10:03]
21 That sort of race consciousness or race awareness
22 does not inevitably lead to impermissible race
23 discrimination. So, race can be considered however,
24 it cannot be a predominant factor withdrawing
25 districts. Critical to determining the factors

1 involved will be the shape of the district, the
2 regard given to traditional districting principles,
3 and the motivations that drive the line drawing
4 decisions. When a majority and minority district is
5 created, it must be created giving due regard to
6 traditional districting principles. Otherwise, the
7 district will be subject to strict scrutiny to avoid
8 the pitfalls of gerrymandering. One must be aware of
9 bizarre shapes, drawing districts that are reasonably
10 compact, not making race the dominant motivation and
11 following traditional principles. Principles
12 mentioned in previous court cases have included
13 compactness, contiguity, respect for political
14 subdivisions, respect for communities of interest,
15 maintaining traditional boundaries, maintaining core
16 districts, and protecting incumbents from contests
17 with each other. I will now hand it over to my
18 colleague, Matt DeVille, the attorney for Senate in
19 Governmental Affairs.
20 MATT DEVILLE: Good evening. My name is Matt
21 DeVille, and I'm going to be discussing some
22 redistricting criteria this evening. So, I'm going to
23 start off by going over the criteria for all
24 redistricting plans submitted to the Legislature for
25 consideration. This criteria was adopted by the

1 Legislature during the 2021 regular session which
2 wrapped up in June and is contained in Joint Rule No.
3 21 which establishes the parameters for any submitted
4 plan. Some criteria apply to all plan types, whether
5 it be for the State House or Senate, Congress, the
6 Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, the
7 Public Service Commission or the Courts. Other
8 criteria more plan specific, and I'll point those out
9 as we go. We'll start off by looking at the
10 requirements that every plan has to meet. All
11 redistricting plans have to comply with all
12 applicable Federal and State Laws, including the
13 Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment and the
14 15th Amendment of the United States Constitution, as
15 well as section two of the Voting Rights Act of 1965
16 which were just presented. All redistricting plans
17 have to be composed of contiguous geography within
18 the district. Contiguous meaning that if you were to
19 trace it with a pencil, you wouldn't pick that pencil
20 up until you made it all the way around from your
21 starting point to your end point. You can't have an
22 island over here and a mainland over here, so to
23 speak. All redistricting plans have to contain whole
24 election precincts to the extent practicable. If a
25 precinct does have to be divided, it shall be divided

1 into as few districts as practicable using a visible
2 Census tabulation boundary or boundaries, which can
3 be something geographic like a river or drilled down
4 to the more granular level of the Census data and
5 what is known as a Census block that is the smallest
6 redistricting building block in that PL 94-171 data
7 from the Federal Government. All plans shall respect
8 established boundaries of existing political
9 subdivisions, which include parishes and
10 municipalities, and the natural geography of the
11 State to the greatest extent practicable. However,
12 this criterion is subordinate to and shall not be
13 used to undermine the maintenance of communities of
14 interest within the same district to the extent
15 practicable. Continuing with the requirements that
16 all plans must meet; all plans must utilize that most
17 recent PL 94-171 data released by the U.S. Census
18 Bureau as validated through the data verification
19 program of the State House and the Senate. That
20 validated data can be accessed by the public on the
21 redistricting website. Anyone is free to submit a
22 proposed plan but it has to be submitted
23 electronically in a specific format in what is known
24 as a comma delimited block equivalency file, and
25 that's a typical export format on publicly available

1 redistricting websites. If you do choose to submit a
2 plan, we encourage you to include any additional
3 information that could assist in consideration of
4 that plan including rationales for decisions made in
5 the plan, maps, shape files, et cetera. As for plan
6 specific criteria, each State House and Senate,
7 Public Service Commission, Board of Elementary and
8 Secondary Education and Supreme Court plan must be a
9 whole plan that assigns all the geography of the
10 State. It's easy to draw a single perfect district
11 but the challenge comes in when you have to assign
12 all the surrounding districts to accommodate that
13 perfect district. If you think of it as a puzzle
14 piece, if you change the borders of one then you have
15 to make its neighbors fit as well. So, that plan has
16 to consider the whole State.
17 [01:15:00]
18 Continuing to focus on some specifics, each
19 redistricting plan for the House, Senate, PSC, and
20 the BESE Board has to contain single member
21 districts, contain districts that are substantially
22 equal in population, which for our purposes means
23 they are within at least plus or minus is 5% of that
24 ideal district population figure, and they also must
25 give due consideration to traditional district

alignments to the extent practicable. Now, we'll talk about Congress which is subject to a different standard, like those plans I just discussed, they have to contain single member districts. The difference comes in when you deal with population figures. They must contain districts with as nearly equal population to the ideal district population as practicable. This is a much more stringent standard than for State plans. We're talking about fractions of a percent as opposed to that plus or minus five figure, and with that, I will turn things over to my colleague, J.W. Wiley, who will begin the presentation of the malapportionment data.

J.W. WILEY: Good evening. Now that we've gotten a lot of words, we're going to switch back to numbers, figures, and color-coded graphs. We will first discuss the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, also known as BESE. This is a map illustrating the current eight BESE districts that were enacted by the Louisiana Legislature and pre-cleared by the U.S. Department of Justice after the 2010 Census. When these districts were drawn in 2010, the ideal population of a BESE district was 566,671. The new ideal population for each BESE district following the 2020 Census is 582,219. This

reflects an increase of 15,548 due to the population growth in the State. This chart shows the current population in each BESE district and the difference from the ideal population. As you can see, districts three and eight which are in red are underpopulated, and districts six and seven which are in green are overpopulated. This map illustrates the population deviations with the dark red and dark orange colors representing population below the acceptable range. The orange representing the low side of the acceptable range, the light yellow representing the high side of the acceptable range, and the light and dark green representing overpopulation. Now, we will discuss the Public Service Commission also known as PSC. This is the map illustrating the current five PSC districts that were enacted by the Louisiana Legislature and pre-cleared by the U.S. Department of Justice after the 2010 Census. When these districts were drawn in 2010, the ideal population of a PSC district was 906,674. The new ideal population is 931,551. This reflects an increase in the population of 24,877. This chart shows the current population in each PSC district and the difference from the ideal population. As you can see, district one in green is overpopulated. This color-coded map illustrates the

population deviations with the orange, yellow looking representing the low side of the acceptable range, the light yellow representing the high side of the acceptable range, and the light green representing overpopulation. Now, I will turn it over to Patricia Lowrey-Dufour, the house to present the malapportionment of Congress.

PATRICIA LOWREY-DUFOUR: Good evening, everyone. I'm Patricia Lowrey-Dufour with the Louisiana House of Representatives. I'll be discussing the malapportionment of Congress, and I will tell you that I'm not sure that the screen that you see in front of you is reflecting the colors that we are discussing, but this presentation has been available on the House redistricting page and is available and those colors will show up better on the redistricting website. This is a map of the current congressional districts that were drawn after the 2010 Census by the Legislature and pre-cleared by the United States Department of Justice. When these districts were drawn following the 2010 Census, the ideal congressional population was 755,562.

[01:20:06]

Following the 2020 Census, the new ideal population is 776,292 reflecting an increase of

20,730 per district. This chart illustrates the deviation of each of the six congressional districts from the ideal population, and again, I want to reiterate the point that was made earlier in the presentation that congressional districts must be as equal to that ideal population as is practicable. So, none of the congressional districts at this point would represent that current standard and therefore must be redrawn. This is a map illustrating the difference of each congressional district and the deviation of that district from the ideal population, and again, the dark orange color illustrates the population furthest below the ideal, the lighter orange representing population below the ideal, with the light yellow representing population slightly above the ideal, and the green representing population the furthest above the ideal district population for a congressional district. Now, I'll go to the Supreme Court, and again, I want to reiterate that the Supreme Court is not subject to the one man, one vote requirement as was discussed earlier by my colleagues. This is a map illustrating the current seven Supreme Court districts as they were redrawn by the Legislature in 1997 using the 1990 Census. If the Legislature had chosen to redraw the Supreme Court

1 districts following the 2010 Census, the ideal
2 population would have been 647,624. Using the 2020
3 Census, the ideal population for a Supreme Court
4 district would be 665,393. This is a chart showing
5 the deviations of each Supreme Court district from
6 that ideal population. As you can see, there is a
7 substantial variation in the population among the
8 Supreme Court districts with a high of 838,610 in
9 district number five, and a low of 476,554 and
10 district number seven reflecting a difference of
11 362,000 people from the lowest to the highest
12 district. This is a map illustrating the deviations
13 of each of the seven Supreme Court districts from
14 that ideal population, with the dark red and dark
15 orange colors representing populations furthest from
16 that ideal population, orange representing population
17 below the ideal, but within a 5% range, and the dark
18 green representing population the furthest above the
19 ideal. Now, I' going to move to the malapportionment
20 of Louisiana House of Representatives. This is a map
21 showing the current configuration of the 105 House of
22 Representatives districts across the State. When the
23 Legislature redrew these districts following the 2010
24 Census, the ideal House population was 43,174.
25 Following the 2020 Census, the new House ideal

population would be 44,359 or an increase of 1,185 in that ideal district population. So, again, for no change to occur, every district would have had to consistently grow across the State by at least that number. As you can see by this chart, that did not happen. The Louisiana House of Representatives currently has 29 districts that are above the acceptable plus or minus 5% of the deviation. We have 39 districts that are within that plus or minus 5% of the ideal, and we have 37 districts that are well below the deviation. This is a map illustrating those deviations of each of the 105 House districts from that ideal district population, and again, you can see the districts kind of reflect the population trends that were discussed earlier by Dr. Bill Blair. Now, I'm going to go into a little bit further detail regarding the districts of the House of Representatives in the East Baton Rouge Metropolitan area. This is a map showing the current configurations of this districts as they were drawn by the Legislature and pre-cleared by the United States Department of Justice following the 2010 Census.

[01:25:08]

This first half of the chart, shows the deviation of the population of those districts from the ideal. Districts in black are within the acceptable population range, districts in red are underpopulated outside of the acceptable range, and districts in green are overpopulated outside of the acceptable range. This is the second half of that chart. As you can see of the 22 districts reflected in this chart, only four districts in this area experienced any significant population growth, and are overpopulated outside of the acceptable range, two in South Baton Rouge and two in Ascension Parish. There are nine districts within the acceptable population range, and there are nine districts that are significantly underpopulated. This is a map illustrating those population deviations from the ideal House district. Again, the colors in dark red and dark orange representing population below the acceptable range, orange or the lighter orange reflecting below the ideal but within the acceptable range, the light-yellow reflecting population within the acceptable range but above the ideal, and the light and dark green representing population above the acceptable range. And here is a close up of the maps within East Baton Rouge Parish with some of the major boundaries

1 showing the differences between the districts and
2 again, the color-coded deviation maps showing those
3 districts which are underpopulated those within the
4 deviation, and those that are overpopulated. Again,
5 you can see very clearly the growth in South Baton
6 Rouge and the North part of Ascension Parish. And
7 now, I will turn it over to my colleague, Yolanda
8 Dixon, Secretary of the Senate, to discuss the
9 malapportionment of the Senate.
10 YOLANDA DIXON: Thank you, Patricia. So now, we
11 turn to the Senate districts. Here are the districts
12 encompassing the State Senate district. These
13 districts were drawn by the Legislature in 2010 and
14 approved by the Department of Justice in 2011. In
15 2010, the ideal population was 116,240. For 2020,
16 descendant ideal population is 119,429 which is a
17 difference of 3,189 persons. This chart shows that
18 there are 10 Senate districts in which the current
19 population exceeds 5% above the ideal population.
20 There are 14 Senate districts that are within the
21 deviation and 15 Senate districts which are below
22 more than 5% below the ideal population. This map
23 illustrates the population deviations with the dark
24 red and dark orange colors representing population
25 below the acceptable range, the orange representing

the population on the low side of the acceptable range, like yellow representing population on the high side of the acceptable range, and the light and dark green colors representing population which is above the acceptable range. Now, we'll get to the East Baton Rouge Metro area. Again, here are the districts encompassing the East Baton Rouge Parish Metro area with districts 6, 14, 15, 16 and East Baton Rouge proper closely bordered by districts 2, 13, 17, and 18. Surrounding them are districts 22, 24, 28, and 32. And here are the population numbers for the districts just shown on the map, and as you can see, districts 2, 17, 28, and 32 are underpopulated, districts 6, 13 and 18 are overpopulated. While districts 14, 15, 16, 21, 22, and 24 are within the ideal deviation that doesn't mean that they are however, can stay the same just because those districts are within the ideal because there are other districts that are surrounding them that will need to either gain population or lose population.

[01:30:02]

Now, here are the districts shown in the color-coded format with district 17, 28, 32 and 2 in underpopulated. District 15 is also underpopulated

but still within the deviation of plus 5% and districts 14 and 16 are within the deviation. Districts 13 and 18 are again overpopulated. Now, focusing on a little more on the Baton Rouge area comprising districts 2, 6, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18 with place names as you can see, and here are those districts color-coded for the population losses and gains. As you can see, district 17 will have to find population, and remember from the first set of slides that districts 32 and 28 are border. District 17 and we're also underpopulated. District 15 is underpopulated but less so. Districts 14 and 16 are within the deviation, and districts 3, 13 and 18 are overpopulated. This concludes my presentation. I'll now turn it over to the Chair who will discuss the timeline.

CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: Thank you. Thanks, staff, for that great presentation. I think it's a wonderful breakdown about what our tasks are and the guidelines that we have to operate in during that. As you can see, we're doing this roadshow. We are progressing nicely. I believe this is our fifth meeting. We also have a meeting coming up in the North Shore on November 30th, December of the 15th will be in Southwest Louisiana, January of the 5th in the

1 Orleans area, and then January the 11th in the Bayou
2 region around Houma-Thibodaux, and then finally,
3 culminating in a Thursday, January 20th where we will
4 meet at the capital to discuss all of this. With that
5 said, now, we are going to move to the public
6 participation part. I do want to recognize
7 Representative Larry Selders walked in and
8 Representative Edmond Jordan walked in as well. Not
9 sure where Edmond is, and so, I want to recognize
10 them for being here as well. So, the first card that
11 we have is Cynthia Young. If you would like to go up
12 and give your testimony, ma'am. And before we get
13 started, I do want to remind everybody, please
14 refrain from any applause or booing either way. We're
15 trying to keep this just about the testimony and keep
16 us moving quickly. Ms. Young?
17 CYNTHIA YOUNG: Yes. Good evening, everyone. My
18 name is Cynthia Young, and I am a resident of Baton
19 Rouge. I grew up in West Baton Rouge Parish in the
20 City of Port Allen. I am here today as a mother, a
21 community member, and a community leader. I have
22 school age children that are in the East Baton Rouge
23 Parish Public School System. I'm also the President
24 and founder of Right for Victory. Right for Victory
25 is a nonprofit community organization that I started

in 2020 because I love my community. Right for Victory, we work to build civic power in communities of color. We do that through voter education, outreach and civic engagement and career development services. I started this organization because I desire to see every person in my community, especially people of color get involved in issues that impact our everyday lives such as health care, education, and voting rights. A lot of times I do this work, I do it with no support. I do it with no money, but I will continue to do it because I know how important it is that we dismantle the systems of injustice that has tried to hold us back for hundreds of years. So, I just urge you today, I know you all have heard a lot of testimony from a lot of people, but I just wanted to come today to give my input and just urge you to consider people of color, people that look like me when you draw these maps. Thank you for your time.

CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: Thank you, Ms. Young. Next up, we have Arielle McTootle.

ARIELLE MCTOOTLE: Good evening, members, and thank you for the opportunity to testify tonight. My name is Ariel McTootle, and I'm a law fellow with an NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund.

1 [01:35:00]
2 As you know, you have an affirmative obligation
3 to comply with section two of the Voting Rights Act
4 of 1965 with respect to every map that you draw. Last
5 month, you received a letter from the LDF and 16
6 civil and human rights organizations explaining that
7 section two likely requires you to draw two majority,
8 minority congressional districts. LDF has offered
9 seven different maps based on 2020 Census data in
10 which two of the six congressional districts are
11 majority black. The second majority minority district
12 would give black Louisianans an equal opportunity to
13 elect their preferred candidates to Congress and in
14 doing so help ensure that Louisiana's congressional
15 map complies with Federal Law. Here in Baton Rouge,
16 under the current map, black communities in Baton
17 Rouge are carved into the Second Congressional
18 District. The rest of Baton Rouge, where the majority
19 of white voters reside is in the 6th Congressional
20 District. As a result, black voters here in Baton
21 Rouge are packed into a bizarre district that is
22 based in New Orleans, and they have had no
23 opportunity to influence the outcome of elections in
24 the 6th Congressional District or in any other
25 district. Each of the maps presented by LDF would fix

1 this problem by placing the Baton Rouge region in a
2 second majority black district. If anyone of these
3 maps was enacted, black voters in Baton Rouge would
4 finally have an opportunity to elect a candidate from
5 their community rather than being packed into a
6 district with voters from New Orleans. It is
7 important to remember that section two compliance is
8 a higher priority than other State level
9 redistricting goals, such as preserving the cores of
10 existing districts. In order to enact maps that
11 provide black Louisianans an equal opportunity to
12 participate in the political process, it will be
13 necessary to make significant changes from the
14 existing lines that led us to this point. Compliance
15 with section two is particularly crucial in light of
16 Louisiana's longstanding and well documented history
17 of discrimination in voting, which is one of the
18 factors considered by courts under section two. Voter
19 intimidation in Louisiana is not ancient history.
20 Here in Baton Rouge, just last year during the 2020
21 election, there was a white man who stationed himself
22 outside a polling place in the City of Baker in East
23 Baton Rouge Parish which is 84% black. The man was
24 armed and he was wielding a blue Lives Matter flag,
25 and many black voters reported to LDF that they were

1 intimidated and scared to go vote as a result of his
2 presence. But law enforcement refused to intervene to
3 permit voters to cast their ballots without fear.
4 Another factor considered by courts is the extent to
5 which minority groups experience socioeconomic
6 disparities. Here in Baton Rouge, the racial pay gap
7 is one of the highest in the country. The median wage
8 for white residents is approximately $60,000, whereas
9 the median for people of color is only $37,000. In
10 East Baton Rouge, 19% of black adults have a
11 bachelor's degree compared to 47% of white residents.
12 Residents of East Baton Rouge also experienced
13 environmental racism. East Baton Rouge perishes home
14 to cancer alley where high levels of toxic, cancer
15 causing pollutants have been released across the
16 region for years. Courts have found these types of
17 disparities to be highly relevant in redistricting
18 cases because of the proven relationship between
19 racial discrimination in voting and racial
20 discrimination on other issues. A map that includes
21 all of Baton Rouge in a second majority black
22 district would keep this community intact and allow
23 residents in Baton Rouge to participate equally in
24 the political process. In closing, the time has come
25 for a second majority minority congressional district

that includes Baton Rouge so that Louisiana's black residents and residents in Baton Rouge will finally be fairly represented by their congressional delegation. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: Thank you. Next up, we have Sheila Lewis.

SHEILA LEWIS: Good evening, all.

CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: Good evening.

SHEILA LEWIS: Madam Chairwoman, to the members of the House and Senate Governmental Affairs Committee, to all of the other legislators who are here today, and to all the citizens who are present. I am Sheila Lewis, a long-time resident of this great State of Louisiana. I care dearly about what we are about today. I am fortunate, however, to reside in a district where I have not had to worry about protection by law enforcement. I am fortunate to live in the district but I've not had to worry about a shortage of housing, having to worry about education, having to worry about driving long distances to get to a hospital. I'm fortunate about that. But when I look at the grand scheme of things and I look at the State of Louisiana.

[01:40:00]

I look at neighboring communities in the Northern Port of the Parish. They don't have that luxury. I call on you today, this lady in red for you to search your hearts and when in the maps are drawn that they reflect a population shift that we have seen validated by the 2010 and 2020 censuses. We know already that there have been a 2.36% growth in population in our state more reflective of the Hispanic community and so then you are compelled to make sure that these maps are fair. That these maps are equitable. And that these maps are transparent. I called on you. My fellow legislators to do that. It is time for Louisiana to do the right thing. It is time for us to be able to say that we people of color. We have a seat at the table where there is representation that takes care of the wellbeing of all citizens of this great state of Louisiana. I'm asking you today to render the public service that you were voted in by your constituents to do, and that is to create fair, equitable and transparent maps. Thank you for giving me the opportunity today to speak to you. My last concern is the need for another majority minority district. You've been presented with seven maps by the ACLU, by the league of women voters, by the NACP and other organizations

who believe that the maps that you have been presented with will be reflective of the needs of the districts throughout this state. Thank you again for giving me the opportunity to speak to you today. I am Sheila Lewis.

CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: Thank you, Ms. Lewis. Next, we have A'Niya Robinson.

A' NIYA ROBINSON: Good evening.

CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: Good evening.

A'NIYA ROBINSON: My name is A'niya Robinson. Although I work at the ACLU Louisiana, I'm here testifying in my personal capacity. I'm here because I was born and raised in Baton Rouge. I'm a farmer first and an organizer second and an attorney and [INDISCERNIBLE 01:42:59] last. Most people actually assume that I'm from New Orleans, but I quickly correct people and let them know that I'm from Baton Rouge. Every month, I come home to my farm that's here in the area, a farm that's been in my family for almost 140 years. I come home to the farm, care for and nourish the land my great, great grandparents once didn't even have the right to own. But they gave their all to the purchase so that our family could have something to be proud of. I come home to my beautiful family, a Church that my great uncle

1 started right after reconstruction. My 87-year-old
2 grandfather and I come home to a city that I have
3 seen as long as I can remember depleted. I hope I can
4 illustrate to you what having adequate representation
5 means. Five years ago, Baton Rouge having a
6 devastating flood, a flood that took away my
7 farmhouse. And a few days later, I started law school
8 and one of my professors asked me how I was doing and
9 I told her it was hell. Maybe some of you can relate
10 to the feeling of losing everything and not knowing
11 where to turn feeling suffocated and the amount of
12 work it's going to take to rebuild and move forward.
13 We've had so many storms since then and so when a
14 federal bill that included money for flood protection
15 and strengthening our grid passed a few days ago, I
16 was appalled when my congressional representative
17 voted against it. But it's not only votes that have
18 me concerned. There's another reason why having a
19 representative that responds and serves matter. Yes,
20 I made it to college and law school and I'm at a job
21 that I love.
22 [01:45:00]
23 And one of my main responsibilities right now is
24 getting the community ready for this process. And by
25 the grace of my family and my savior, I was able to

make it this far. And it was hard but there was this lingering part of me that wondered, what would it have been like if I had a representative or a senator that looked like me that I knew? Maybe as a kid I could have shadowed them at their office or put up their calls or interned with them, but I never know. So, the best thing I can do now is make sure that the kids that come behind me have elected officials that they can turn to so they can see themselves in. I want my city, the place that I'm so proud of, the city that raised me to be nourished and cared for. For our people to be nourished and cared for. And to me, that means making sure we have the resources to not only survive but to thrive and grow. And that starts with elected officials that are dedicated to making sure we're not left behind. That actually respond to us and listen to us. I have so much faith in the people of this state and the city. And that's why I haven't left like some of my peers have. I know we can make districts where minority candidates have the chance to elect people that they want to represent them in districts that actually represent our communities. I know we can make this right. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: Thank you. Next, we have John Frankie Hires.

JOHN FRANKIE HIRES: My name is John Frankie Hires from Jefferson Parish, Louisiana. Article 4, Section 4 of the US Constitution, guarantees to the several states in this union a republican form of government. If you all choose to go down that rabbit hole, it's going to take you to the 1960s and this most of what everybody's talking about here. And if you go further down, it will take you back to 1849. And grievous judgment on a tally court. Anyway, if anyone in here presently could explain to me how the numbers 105 or 39 bear any respect or relationship to the number 64, the number of parishes we all live in. I could cut this short, go home and get back to fix some pianos. Anyone want to try? They don't, they don't. And with regards to that article 4 that guarantee republican form, I assure you we would not be guaranteed something if it could be made arbitrary. So, it's important, principled representation matters. How we empower those that we elect or entrust to these offices of trust that we empower to those? How we empower them has to begin to matter more to all of us then who? They're just a reflection of our neglect and our opportunism.

1 Jefferson and his advice to George Washington at the
2 first enumeration began thusly, the constitution
3 declared that representatives in direct taxes put a
4 pin in direct taxes because I don't think anybody
5 knows what that is. Shall be apportion among the
6 several states according to their respective numbers
7 that, that the number of representatives shall not
8 exceed one for every 30,000 but each state would have
9 at least one. The bill for apportioning
10 representatives at that time that it passed through
11 narrowly through both houses without explaining any
12 principle at all, which would show its conformity to
13 the constitution or guide for future apportionments
14 says that the States would have an arbitrary number
15 of representatives, blah, blah, blah. He goes on,
16 therefore, to explain to say that therefore we'd have
17 to find by experiment. What principle was employed to
18 achieve this? What happens that bill came to adjust
19 intolerable result with regards to the great and
20 small states or in our case parishes. between the
21 north and the south and between aggregate and
22 industrial interests. And consequently, could not be
23 accepted to on those grounds but if it were obtained
24 by any process prescribed in the constitution. But if
25 it's paint by any process out of that, it becomes

arbitrary and inadmissible. Arbitrary and inadmissible 105 and 39 they're arbitrary and inadmissible. He says that representatives shall be apportioned among the several states with regards to us it would mean parishes. According to their respective numbers that's to say they shall be forced by some common ratio.

[01:50:00]

Proportion and ratio are equivalent words and they shall have a ratio of commentor or in other words a common divisor. Now, he concludes with some important points that I'm going to jump to. And he says this, and this is important for everybody that's of them or the people so to speak. It says the application of any one ratio is intelligible to the people and will therefore be approved, whereas the complex operations of whatever you're scheming to do. Complex operations of the bill that they passed then would never be comprehended by them and though they may acquiesce so we've been acquiescing for 179 years at the federal level, as far as I can tell. Though they may acquiesce, they cannot approve what they do not understand. You conceive of something that we can't understand. You're getting acquiescence at best. He says, no invasions of the constitution, so

1 fundamentally dangerous as the tricks played on their
2 own numbers, apportionment and other circumstances
3 respecting themselves and affecting their legal
4 qualifications to legislate for the union. Article 4
5 republican form, it wouldn't be guaranteed something
6 if it could be made arbitrary. Now, what does
7 arbitrary government lead to? Ms. Polly Thomas, my
8 representative District 80 has not one school. Not
9 one high school in her district. There are five in
10 District 82. The council is on aging. Everybody
11 familiar with them? Before the last session or a few
12 sessions ago, they were limited to about $30,000 per
13 council. Every parish has one. In order for Jefferson
14 Parish to get its $250.00 per senior that's $250,000.
15 We had to up that cap to 100,000 that means Kansas
16 Parish with 4,000 people in it, maybe 1,000 seniors
17 are getting $100,000.00. We're getting 250.
18 $250.000.00 for 100,000 seniors in Jefferson Parish,
19 arbitrary governance leads to malfeasance ineptitude
20 due to our neglect. I don't blame a shark for being a
21 shark. Don't blame anybody in Kansas Parish for
22 taking advantage of what they can. But you've got 18,
23 18 parishes, 18 districts that serve more than three
24 parishes. Now, I believe we probably had an
25 invocation, love thy neighbor some kind of principles

1 related to a theology. There's something in there
2 about serving more than one master. Now, I've come up
3 with a plan. It's pretty simple, based on
4 Jeffersonian principles, each Parish will have one
5 representative none more than one for every 51,000.
6 That means that you don't get a second representative
7 until your tera bone. Jefferson Paris and East Baton
8 Rouge would have aid of peace. And we would abide
9 republican form as prescribed on the constitution.
10 How we empower has to matter more than who we empower
11 or who their affiliations are? Which party? What
12 race? I work for the census. Two or more races is
13 going to multiply 400% growth. 400% growth, how long
14 are we going to be playing this game with the voting
15 rights act, where we fall for a shiny object? While
16 the principled representation we all suffer for and
17 trust me the direct taxes. I can't only speak for
18 Jefferson Parish. We got innumerable bound of
19 property taxes levied across two different sides of
20 river completely arbitrary. All that's done because
21 nobody has been paying attention to how, thank you
22 very much for your time.
23 CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: Thank you, sir. Next, we
24 have Albert Samuels.
25 ALBERT SAMUELS: Good evening.

CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: Good evening.

ALBERT SAMUELS: My name is Albert Samuels. I am a professor and Chair Department of [INDISCERNIBLE 01:54:03]. I am originally from [INDISCERNIBLE 01:54:08] Louisiana but I came to Baton Rouge and didn't leave. And so, this is home for me. I want to speak to the fact that we are engaging in this process the first time since the United States Supreme Court got it really wanted the key provisions on the voting rights act of 1965 in 2013. Went to the city in Shelby County versus [PH 01:54:50] Holder and in that decision, Chief Justice John Roberts who writing for the majority essentially said that --

[01:55:00]

Well, because we've made so much progress since 1965 that essentially states can be trusted essentially to basically act as or based on good faith that they will come up with the rules governing elections that will be reasonably and reasonably fair. That it was simply wrong to essentially punish the current generations of Americans for the sins of their fathers. And so, since that is the case, that is the state of the law at this time and since Justice Roberts says put faith in the States to be good actors. Let's talk a little bit about what

fairness might look like. Fairness might ask the question of why is the Scotlandville area, the North Baton Rouge area, lumped in with a district that really predominantly represents New Orleans? Because from our standpoint, that looks like packing and cracking. Now, I happen to live in just east of the divine line between district two, which is the minority district and then district six so I'm just ease of that line. And so, I don't feel represented when I have a congressman who thinks it's okay to nullify the results of a free and fair election. And I have a congressman, given all of the infrastructure needs in our communities, who voted against billions of dollars for roads, highways, bridges, [INDISCERNIBLE 01:57:23], and things that our community needs. This is why representation matters. Fairness asked the question of since we have had population shifts, why can't we have a second majority minority district? There have been some plans that have already been submitted to you? You probably can get some more before it's all over with. But the numbers are there the thorn factories are there. So, Fairness might ask the question, why don't we have a second majority of minority district? I think that in some ways that would better represent

1 the interests of the communities particularly in this
2 area. You've also indicated that while the Supreme
3 Court is not subject to the one man one rule, but
4 fairness asked the question. How is it in a state in
5 which almost about 40% of the population is people of
6 color. is it fair? That there's only one seat on that
7 court held by a person of color. Especially given the
8 fact that we have been one of the leading states in
9 this country in mass incarceration and the
10 disproportionate in conservation of African
11 Americans? So, fairness might ask the question of,
12 why is there only one? And why haven't we
13 redistributed the case since 1990? How is it that the
14 First Circuit Court of Appeals right here in Baton
15 Rouge, that court looks nothing like the constituents
16 for which it serves? We have one person of a color,
17 my good friend John Michael Gabriel on that court.
18 So, fairness might ask that question. Now, some of
19 your other southern neighbors, Texas and North
20 Carolina, that were also covered by the voting rights
21 act, have already gone ahead with their redistricting
22 plans. And despite the fact that they've had
23 population -- and most of this have been minorities.
24 [02:00:00]
25

1 Nevertheless, they have put forth maps that have
2 discriminated against minorities. Texas, 95% of the
3 growth in that state is because of minorities
4 populations. And under the maps they're proposing
5 minorities have less representation than what they
6 would have in 2010 cycle. You have the opportunity to
7 chart a different course. Will you take that
8 opportunity? Will you validate Judge Robert's faith
9 in the ability of states to do this in good faith? Or
10 will you fall back into Louisiana's old habit of
11 racial discrimination loss in your court, but we're
12 going to be watching. We're going to be participating
13 in this process. Thank you for your attention.
14 CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: Thank you, sir. Next, we
15 have a former representative Woody Jenkins.
16 WOODY JENKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Madam
17 Chairwoman, I guess. So, I have some pass outs here.
18 Can I give this to you and ask that you give them to
19 the members of the committee, I think it would help.
20 CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: There's actually a formal
21 process which we have to consider it, but it has to
22 be 24 hours in advance of the committee hearing.
23 WOODY JENKINS: Oh, I see, I'm sorry.
24 CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: I do apologize. Mr. Jenkins.
25

WOODY JENKINS: Well, it is a pleasure to be with you today, and I had the pleasure of representing Baton Rouge in the State House of Representatives for 28 years and served them a constitutional convention and drafted the Bill of Rights of our state constitution, which I must say is one of the most progressive constitutions and Bill of Rights in the nation even now. And by the way, if you look at it, you see that we prohibited all discrimination based on race under our Louisiana constitution. Back in the 1960s, when I was editor of the North Baton Rouge journal, we proposed single member districts in our paper, and in 1970 the Federal Courts actually adopted that and had single member districts that they put into effect and the legislature immediately changed both the house and the senate. We went from no black members, by the way, of the house too. Then we had the first, I think, six since reconstruction and today it's maybe 35 black legislators in the House of Representatives and similar changes were made in the senate. So, this has been evolving over the years. I had the pleasure of living in North Baton Rouge where I grew up, and I still live there about a mile from where I grew up in an area that is a minority area. I'm all involved in Istrouma High

1 School, my alma mater, which went from 99% white to
2 now it's 99% black. I really don't think we need to
3 think about things and look at things in terms of
4 race. We're all equal. We're all Americans. We need
5 to unify around that and our similarities. I was
6 taught that the right thing to do was to be color
7 blind and I think that's what we should do. Now, we
8 have here in East Baton Rouge Parish I think a
9 problem that you need to address as legislators and
10 I'm part of creating that problem and I want to tell
11 you what it was about. Back in the 1990s and the
12 early 90s among our district judges here in East
13 Baton Rouge Parish, only one black member of the
14 judiciary. And I believe it might have been Freddie
15 Pitcher at the time. I was very concerned about that
16 and I was one of the ones who came forth and we
17 authored the concept of having subdistricts for the
18 election of district judges in East Baton Rouge
19 Parish and we created in that legislation the
20 minority subdistrict, which was a mostly black area
21 that was given five district court judges. I assumed
22 that that would be changed over the years and would
23 be rearranged, but today that's the same and the
24 precincts are almost exactly the same. So, we went
25 from an ISA conservative took a lot of heat from a

lot of people for creating a subdistrict plan that just immediately created five new judgeships that blacks were elected too. But now we have a very strange situation because those subdistricts are still in effect just like they were, but the population is very different and I want to tell you about them. Division one which was that minority subdivision now has 58,000 voters.

[02:05:00]

They have five district judges. District two has 100,000 registered voters and it has five district judges. And division three has 134,000 registered voters and it has five district judges. So, we have an extreme malapportionment of our district judges here in East Baton Rouge Parish. And of course, what's happening is the minority district is 48,000 blacks, 76,000 whites, but the Northern district division two is now 49,000 blacks, 45,000 whites, and that third division is 92,000 whites and 31,000 blacks. So, this Parish is just about 50/50 black and white. If you had your judges, it would be probably eight whites, seven blacks or eight blacks, seven whites instead. It's now we have ten black judges and five white judges, even though the voting population is 145,000 whites and 129,000 blacks. Now, as a

1 person who came forward in the 90s and said, it's not
2 right that we had one black judge out of all our
3 district judges and I helped create this minority
4 district, we are extremely malapportioned in our
5 three judicial subdivisions. So, what I'm hoping is I
6 know that everyone will be concerned about the
7 legislature, about congress and about the other
8 things. But we also have issues here at the local
9 level that's controlled by the state is the
10 legislature who draws these maps it's in the acts. We
11 need to have our judicial subdivisions with more or
12 less equal population. I know it's not one man, one
13 vote, but we have malapportionment in our judicial
14 subdivisions in this parish. It's not reflective of
15 the population. So, having gone through, I guess,
16 three reapportionments. I would like to give you a
17 couple of words of advice over my 28 years. Number
18 one, I would say try to go and have create districts
19 around communities so that your representative over
20 senate can really represent a community. I disagree
21 with the idea that -- I don't know that I've ever met
22 Professor Samuel, but I read what he says all the
23 time, and he's very bright man. I don't believe in
24 the idea of creating the spidery sneaky districts
25 that go everywhere and that's the second

1 congressional district is that why in order to create
2 a minority district. That's why it comes to
3 Scotlandville, this was to create that minority
4 district. And I guess you could have some other
5 sneaky spidery looking things somewhere, but that's
6 not really that puts so much emphasis on race. We
7 don't need to apportion like that. We need to have
8 communities together. North Louisiana, South
9 Louisiana, and all these different things based on
10 where we live and we need to stop emphasizing race.
11 What's really important is policy. Now, we have had
12 black mayors of this parish for the last 20 years.
13 And I'm telling you, as a resident of North Baton
14 Rouge, I have seen no improvements in the last 20
15 years. Our garbage still doesn't get picked up. The
16 sidewalks are not maintained. The servitudes are not
17 maintained. It's not about race. It's about what
18 these public officials do for us and whether they
19 represent what we believe in and most importantly,
20 whether they perform the services that they're
21 supposed to perform as our elected officials. So,
22 thank you very much for this opportunity to be with
23 you.
24 CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: Thank you, former
25 representative. For the public, I'm going to start

trying to keep it around five minutes. We have some more cards submitted since we started and an opportunity to try to give everybody a chance to speak. From now on I'm going to try to keep out about five minutes. Next stop, we have representative Ted James. And Representative James is going to be the first one on the clock has been very --

TED JAMES: Five-minute rule. I will remember all of this when you guys come to criminal justice. All right. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Madam chairman. It's ironic that I came up after Mr. Jenkins. He didn't tell you I used to swim in his pool. He usually reminds people that the reason why I wanted to speak is just to remind us of our simple obligation to follow the numbers, right? I love Royce. I love Jimmy, I love Candice. I don't want to be in the same congressional district as either of them. Here in Baton Rouge.

[02:10:00]

Well, we are the largest Parish. I think you've heard that several times. A growing theme from the people of your capital city, right? The numbers dictate whether you went to McKinley or Strummer that one third of six is two doesn't matter at a Strummer back when Woody went, one third of six was two. And

99 when I graduated from McKinley, one third of six is two. The students in each one of your districts, no matter if it's public, private, charter, they know that one third of six is two. The same applies to our PSC. The same applies to our Supreme Court. The problem with our district court and I want to address some of those issues with our courts as well. Three years ago, there was no problem because we're not going to make race the predominant factor, but then we're going to come up here and make race the predominant factor. There was no problem with our courts when they were 10-5. The problem today is because the courts are actually 9-6, not 10-5, nine black judges, six white judges, now there's a problem. I think that we need to make some changes with our court, starting with our Supreme Court, because while I love all of the chief justices, they don't fairly represent the numbers. The young man that talked about the census. Our obligation is to follow the numbers. We have to do that by creating districts that give people of color an opportunity to elect a candidate of choice. We only have that opportunity in the second congressional district, where we are overwhelmingly packed into a district to allow for one minority seat. I'm asking that we

1 follow the numbers. I'm asking that we take the
2 capital city out of District II. I'm asking that my
3 high school is not in the same district as Royces.
4 I'm asking that Southern University in Baton Rouge is
5 not in the same congressional district as Southern
6 University of New Orleans. Same system will need to
7 be in the same congressional district. That is our
8 obligation. That is our charge. And honestly, it's
9 very simple because you guys have already seen the
10 maps. Folks around here have already done the work.
11 The NAACP, Legal Defense Fund, ACLU, they've done the
12 hard work. All we have to do is the easy job to
13 follow the numbers. That's what I hope that we
14 continue to do. And it's not about rates, let's
15 follow the numbers because no matter how we slice it,
16 one third of six is two. Thank you.
17 CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: Thank you, Representative.
18 Next up, we have former Representative Melissa
19 Flournoy.
20 MELISSA FLOURNOY: Good evening. Thank you, Madam
21 Chair Hewitt and Chairman Stefanski and all the
22 members of the Legislature here tonight. I'm Melissa
23 Flournoy, and I'm the Board Chair of Louisiana
24 Progress, and I've been the most of these roadshows,
25 and I appreciate the opportunity to talk to you

1 tonight about the challenges of drawing fair and
2 equitable maps that reflect the interests of all
3 citizens and reflect the interest here in the Baton
4 Rouge region. So, we appreciate your opportunity or
5 the opportunity for people in each region to come and
6 talk about the particular challenges they face.
7 You've already heard tonight that the population has
8 shifted, it shifted down towards the southern part of
9 the State. I'm originally from Shreveport and it
10 looks like as you redraw these maps, you're going to
11 end up consolidating some districts in North
12 Louisiana and there are going to be a lot of unhappy
13 people and so I just want to say we're all praying
14 for you. Because this is a remarkably difficult task
15 and no one is going to be happy by the results. But
16 when we talk about the shift in population in
17 Louisiana and we look at the maps in each region,
18 it's clear to see that there are opportunities to
19 redraw some of the state level maps to be more fair
20 and equitable. Now here for Louisiana progress, we've
21 defined fair and equitable to be around
22 competitiveness and racial proportionality because we
23 know the tendency as elected officials is to protect
24 incumbents. And now with term limits, many of you are
25 not going to have to live by the maps that you're

1 drawing which I think is actually a good thing.
2 Because just as Mr. Jenkins said, this is my fourth
3 redistricting cycle, I was elected to the Legislature
4 after the redistricting in 1991. I know that
5 redistricting can open up the doors to new districts
6 and new talent and young people and not just protect
7 the status quo, not just protect the current
8 incumbents and protect political parties.
9 [02:15:00]
10 I want to reiterate some of the work that's been
11 said about congressional districts. It's true that we
12 have six congressional districts in Louisiana, but
13 they're not competitive. We have five hardcore
14 Republican Congressmen, and we have one African-
15 American Congressman who for all intents and
16 purposes, is expect to represent the voices of
17 African-American voters in Caddo Parish, in East
18 Baton Rouge Parish, in Tallulah, Richland, Tensas,
19 Concordia Parish. Because he's the only congressman
20 that will return the calls, okay? He's the only
21 congressman that really will be engaged in the issues
22 that are important to people. So, Mr. Jenkins can say
23 race doesn't matter. I'm here today to say race does
24 matter. Unfortunately, in 2021, we're in a State
25 that's 40% minority. We really do need to redraw the

1 congressional maps. We really do need to have a
2 second African-American district that's sort of
3 centered here in the Baton Rouge capital area. And it
4 can go north. It can go west to up through central
5 Louisiana. It can go east across the Florida
6 Parishes. But if you look at the population and how
7 it shifted, you can and should draw a map that
8 represents the people of the State of Louisiana. Now,
9 the BESE Board has right now is drawn with two
10 minority districts. It probably should have three.
11 So, let's look at how we've drawn these maps. But the
12 real issue I want to focus on tonight, which I don't
13 think has been talked about enough in the other
14 regions, is the State Supreme Court. Politics has
15 been the issue around our Court mapping for 30 years.
16 We have hidden behind this notion that one person one
17 vote does not count for the Supreme Court as a shield
18 because the politics are just too hot to handle. This
19 is the year that we must address the needs of the
20 Supreme Court. And the Supreme Court should have at
21 least two minority districts and probably three if
22 you look at how the population flows. So, I know the
23 challenges facing your committee are difficult and
24 very important. I thank you for your patience and
25 your willingness to go around the state and hear

about the passion of the people, because oftentimes, we make these decisions without really concentrating and focusing on what's in the interest of the people we should be representing. So, we believe that fair representation matters and that voter delusion and voter suppression are not appropriate political motivations in redistricting. We ask that you consider the population shifts in your efforts to make sure that every vote count.

CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: Ms. Flournoy, if you could just get this man.

MELISSA FLOURNOY: You got me right when I was going to say thank you, Chairman.

CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: I apologized. I'm going to be a stickler on the time.

MELISSA FLOURNOY: That's all right. That's all right. I should have come earlier, but I'll say this one last thing, and this goes to Representative James. There are so many qualified, talented, competent elected officials throughout the State of Louisiana that are ready, able and willing to run for congress. Let's give them a place to run. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: Thank you, Ms. Flournoy. Next up, we have Gerry Briette.

GERRY BRIETTE: Thank you, Sir Chairman and Madam Chairwoman for the opportunity to provide comments for this important activity that you all are undertaking. My name is Gerry Briette. I'm a lifelong citizen of Louisiana and believe that fair and representative redistricting at both the federal and state level is paramount for the spirit of a truly representative democracy which our Republic mandates. I strongly encourage you to take into consideration reasonable geographic and cultural considerations when developing district boundaries. Extreme gerrymandering must be avoided and to the extent possible, compact districts containing like cultures and norms are desired. When you look at the maps that were shown earlier, you look at something like State Senate District 29.

[02:20:00]

You wonder how those come about. Our current Public Service Commission's map is almost adequate, except for the somewhat strange shape of District 3. Likewise, our current congressional delegation map is somewhat questionable as District 5 includes both Franklinton in Washington Parish and Bunkie in a Boyle's Parish. Franklinton and Bunkie are not geographically nor culturally common. So, how do we

1 get into those types of situations? In a similar
2 manner as mentioned several times tonight,
3 congressional District 2 slices through Congressional
4 District 1 and 6. I understand you're trying to
5 achieve and appease certain constituencies, but in my
6 opinion, your primary constituency should be the
7 United States and the Louisiana Constitutions. I
8 respectfully request that in drawing maps, you take
9 into consideration both geographical and cultural
10 norms while striving to create as compact as possible
11 districts. Thank you for your time.
12 CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: Thank you. And I believe the
13 next one is Roland -- is it Volil?
14 ROLAND VOLK: Volk.
15 CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: I apologize. I couldn't see,
16 the K was giving me trouble.
17 ROLAND VOLK: My handwriting is very poor. Yes,
18 I'm Roland Volk. I'm a socially moderate but fiscally
19 conservative voter from the Baton Rouge Garden
20 District. Over the last few decades, I've seen a
21 tremendous erosion in the sense of community in our
22 democracy. Politics have become more divisive with
23 less concerns for neighbors helping neighbors. This
24 divisiveness has been documented by the Pew Research
25 Organization. This extremism in politics leads to the

1 corrosion of our democracy. However, this doesn't
2 have to be the case, our communities remain strong.
3 For example, I'm a retiree and volunteer three days a
4 week for affordable housing non-profit habitat for
5 humanity and rebuilding to the Baton Rouge. I also
6 volunteer for Front Yard Bikes, a local non-profit
7 bike shop that uses proceeds to help underprivileged
8 children learn how to repair their own bicycles and
9 gain other skills. I'm not alone in these volunteer
10 efforts. People often ask me, why is the U.S.
11 Congress so confrontational and what can be done? I
12 believe the answer is we need to move to
13 congressional districts that are not gerrymandered.
14 With one district, with all minority and low-income
15 people packed into it. In the other district's
16 minority and low-income voters influenced and
17 deluded. How do we regain the sense of community in
18 our politics? The answer is to adjust political
19 districts to match the communities they serve rather
20 than being gerrymandered for political gains. The
21 North Baton Rouge to New Orleans district is a
22 classic example. If we had reasonable districts, our
23 representatives would be moderates who would work
24 across party lines with other moderates and vote the
25 needs of the people. Please eliminate gerrymandering

of federal and state districts and help us strengthen our democracy. I know this can be done because ACLU Louisiana has shown you the taken the recent [INDISCERNIBLE 02:23:56] shows numerous configurations you can pick from. Thank you for taking on this critical task in a manner that will strengthen our democracy.

CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: Thank you. Next up, we have Arthur Thomas. Arthur Thomas? No, okay. Carlos Pollard, Jr.

CARLOS POLLARD, JR.: Good evening, Madam Chair and Mr. Chairman. My name is Carlos Pollard, Jr. with power coalition for equity justice and I travel here from New Orleans, Louisiana to advocate for fair maps for my community. But most importantly to be a voice for Gen Z. When I specify Gen Z, I want to clarify the age range 9 to 24.

[02:25:06]

There are so many of us who are currently in high school and college, but even the ones who decided college was not for them and decided to become entrepreneur or working-class citizens. Redistricting is a key component to building power in our community. Having the ability to elect someone who will accurately represent us and [INDISCERNIBLE

02:25:26] the foundation for the upcoming years. So, this evening, I am going to advise the legislative to please think about the leaders [INDISCERNIBLE 02:25:36], my generation and pass fair and equitable maps that do not deflate our power in the election process.

CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: Thank you. Next, we have Bert [PH 02:25:51] Cole. I hope I pronounced the last name right. Thank you.

BERT COLE: Excellent job on the pronunciation.

CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: It's the K in me, I guess.

BERT COLE: So, I'm from Brusly across the river, and I just want to say I'm someone who came from a predominantly -- I hear color all the time being mentioned here. So, I came from a predominantly private school it was white, but I moved. And part of that reason, when it came time for my kids to go to school, I should say we moved and I moved to Brusly. And it was great because there was basically a 50/50 in the population. So that's where my mentality is when I'm going to say what I'm going to say. I'm an American, I served in the armed forces twice. I served with blacks, whites, Hispanics, everybody, we were brothers, and it was some sisters there, too, medics and I was glad to start making that change

when we moved. I was glad that my kids were able to experience it because they don't have those fears, so to speak. So, with all that said, I guess I'm neutral on this whole thing. And I agree with what some of the folks said here. To cut out all the polarity in politics is to start to unite by community. That's what I would like you to consider, because I have no idea what's going on in New Orleans. Yet I'm in a district way up in Brusly and almost to Baton Rouge, and the same thing with my state, I think it's District 29. I have not much in common with folks in North Baton Rouge, but I have very much in common with my side of the river and that kind of thing. And I really don't care what color you are neither do they, because we have the same issue on that side of the river when it comes to traffic and those kinds of things. If my representative doesn't answer my phone call or my email, I want to go down the road and find him, knock on his door or set up an appointment with his secretary, whomever it may be not travel all the way down to New Orleans or across the river. That's what I would like you to consider when you're redoing this thing. Thank you very much for your time.

CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: Thank you, sir. Next up, we have Keturah Butler-Reed and you're going to tell me it was Keturah, right?

KETURAH BUTLER-REED: Yes. Hello. I am Keturah Butler-Reed and I am speaking as the Louisiana Regional Organizer for the Black Voters Matter fund. About 10 years ago, I remember hearing the stories of my mom going door to door asking people in the community to take the census. See, at the time it wasn't as high-tech as it was this go round and I really had no clue what or why she was working for the census. But I had a feeling whatever she was doing was very important. Years later, I was attending census summits and leading campaigns and like many of you in the audience I was spending multiple days and nights educating our peers and communities on the importance of the encounter. We knew that the census would determine the allocation of so many resources and political power across the nation but as a community, we must be reminded of what that even means. So, we take it a step further and shared that the local infrastructure of our communities whether they be our schools, our roads, our hospitals, or more.

[02:30:05]

All counts are for more representation. I say all that to say, us as a community did our part, and we look at you to do yours. There are maps dated back to the census of 1860 showing the distribution of the slavery population in Southern States that show a direct correlation to poverty lines as recent as 2010. Now, we can pretend that we as a people have progressed, but as long as the demographers, I'm sorry, continue to draw lines that crack stack impact my people, black people. In districts of communities' hours away, we have no choice but to fight back. So, at this moment, we are demanding fairness in the drawings of these maps in the kindness way. But as a community, we are tired of our brothers and sisters being underrepresented. It is absolutely ridiculous that as a result of the school to prison pipeline, mass incarceration, et cetera, black and brown human beings are being counted in prisons that are only temporary homes for them. And if you take a trip to Angola, then you'll see and know that the people who live in those towns look nothing like us, nor do they care about the issues that black people face. Gerrymandering in general, is just another way to strip us of our voices when it's time to go vote. We also know that a lot of politicians just so happen to

benefit from those stolen elections. So, if you all truly believe in democracy, and I mean true democracy or upholding the values of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, then that means we should be getting more majority minority districts, because that is the reflective of the numbers of the people, not the numbers of the candidates running. We need more spaces and districts for black government officials because they are aware of our issues. So, when we are unable to speak for ourselves, they should be able to advocate for us, propose legislation, and ultimately work with us to make sure that our people are given the attention that we deserve. And for those in the audience, if you are interested in learning more about redistricting, we are hosting a community mapping training tomorrow at 03:00 p.m. with our national data and policy team. So, I have a sign in sheet in the back also. And we're also doing a bus tour to get 100 black people to testify at the extraordinary station. So, thank you.

CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: Thank you, ma'am. Next up, we have Chico Yancy.

CHICO YANCY: Good evening, everyone. Everybody said what I probably wanted to say, and I will start

1 out by saying that I'm a former incarcerated person.
2 And now I understand that years ago, when I was in
3 Angola, when the sergeant came around and gave me
4 that form and told me I'd better fill it out. I
5 understand now when you ride through St.
6 Francisville, they got a brand-new highway. I
7 understand now that they got two brand new schools
8 because they were packing and counting me in Angola.
9 Well, now I'm a citizen, I vote and count me where I
10 am now and I see my state representative right up
11 there and I'm going to try to make her proud tonight.
12 I was going to start with January the 6th because
13 sometimes this looks like this. What I'm looking at,
14 but I won't. I'm going to ask everybody here to
15 follow the rules, follow the numbers and let's do the
16 right thing. When I was watching last time at the
17 road show and laugh at and I heard the good old boy
18 say and it stout, you kind of stunned me. It was the
19 Sierra Club and the Kiwanis and everybody and
20 everybody was saying, we don't get along everything
21 but, you know, I love my senator, I love my state
22 representative and we've been having this done for 57
23 years and I like to keep it that way. Damn. Can we
24 get 25 years of it? Just 25. They've been at 57 just
25 like they wanted it. So, we need to understand that

we need to make a change. And when I heard [INDISCERNIBLE 02:34:49] that we're equal. Where has he been? Where has he been? You know, true packing and cracking.

[02:35:00]

And we only have one black appeal court judge, no black state supreme court judge. And when you read the paper about [PH 02:35:14] Hughes, what the deals he's been making behind the scenes? Wow. We got some real problems. And my final portion is what all those other congressional district people up there in the feds, all of them voted against my president, that I voted for Joe Biden. With the infrastructure, all of them voted against it only one voted for it and that was Congressman Carter. Can I ask you to do something? Let's not give any of those billions of dollars that's coming to Louisiana to those other districts. And let's put it all in District 2. Because that's the only one that voted for it and nobody else believed in it. We need fairness at every level. The school board, the supreme court, the appeals court, and give us a couple more seats so we can have an opportunity. You know, when I look up to some of your faces, I know that you don't like it. I know that you don't like it. But guess what? We're

1 getting educated. We understand what the maps look
2 like. We're going to be practicing drawing and guess
3 what? We're going to be watching you in January and
4 February. The same people that's been here now, we're
5 going to be there. And finally, I think you're going
6 to woke up some sleeping giants. Watch out. We coming
7 for you.
8 CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: Thank you, sir. Next up, we
9 have a Stacey Bell. Stacey Bell? The next one is
10 Valerie Oliver or Olivier? Valerie Oliver. I'm sorry.
11 VALERIE OLIVER: Good evening Chairs. The members
12 of House and Senate Government Affairs Committees.
13 Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you. My
14 name is Valerie D. Oliver. I am a proud supporter of
15 the ACLU of Louisiana, and I am representing myself
16 as well. I'm a lifelong resident of Louisiana and I
17 have lived in Baton Rouge since very early in my
18 life. I'm here today to ask for fair, redistricting
19 maps. Maps that give us opportunity, our community, a
20 fair chance to elect candidates of our choice in the
21 greater Baton Rouge area. And transparency in sharing
22 the criteria used to draw maps and giving the public
23 sufficient opportunity to provide feedback before
24 final decisions are made. I am black, I am a member
25 of the LGBTQ plus community and I am a woman. My

1 community has grown significantly over the past 10
2 years. It has become more diverse and will most
3 likely continue. We need maps that will represent the
4 diversity in our community. I am concerned about
5 policing in my community and who will understand what
6 it feels like to wonder every single day. If I am
7 pulled over for a busted tail light, if I'm going to
8 make it home. I am concerned about the LGBTQ
9 community and who will understand what it feels like
10 to wonder if I marry a same sex partner one day, if I
11 have a job the next today. I am concerned about
12 equity and pay for women and if I can perform the
13 same duties and responsibilities as well as my male
14 counterparts.
15 [02:40:06]
16 Who will understand what it feels like to wonder
17 if I will receive less pay or equal pay? This is why
18 fair mapping and fair representation is necessary in
19 my community. I will end my testimony with a quote,
20 one that you may be familiar with. Micah the 6th
21 Chapter, verse eight. "And what does the Lord require
22 of you to act justly, to love mercy and to walk
23 humbly with your God." Thank you for your time.
24 CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: Thank you. Next, we have
25 Cooper Smith. Cooper Smith? Next, we have Mike -- oh,

he's coming. Oh, I apologize. I thought somebody said he's gone and it was he was coming. Got you.

COOPER SMITH: I'm sorry. Good evening. My name is Cooper Smith. I'm a 15-year-old sophomore from Liberty Magnet High School. And at Liberty Magnet, we see a lot of diversity at school. We see the next dancers, the next chief of surgery, and even the next NFL players like my friend, Caleb Jackson with the four college offers in his junior year. But in the midst of all of these students, we are seeing a lack of the next judges, the next mayor's, governor's council members, representatives and senators who have to step up and help to create a better future for ourselves and those around us and that changes today. This lack of persistent leadership among young people is why it is important for me to get involved in issues such as voting rights and encouraging more youth as well to get involved with community restoration events. More youth should be involved in voting rights work because young people can contribute tremendously to democracy by voting, which is a vital act of civic participation. Voting is a great tool for young people to have our voices heard and to make a difference on issues that concern us in our communities. Our votes and those we influence the

1 vote can have a big impact and perhaps be decisive on
2 issues such as redistricting Louisiana now. Since
3 each state draws new redistricting line boundaries
4 every 10 years, my peers and people my age will have
5 to live with these new boundaries as we begin the
6 process of voting. When making these new boundaries,
7 the sad truth is, most legislators don't focus on our
8 communities of interest. This is one of the many
9 crucial reasons why I've come to make my voice heard
10 tonight. Along with this, in 2021, 33 restricted
11 voter laws were passed in various States across the
12 country, limiting options to vote and undermining
13 local election official's ability to mine elections.
14 For example, Georgia Law SB 202 criminalized handling
15 out water to voters standing in long lines. These are
16 all reasons why I'm here to demand fair maps for my
17 people and youth. This is an opportunity that will
18 help change voting in Louisiana for everyone.
19 Redistricting is so important because it can
20 determine which voters participate for which
21 congressman by the location of district lines.
22 Changing these boundaries will affect the relevant
23 voters as well as the district's representative's
24 identity and political priorities, as well as the
25 political representation as a whole. Something that

most voters see is not a majority priority could be a pivotal role in the transition of Louisiana into a better Louisiana for better youth like me. A transition into Louisiana with fair maps for all. There are many young leaders like myself studying and watching from afar, waiting to be given platforms like this to make our voices heard. And before you know it, we will be the same young men and women taking your spot one day leading and still making our voices and concerns heard and making things right. But we can't do it alone or through misguidance just as much as we are calling for more youth to stand together and use our voices about the problems in our communities, us as young people need to be able to instill our trust, our full trust in the officials we have now. And this is an opportunity for you guys to show us we can do it together. So, I urge you to consider today's youth and when redistricting Louisiana because you are contributing to changing our communities and youth lives for the next decade. Thank you.

[02:45:08]

CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: Thank you. Next, we have Mike McClanahan.

MIKE MCCLANAHAN: Good afternoon. Mike McClanahan. I represent the NAACP State Conference as well as the NAACP National Board represent Region 6. I'm glad to see that you all turned what products could have been a circus show into an informative town hall meeting. I know you all go around the state listening, and we hope that you all consider what the people that you are representing are saying. Ten years ago, probably some of you were probably never elected and probably switched parties or switched houses. The good thing about redistricting, they come around every 10 years, but it should be every five because people move, things change and so we need to be on top of that sooner than later. The other part to that is that we become complacent in whatever space we're in. We don't want to move. I've been to legislation, so I feel the power. And so, I'm going to compact my district so that nobody beats me. But I think the beauty of democratic society is that we like new blood to come in, give us new ideas, and so we can freely say that this is a true democracy. But when you pack a districts and you draw those funny looking districts where only a few can run and only those that are incompetent or those that drew the maps themselves win. Nobody like us win because we

1 don't see the benefit of having somebody we can't
2 take out. And so, I represent about 40 adult branches
3 and 18 youth in college chapters throughout the State
4 of Louisiana. And so, I hear man stuff is going to
5 stay the same. There is no need of going to those
6 shows and talking about change. But you are in a
7 unique position to bring about change. Louisiana has
8 always been ranked about talking about things that
9 are bad, right. And it's good to have Louisiana bring
10 to the top about what's good about it. I've been
11 around long enough to see how during the last couple
12 of legislative sessions that we passed some good
13 legislation because good people came together to make
14 it work. Black, white, democrat, republicans and
15 independence. We can do the same thing when we draw
16 these lines. I've been talking about re-apportionment
17 for about the last six years because I know what's
18 coming, so we want to get ahead of it. So, I have a
19 call every Monday night, I talked to my memberships
20 throughout the state about talk to your elected
21 officials from the school board, local municipalities
22 of what you think your area should look like, who
23 should represent you, should. That's part of the
24 democratic process. But then you have some
25 municipalities have town hall or to have meetings at

2:00 or 03:00 in the daytime when [INDISCERNIBLE 02:48:16] should be what? Working. Where do they do that at? So, it's incumbent for you all now to tell them listen, everybody should play a part in this process and so I have what we call the NAACP Legal Defense Fund on my side. And so we talk about -- well, if you're talking to the legislatures don't work and I tell them it's going to work because most of you all I know intimately, I know personally and you all are real good people but just in case it slips by and it never gets into you, right. I got something called the law on my side, and I like to tell people how to organize, mobilize, agitate and litigate. Literally, we have the best largest side of heaven and if I talked to you don't win out and I know it will. I'm from Louisiana from Zwolle. But if it doesn't work, I'm going to sue you. And I can tell you now when we sue? We win. I'm telling you do so, we've already got maps so you don't have to do the hard work. We've already done it for you. We've created a map for the whole state and I'm going to tell my team to give it to you so you don't have to have no more road shows. Go ahead and doctor maps and everybody be happy because we're one and when we do

it right, we do it right for the betterment of the people. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: Thank you, sir. Next, we have Taryn Branson.

TARYN BRANSON: Good evening to the Madam Chairwoman and Mr. Chairperson of these committees. So, it's ironic today that I stand before you because two years ago on this exact same day, I lost an election.

[02:50:06]

And I'm wondering if Representative McKnight is here because that's who won. And so where is he? And I want to put it on the record, was he here earlier, and I just missed him. So I wanted to be on the record that he's not here. So, the day that I ran for State Representative was two years ago today. And what I saw was that it was essentially impossible for anybody other than a Republican or a white person to win that district. This is my first time to run, and though I was blessed to make it to the run off in the election, looking back now, it makes sense. And I want to point out just a few points. Voters were energized and engaged in the voting process. They saw hope in me as a candidate and someone who could represent their interests as well as the interests of

1 others in the legislature. However, most importantly,
2 it showed that no matter how much you engage voters,
3 no matter how great the voter turnout may be,
4 nothing, absolutely nothing, can compete against a
5 map that is deliberately drawn to silence a group of
6 people. House District 68, which is the district that
7 I ran in, it has some interesting statistics. At the
8 time of the election, stats showed that the district
9 was 70% white, about 20% black, and the remaining
10 population was Asian, Hispanic, and those who were
11 racially diverse. And if you just said to yourself,
12 "why would you run in a district that is 70% white?"
13 I want you to understand that that really is part of
14 the question and part of the answer at the same time.
15 So when we look at this now, we say, well, it's not
16 about creating a district that's 70% black either,
17 because we understand that we tried separate but
18 equal, but that didn't work. And so, this is about
19 creating districts that are competitive. And by
20 creating districts that are competitive, we can
21 create accountability. We can create an opportunity
22 for all voices to be heard and considered in the
23 decision-making process. And so I'm an 80s baby
24 product of the 90s, really. And so I remember a time
25 in the legislature when there were really people who

1 cared about people in general, and there wasn't so
2 much division, but they messed around and allowed me
3 to get three degrees, and I have the student loan
4 debt to go with it. And now I stand before you asking
5 that there be fair map strong so that I can be
6 represented. I'm originally from West Monroe,
7 Louisiana, and my home city was placed under a
8 consent decree because there had never been a black
9 elected official in the entire history of West
10 Monroe, Louisiana. And so now I have been faced with
11 the fact that even as a little girl in West Monroe,
12 Louisiana, growing up, I went to Louisiana Tech for
13 undergrad. I went to ULM for grad school. I went to
14 the Southern University Law Center for law school.
15 And now being here in Baton Rouge in the district
16 that I decided to live in, I was once again faced
17 with the notion that I would not be represented and
18 enough is enough. And so creating fair maps is not
19 about simple ability because there is ability to do
20 so. It's really about willingness in this point. I
21 see your faces and some of you all I understand that
22 you really don't care about other people who aren't
23 voting for you. I get that. But we're asking you to
24 care about other people who really do need to be
25 represented. We know that there is crime rapid in all

kinds of places but you have the opportunity to vote in such a way that can help people, that can lift people out of poverty. Are you doing that? Because if not, then you're part of the problem. And so we're asking that you draw maps that allow people to have adequate representation to have the dollars that they need to go into their communities so that they can be supported. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: Thank you. Next we have Peter Robins-Brown.

PETER ROBINS-BROWN: Hey, all. Thanks for the time. So I started coming to the legislature working on various issues about five years ago. Something I've noticed over those five years is that it seems like each year the heat gets turned up a little bit. It's a little bit more contentious. Things can get really contentious, especially toward the end of the session.

[02:55:00]

At the same time, I've had the opportunity to get to know a lot of you personally. I know that you all are people of good will and good faith that you're all coming together to try to do right for the people you represent for the state as a whole. And so sometimes I have a hard time reconciling goes, right?

1 On the one hand, I see all these individuals, I know
2 that you're trying to do the right thing. On the
3 other hand, I see some of the stuff that, especially
4 if you're not in there day to day, can look like
5 people aren't trying to do the right thing and trying
6 to understand why does that happen. Same thing is we
7 see a lot of persistent problems in this state. We
8 often come in, we always talk about we come in sort
9 of at the bottom of the good list, top of the bad
10 list, yet we kind of keep trying to do a lot of the
11 same solutions to these same problems. And so those
12 are kind of two ideas that I often wonder, like, how
13 does that happen? Good people of goodwill coming
14 together can't seem to change some of these things
15 and often get very contentious. And I think one of
16 the reasons might be that so many of our seats in
17 this current map are so safe, they just lack
18 competitiveness. Of the 144 total seats that we have
19 in the legislature, you could argue that maybe six of
20 them are truly competitive between political parties.
21 Of those 144 seats in 2019, 52 of them were one
22 uncontested. And I think, again, a part of that is
23 that there's such a lack of competition that people
24 don't even feel like it's worth their time to run.
25 And so we end up in this situation where people of

goodwill might feel pulled to maybe an extreme at times, even if you don't realize it, you're just kind of incentivized implicitly to maybe move to one extreme or another. And I think that's maybe where some of that people of good will are coming together yet not being able to solve problems or maybe getting very heated with each other might come from. And so I think that as we look at redrawing these maps this time around. One thing I would just really like to urge you is maybe let's try to break that pattern. Competition as we always hear, especially when we talk about business and how we want to make more economic opportunity in this state, competition breeds innovation. I think something that we can really use in this state is some innovation, whether it's policy or relationships or approach to government. And so I would like to urge you all, as you go through this map making process to really try to emphasize competition. I think one of the ways we can do that specifically is by looking at cracking and packing not even so much just from the racial issue, which people have covered very substantially and I'm not going to go into that as much, but when we see districts that are 75%, 80%, 85% one race or another, but I think that's part of the way that we

do create these kind of very extreme seats. And so as we are looking at, how do we actually create more competition, one way would be to create a little bit more diversity within these districts and then create some more diversity in the body as a whole. And hopefully actually incentivize everybody to really try to come together and hopefully we don't see as much of this sort of bedraggled, red eyed, angry last week of every session that we often see or that I've seen more and more each time. Thank you for the time.

CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: Thank you. Next, we have Jacqueline Germany. I hope I said that last name right. I apologize.

JACQUELINE GERMANY: Good afternoon. My name is Jacqueline Germany and I am a lifelong Louisianan. I have lived in Louisiana at the Eden Park Community all of my life, but I stand here tonight to tell you that I'm sick and tired of being sick and tired. I'm sick and tired of being not fairly represented in Congress. I'm sick and tired of my congressmen overlooking my district when I ride around and look around in my community and see the broken-down community that should be something that should be done and can be done. We are a black community of black and brown and we are very proud. The

redistricing process is supposed to play a part to ensure that our voices are heard, listen to and ensure that our rights and responsibilities as are applicable by the Constitution of the United States are applied to each and every one of us, no matter who we are, no matter what we look like, no matter where we come from.

[03:00:00]

I'm represented by Denise Meisel. She takes care of my district. I worked with Senator Ted James. He works hard for the black community. I work with Senator Regina Belle. She works hard for our community. But I need all of you all to work hard for all of us in Louisiana. We need fair maps. We need maps that represent our community. When I look at Louisiana, I see that little small piece of pie that they built throughout at District II and gave each part which Parish a part of different congressional districts. There's something wrong with that. That should be a change. Back in 2000, we had seven representatives, eight representatives one time. We only have six. It's time for a change. It's time for fair maps. It's time for fair representation. It's time to make a difference. It's time to do something

and do something effective for Louisiana. Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: Thank you, ma'am. Next we have Angel Bradford.

ANGEL BRADFORD: All right. Hi, you all. I'm Angel, and I'm advocating for racial proportionality and competitiveness in our districts. This entire year, I was volunteering with the CR Club, and we were trying to get a meeting with congressional leaders. We started early back in January thinking we were getting ahead of the game. And the entire time, our congressional leaders avoided us across the entire state, and it was absolutely impossible to get a meeting. We never did, Build Back Better was a big conversation, the bipartisan infrastructure framework. And while we're grateful for the bipartisan infrastructure framework votes from Carter and [PH 03:02:27] Cassidy. Louisiana has missed yet another year to address the climate crisis because we've been marred in our noncompetitive districts. No leader has incentive to meet with us is a very important statement because we're missing very crucial moments to make change in the State of Louisiana. We're locked into a binary framework that does not encompass the spectrum of ideas, whether

Democrat or Republican. There are no leaders that represent my values fully. And we're losing out on thoughts and solutions and ideas and a diversity of those thoughts and solutions and ideas that go beyond race. And so tonight is really just the first step to have those conversations and come up with real solutions and to achieve a fully functional democracy. I also wanted to lift up that media doesn't have an incentive to cover the breadth of ideas, thoughts and solutions either. And because of that, the truth really never gets out in Louisiana. There are a limited set of media and newspapers and reporters. And if you're not locked into that binary framework, then the conversation is pretty lacking in nuance. And so I'm just asking you to hear everyone tonight and really invest your time in racial proportionality and competitiveness and understand that's only the first step in a long fight we have for the future of Louisiana. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: Thank you. Next we have Kaitlyn Joshua.

KAITLYN JOSHUA: Hi, I'm Kaitlyn Bradford Joshua. I'm going after my twin sister. I've been a resident of Ascension Parish for two years in East Baton Rouge Parish for 26 years. I'm here with my community

members and large coalitions. I urge you to keep my community together. My goal for this redistricting process is to ensure that the elected officials has fair and equitable maps that do not deflate my power in the election process. I must admit though I am super blessed as my community is rich in resources and economic opportunity, when comparing my surroundings and activities afforded to me, the lifestyle and lack of economic growth that my family is experiencing in various parts of Baton Rouge looks very different. I cannot help but feel that this is by design. Twenty-five, thirty years ago, the district within Baton Rouge were filled with promise equitable housing, folks made livable wages and were able to provide for their families and send their kids off to college.

[03:05:00]

On the weekends, my relatives enjoyed parks, road down street, smoothly paved, and frequent at local cafes and restaurants. This is no longer the reality for all of Baton Rouge. There are certain things that are important when deciding where to live and be are. As a mom to a super wild 3-year-old, my husband and I have [PH 03:05:21] soulless and knowing that at any given moment, when she has another accident or has

1 another injury, we're off to the nearest hospital.
2 There are actually three, technically four in our
3 area, making it convenient and easy. My grandparents,
4 aunts, uncles and cousins are not that fortunate. The
5 closest hospitals are somewhere between 10 to 15
6 miles. Grocery stores are scarce. In a state with so
7 many beautiful resources, natural farmers and
8 agriculturalists, that just doesn't seem normal. And
9 I know this is not due to my influence, but because
10 of redistricting 10 years ago. Our communities
11 deserve uniformity, so why split them up? Draw the
12 districts congruently and in a way that makes sense
13 to all of us so that we all can benefit and have
14 influence over our politicians. We need better
15 transit systems, more areas of walkability, better
16 roads and well-paying jobs. We need the redefining of
17 safety and wellbeing in our neighborhoods. We also
18 need more green spaces. Tonight is just the first
19 step in ensuring that the next 10 years are promising
20 for our children and ourselves. We cannot continue to
21 further the line of demarcation and continue the
22 cycle of systemic oppression and division in our dear
23 Baton Rouge. Redrawing the districts in a fair and
24 equitable manner gives folks a voice, a vote, a say
25 so in their future, and it's the best thing we can do

for them. We are calling on Baton Rouge and all legislators across the state to do their part and make this fair. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: Thank you. Next we have Robin Moulder.

ROBIN MOULDER: My name is Robin Moulder. I'm resident of Baton Rouge. Honorable legislators. You've heard many eloquent speakers. Oh, well, not me. I'll just start with that map that you showed us of the districts, all the different districts. You heard the KISS principle. Not one of them meets it. As an engineer, those are ugly, poorly designed maps. They should be community based, compact and logical. That's what pretty much everybody's been saying in elegant words. I'm telling you straight up, do it right. We're going to be watching you. And District II, if it walks like a duck, it talks like a duck, it's a gerrymander. Kill that beast. Make two districts. Make it logical. Make it community based. Think like an engineer. You'll hate yourself in the morning, but it'll look much better. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: Thank you, sir. Next we have Gary Chambers.

GARY CHAMBERS: Good evening. I think I have a unique perspective being one of the people who ran in

1 the Second Congressional district race earlier this
2 year. Ten Parishes, I went to all ten of them.
3 Assumption Parish has about this much of assumption
4 carved into the district about 10,000 votes. The
5 people of Assumption are not represented fairly. St.
6 James Parish is the only Parish that the entire
7 Parish is in the district. So if you live in Baton
8 Rouge and you're black you have to negotiate with
9 people who grew up in New Orleans, and New Orleans
10 once a seat. It has been beneficial for the City of
11 New Orleans and I understand it. But what's unfair is
12 taxation without representation. That's something
13 each of you up here should understand. And Ms.
14 Fryberg, Ms. Hewitt, some of you others would never
15 represent a district or live in a community where
16 nobody who represents you looks like you, thinks like
17 you, or votes like you. Yet every time these ten-year
18 maps roll around black folk get screwed. It's
19 unfortunate and it's really unAmerican. I would
20 challenge you all to lookup Ronald Reagan's comments
21 about redistricting. He said that it was unAmerican
22 what was happening with the maps in the country and
23 that it was a disadvantage to democracy. Everybody
24 loved Ronald Reagan in the Republican party. He's the
25 standard bearer. I won't quote President Obama

because I know his name offends some of you. So I gave you somebody that you like, that you look up to, that you understand and respect.

[03:10:00]

What that means is that little kids who live in the second Congressional District don't have something body in D.C. When you live in some of these other Parishes, that really speaks for them, that really understands where they grew up. Some of our differences are not just based on race. Some of it's cultural. We grew up in different communities. We were raised a different way. We were taught different. If you live in Central Louisiana, you might talk like this. If you live in New Orleans, you might talk like that. You live in North Louisiana; you might sound like you're from Arkansas. It's a little bit of all of it, right? But that's because culturally we live in different communities and we should be able to be represented by people who understand our culture, who share our flavor, who have our ideas and our values, and then they go vote those values. Gary Graves represents much of Baton Rouge. He does not vote the values of Baton Rouge. That is an unfortunate thing for the people who live in this community. That is an unfortunate thing for

the people of Ascension, St. John, Iberville, West Baton Rouge. Now, you're going to do what you want to do at the end of the day. But when you get to those dates, because we all love to talk about Jesus and how much we love him and how much he saved us all, but will he agree with how you truly treated your neighbor when you cast your vote on these maps? Do good and seek justice, help the widow, the orphan, the oppressed and the poor as they are 1 in 17. I live by those words and I intentionally didn't put a suit and tie on and came in a shirt that said love is an action word. If you say you love people of this state, if you say you want to represent all the people, being colorblind is not it. See my color, recognize my difference, appreciate that, and then give us maps where we can send people there who represent us, who share our values. We don't send you there to vote your conscious. We send you there to vote our will. And it is our will to have fair maps in this state. Louisiana is 35% black. If the roads were reversed and the state was 35% white and black folks were the majority. And every time we got to draw the maps, we decided little old Assumption Parish, these 10,000 black people are going to dump them in the map too, because we're just stacking

black folks. So we can get a map that makes sure we got control in Congress. And here's the thing, your Congress members are failing you. We rank 50 in the nation, guys. Number 50, dead last. That means some of the stuff we're doing, no matter how much ideology you have, it isn't turning into results for people and that's your job. It's not to go and carry the banner of a party. Let's be honest. The Democratic party isn't crazy about me. All right? So I'm not here to carry a banner of a party. I'm here to carry a message of people that we want you to do your job and do just by all the citizens of this state. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: Thank you. Next, we have Elijah Crawford.

ELIJAH CRAWFORD: Good evening. Thank you for your time. I'm Elijah Crawford. I'm a senior here at Southern University studying political science. I'm also a Louisiana progress college fellow. I'm going to be pretty concise. A lot of people already hit the points that I wanted to make. Although I am from Portland, Oregon, I've lived here in Baton Rouge and East Baton Rouge, Parish for the past four years. And I understand that there are six congressional districts, and of those six, only one of the

representatives is black. As Gary Chambers just stated 35% of the state is black. My message is pretty simple. I think with this information alone, the only approach to take when you guys do go redraw lines in February is to one seek racial proportionality in doing so, by creating a second congressional district and also to create districts that allow for competitiveness among parties. Right? So, the representatives have to actually engage with their communities and actually earn their vote. Again, thank you for your time.

CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: Next, we have Frankie Robertson.

[03:15:00]

FRANKIE ROBERTSON: Hi. Good evening. My name is Frankie Robertson, and I am founder and President of the Amanda Group. It's a social justice consulting firm focusing on addressing the social and political determinants of health that impact the overall health of black and brown birthing people. I just wanted to just share oftentimes in representing my maternal child health clients and agencies that I work with, there are oftentimes conversations when we're meeting with legislators, policy makers and the general community and there are a lot of questions about

1 what's impacting the overall health of black women
2 and why the maternal mortality or maternal death
3 rates are so high in our state. Why black women have
4 negative birth outcomes in our state and brown women
5 as well? Well, I just want to be able to connect the
6 dots about social injustices, the social determinants
7 of health and the political determinants of health
8 that are wearing on the overall health of black and
9 brown birthing people. So when we are having meetings
10 with policymakers and there is genuine interest about
11 why black women are having disproportionate health
12 outcomes in our state, and the question is always
13 asked with a tremendous amount of bewilderment. Why?
14 This is one example of that, why. It's the systems
15 and the policies and the infrastructure that's in
16 place that are creating inequitable outcomes that are
17 bearing on the shoulders of black women who then are
18 of child bearing age to give birth. So they may not
19 necessarily seem like a direct connection
20 immediately, but I want to draw that connection for
21 you. What you are about to embark upon and what
22 you've already began to embark upon withdrawing
23 equitable maps across our state. Those types of
24 actions impact the overall lives of the constituency.
25 So the resources are important to be allocated

1 equitably, and that is in turn, impacting families
2 overall health of people in our community. So thank
3 you for your thoughtfulness that you will provide in
4 this process. And please remember the people who are
5 impacted day to day by the choices that you will make
6 over the next few months. Thank you.
7 CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: Thank you. Next, we have
8 Davante Lewis.
9 DAVANTE LEWIS: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman.
10 Madam Chairman, Madam Chairwoman, excuse me. Davante
11 Lewis, representing the Louisiana Budget Project. We
12 really want to speak on why equity is important in
13 redistricting. As we've heard multiple comments, and
14 I'm not going to repeat them about the fairness of
15 our state. We have to include race in those
16 conversations and have lines that adequately
17 represent the population of our state. And so, we've
18 supported that we've signed on to the letter that
19 many of you have seen. I know Madam Chairman and Mr.
20 Chairman, we have sent those to you about what we
21 believe in our congressional maps. And so, I'm not
22 going to belabor that point, but I am going to talk
23 personally because I call myself a border resident. I
24 live here in Baton Rouge in the Garden District.
25 First time homeowner bought it about a year ago. And

so enjoyed my first Halloween with my neighbors with children trick or treating. And as we were discussing and we were talking about elections, I live on South 18th Street, which starts what is known as Old South or South Baton Rouge right off the park. But my neighbor right across the street, as we were talking, realized that we live in a different PSE district. We live in a different BESE district, and we live in a different congressional district. Even though we share the same power grid, we share the same school board member, the same state representative, the same state senator. We are in the same neighborhood association. But because I live on the side of the city that starts where majority residents are black. I am grouped in with New Orleans in my PSE and in my congressional district. So I'm a border representative. I understand exactly the effects of what racial gerrymandering does because my community, my neighborhood cannot speak as one voice because we were divided up based off of our race. And so what I ask for you to do is considering when you are making these districts. Don't separate our communities. As we have grown, we are diverse, different ages, multiple first-time homeowners. We have a lot of LSU students who live in our area, retirees, state

employees, capital employees. But the lines fit racially to keep us separated and segregated. And so in this redistricting process, I want you to consider someone like me who you see at the capital every day about how these lines affect our communities and affect who we get to have our voice. So, like I said, I'm here in Baton Rouge. You see me at the capital. I live here, but I have to talk to the same member of Congress that Representative Duplessis does. When I visit at his office in his legislative district to talk about policy. We share the same congressional district. And I just don't think that is fair, that is right or that is just.

[03:20:00]

And we have an obligation to do what is just. And that means equal, fair and equitable representation. I hope you consider that in the redistricting session. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: Thank you. We also have some comments that were submitted who would like to just like to have me read them. This one is from Pat [PH 03:20:24] Leduff. One third of six equals two. Do not separate Scotlandville when drawing your lines, airline 190 to Thomas Road should remain in one district. Follow the numbers. Another written comment

1 from Carlton Jones. In a state where one third of the
2 population is black and they're increasing
3 populations of color, we must draw districts that
4 reflect our population and give all communities the
5 opportunity to elect people that will represent their
6 interests. Drawing fair and equitable maps that
7 return power to minority communities it has been
8 taken from -- it's not a radical act, but is a
9 necessary step towards creating a fair Louisiana. And
10 our last one from Yolanda Martin Singleton. I fully
11 support a map that will add another majority minority
12 congressional district and allow minority voters to
13 elect the minority member of their choice to
14 Congress. We have also had some written submittals.
15 One from Charlie East Jr., one from Ashley White in
16 the Bail Project, one from Catherine Gray, one from
17 Chris Kaiser in ACLU, one from Danny Wilson, one from
18 Gregory and Pamela Baldwin, one from Kathleen Parker,
19 one from Emily Hargest, one from Holly Liner, one
20 from Paul Landry, one from Samuel Smith and one from
21 Elvin Pradia in the Iberia Parish School Board. Those
22 will all be put into the record and can be found on
23 the website. A copy of this can be found on the
24 website, the redistricting plan all of that can be
25 found on the website, that concludes our meeting

1 today. I thank you all for coming out. This is an
2 extremely important part of the process. So thank you
3 for being here. Thank you for your testimony. There
4 is a motion from Chairwoman Hewitt to adjourn without
5 objection.
6 [BACKGROUND NOISE]
7 [03:22:28]
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I, Anders Nelson, hereby certify that the document "F865554-louisiana-redistricting-2021-baton-rouge" is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, a true and accurate transcription from English to English.

Anders Nelson
Project Manager

April 27, 2022