CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: I'm going to call the Committee on House and Governmental Affairs to order. Today is Monday, February 7. We will go out and ask anyone who wish to give testimony today, please fill out a card, green support, red in opposition, white for information only. Additionally, I would ask that you please silence all your cellphones so that we don't disturb anyone while we're conducting business today. With that said, we will go to Ms. Ammersbach for the roll.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: Chairman Stefanski?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Present.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: Present. Vice Chairman Duplessis?

VICE CHAIRMAN ROYCE DUPLESSIS: Present.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: Present. Representative Beaullieu?

REPRESENTATIVE GERALD "BEAU" BEAULLIEU IV: Present.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: Present. Representative Carter?

REPRESENTATIVE WILFORD CARTER, SR: Present.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: Present. Representative Deshotel?

REPRESENTATIVE DARYL ANDREW DESHOTEL: Present.

Hearing Exhibit
PR-58
3:22-cv-00211-SDD-RLB

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: Present. Representative Farnum?

REPRESENTATIVE LES FARNUM: Present.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: Present. Representative Gadberry?

REPRESENTATIVE FOY BRYAN GADBERRY: Present

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: Present. Representative Hodges? Representative Horton?

REPRESENTATIVE DODIE HORTON: Here.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: Present. Representative Ivey?

REPRESENTATIVE BARRY IVEY: Here.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: Present. Representative Jenkins?

REPRESENTATIVE SAM JENKINS: Present.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: Present. Representative Mike Johnson?

REPRESENTATIVE MIKE JOHNSON: Present.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: Present. Representative LaCombe?

REPRESENTATIVE JEREMY LACOMBE: Present.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: Present. Representative Lyons?

REPRESENTATIVE RODNEY LYONS: Present.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: Present. Representative Magee?

REPRESENTATIVE TANNER MAGEE: Present.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: Present. Representative Newell?

REPRESENTATIVE CANDACE NEWELL: Present.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: Present. Representative Thomas? Present. Representative White? The House says 16 members.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: 16 members in a quorum. First up on the agenda is House Bill 11. Vice Chair Duplessis, with your pleasure.

VICE CHAIRMAN ROYCE DUPLESSIS: Thank you Mr. Chairman. At this time I'm going to move to voluntarily defer the bill. I want to acknowledge that I realized members have maybe spent some time studying and taking a look at this bill. I believe that there's still some work to be done. At this time, I will ask that we're going to voluntarily defer.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Any objection to voluntarily deferring House Bill 11? Seeing no objection House Bill 11 is voluntarily deferred. Next up, we have House Bills 14 by Speaker Schexnayder. Pro tem in the chair.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: All right. Good morning Mr. Speaker. Please proceed with your bill.

REPRESENTATIVE CLAY SCHEXNAYDER: I'm on now. All right. Good morning committee. Thank you all for allowing me to come in and make some opening statements about the bill. I think you all know amongst all of you and even house members that a lot of work has went into this bill. I think John and staff and myself has done an excellent job of meeting with each and every one of you all who are willing to come, not just one time, not just two times, multiple times on getting this bill into the posture that is sitting in today. I think we still have some work to do on it and that's how we process around here and I think moving forward from here and getting this bill out onto the floor I think is the next step and from there, I think we will have a bill that Louisiana can be proud of and each of you can be proud of. So, with that, I will turn it over to Chairman Stefanski and I will let him go into detail on how we got to where we are today.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Absolutely. Thankyou Mr. Speaker. So members, as you know this has been a long process trying to draw 105 districts to satisfy this body is an incredibly, incredibly difficult

task. And this really started for me January of 2021 when shortly after I was appointed to this position, started meeting with each member individually. I actually met with every single member of the house and as we've had some changes over the last few years, I've met with some of our new members as well. So I've had the opportunity to meet with every single member of this house since this process started that led into the roadshow along with committee of my fellow committee members. We traveled the state, we heard from everyone across the state in an effort to understand what these regions needed, what the population wanted. We went from all the way from Monroe, we went to Shreveport, we went to Alexandria, we went to Lake Charles, we went to Lafayette, we went to Thibodaux, we went to New Orleans, we went to the Northshore, we traveled all over and we heard and then finally, I called many of you back as a regional delegation. We talked about from a region what we were seeing, we talked about the changes that have to be made and we had those conversations as groups as well. Finally our roadshow finishes and I'd start calling you and again, you know I've had several meetings with members multiple times after that to talk again now that the roadshow is over.

[00:05:05]

Let's start looking at some proposals which the districts could look like. And then even after that over these past week and a half, over these past two weeks you know I've invited many of you, made the offer to several people to come look at our proposal, give me your last thoughts on that. Ultimately, culminating in what you see before you today and what I'll present to you today is, look it's a lot of hard work and it's a lot of effort to make sure that every house district is within the acceptable range, also keeping in mind the geography of the state, our communities of interest and the law. And I believe the map before you reflects the state in compliance with the law. With that said, I am happy to answer any specific questions about this map. I'm happy to talk about any district. I'm happy to talk about any region. I'm happy to talk about any process that went into this.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Thank you Mr. Chairman. I heard your comments and I wanted to ask you a couple of questions. You say you met with 100, but did you ever tell any member that they could not commit with you?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: No.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Regardless of party?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Regardless of party.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Did you give equal opportunity to Democrats, Republicans, whatever caucus they were to meet with you?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Exactly. Yeah,. I mean we individually invited every member personally and then had several opportunities where I would send emails to the body and say I'll be in the office all day today, anybody who wants to come see me come over. I really took a members-based approach on this map and what I mean by that is I tried to think about each and every one of you, I tried to talk to you about what the course of your district were and what was best for your region and the people in those regions and try to draw a map that accomplish that.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: And to the point, maybe a very difficult question, when members of the minority party came to you and gave you input, did you take it?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Absolutely.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: So you made changes off the original map based off of their input?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: A hundred percent.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: So it wasn't just about a cursory meeting, you actually listened?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Yes.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: And you actually did as best you could incorporate what they thought was best for those districts into your map?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Absolutely yeah and that goes for every member regardless of what party you feel you're affiliated with or what region you come from or what or any race you identify with. I tried to treat everyone equally and fairly through this process.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: And just because I am representative from Terrebonne and Lafourche Parish and then after your map just a representative of Terrebonne Parish, when I sat down with you and our map I think there's a lot of conversation about self-preservation but when I worked with you, we actually moved the district away from my house, isn't that correct?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Yeah, I got to admit, you took a not self-centered approach when you were looking at your region. I would agree with that.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: And I tried to connect the communities of interest that were actually not

connected and connect them together. Isn't that correct?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Exactly. Under the old map, you saw that some neighborhoods were split and you made suggestions to me about the way we could unify some of these communities and regions and just also make a map look more geographically correct in your region.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: And we didn't know at the time but the map that we drew in my region ended up looking a lot like the Fair Districts map that was released after you and I met. Isn't that correct?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: I believe that's correct. Yeah, looking at that map and looking at the suggestions that were made for your region, it was very close to what we came up with based on talking to the representatives in that region.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: So it's fair to say that just because you involved the input of members, it didn't mean necessarily that these things were gerrymandered. It was you just getting a sense of how's the best to draw maps in the community because they do know it.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Well, I mean, I think look, all of you have an intimate knowledge of where

you come from, all of you have an intimate knowledge of what's best for the people in your region and so I tried to look to the members to tell me whether or not this works for them or not because I may have an idea of what looks great and maybe it makes a pretty picture on paper but if it doesn't work for you all, I need to hear that from you and I tried to do my best to make those adjustments when you came to me. But also, I tell you members throughout this map, I tried what we heard on the roadshow one thing a lot was that geographically, a lot of these things look like they look. And so I always have that in the back of my mind and maybe I didn't accomplish that in every area of the state but I really did try to geographically make changes that people in the state would go that make sense, that fits what we normally look at as a community of interest and a traditionally geographical alignment.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: But your goal to talk to these members was not just for them to say I want this little piece is for you to create a map that represent the community of interest and you're gathering their input and consideration, right?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Yeah, look I mean what a member specifically wants some times is not maybe

not the best for the region and I think it's a balance. It is. You have to balance what the members want and you have to balance what you heard in that region and try to come up with something that works for the state and maybe I didn't make every member happy, maybe I didn't make every region happy but I got to be honest I do not think I could have put any more time and it's been a lot.

[00:10:15]

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Now when you were drawing these maps, were you talking to any outside groups about what the map should look like?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: I heard from everyone. Look, we had many submittals. We had a couple of submittals on the house but I mea, no more is that more evident than just a roadshow and traveling the state and hearing from the communities about what they wanted their region to look like, but no, I took every single piece of paper that was submitted, I read every map that was submitted are viewed and I used all of that information to try to come up with something that works for the state.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: And when you're doing that, who is in the room with you?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Staff.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Anybody else besides staff and members?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: No. No. I mean look, this is a process where this really is my baby for lack of a better term. Staff and I got together, we grinded it out and we came up with this and this is based on you and based on what the members have told me, based on what the citizens have told me in the state and based on all of the information that's been submitted. It's really a combination of all these things.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Thank you Mr. Chairman. I'm going turn the mic over to Representative Ivey.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Absolutely.

REPRESENTATIVE BARRY IVEY: Thank you Mr. Pro Tem. Chairman Stefanski, I personally want to thank you for really taking up the mantle on this issue and delivering what I believe is with the time permitted and all the other constraints we've had and the efforts you put in is a really commendable map. Obviously, every member isn't going to be 100 percent happy with every little things, some members may be less so than others, but I know it is a work in progress and you'll continue to work with everyone to

1 try to refine that and make it as best as possible.
2 Mr. Pro Tem hit on a few other things but just for
3 clarification, did any political organization or
4 other special interest group assist you in the
5 development of this map?
6 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: No. This was totally
7 staff in-house exercise.
8 REPRESENTATIVE BARRY IVEY: In-house?
9 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: In-house.
10 REPRESENTATIVE BARRY IVEY: Okay. And with
11 respect to the process which I believe is a critical
12 part of how we can demonstrate the integrity that
13 went in to creating the map, it's to understand the
14 process that you went through in making some of the
15 decisions of the hierarchy and all and obviously we
16 passed the joint resolution that was clearly the
17 guide, but how did you ensure that communities of
18 interest remain intact and whenever you needed to
19 have to make a split somewhere because sometimes you
20 just got to draw a line. How did you go through the
21 decision process?
22 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Yeah look, by no means
23 say this is a perfect example of every community of
24 interest in the state. There were times where we did
25 have to split some municipalities where it just make

the population work because the overriding thing with all of this is, it is the law and the law says we have to make these districts get close to that ideal number within that range of the ideal number and so sometimes you couldn't respect as closely as you wanted to a community of interest but I tried my best to keep municipalities all together, to keep parishes as much you can a lot of those things and how was that done? It was done you know it is. Let's talk about its meeting with the members, going on the roadshow, hearing from the communities, look at the public submittals and then you, the members, have an opportunity to comment on my first attempt and hey, this doesn't really work for me. It would be nice if all of this area was together because we have a common linkage and if it was possible, I tried to accommodate the members because at the end of the day, I believe the members from those regions know their area better than anyone else.

REPRESENTATIVE BARRY IVEY: And that was evident from my traveling with you on the roadshow. Outside of the East Baton Rouge Parish area, my knowledge of the communities and each of the other members district just falls off the table and you were able to obviously participate directly in this

1 conversation so I trust that your judgment in balance
2 and I appreciate those efforts. You did mention to me
3 personally and I'd like you to kind of express the
4 extent that some of this had some impact on the
5 decisions with regard to how some of the local
6 precincts were drawn and some of the challenges that
7 created because you--
8 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Okay. There are some
9 areas of the state where I'm still having ongoing
10 conversations because the parishes, a lot of people
11 don't understand the parishes create their precincts.
12 Okay now that has to be, the state has the approval
13 but they create them and from ten years ago when you
14 make dramatic shifts in the way that you draw these
15 precincts, it really has a, in my opinion damaging
16 effect on the locals especially when you're dealing
17 with minority districts and we are trying to make
18 sure that the population is consisted enough to allow
19 an election of a candidate of choice.
20 [00:15:08]
21 And when that happens and you cannot draw these
22 districts that have to be contiguous because they
23 have shifted these precincts. It is incredibly,
24 incredibly difficult. I'll tell you just specifically
25 in the St. Martin Iberia area, it is extremely

difficult to make those districts work with the way they draw the precincts.

REPRESENTATIVE BARRY IVEY: And so what did they do? They make the precincts larger or?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: They combined a lot of the time. They combined you know, let's say smaller precincts that had maybe a high minority population in it, now or now combined with a much larger geographic area that dilutes that population somewhat which makes it very difficult when you're trying to make sure that a minority district is given an opportunity to elect a candidate of its choice. And so in specific and look, it's not just limited to those two areas. We saw precinct shifts throughout the state but I really would if any local government ask me any advice I could give it would be very, very deliberate and studious about the way you change your precincts because it could affect your representation in the years going forward.

REPRESENTATIVE BARRY IVEY: All right. How many split precincts do we have on the map right now?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: None.

REPRESENTATIVE BARRY IVEY: None. And again, per our conversation, have we ever had a split precinct on the house map that you're aware of?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: To my knowledge, the house has never produced a map that became law that had a split precinct and that was a goal of mine as well. It was very easy in some areas especially with the member request to try to split some precincts to better accommodate them and I have resisted that and I'm going to continue to resist it because I do not want to be the first person that ever split a precinct in the House of Representatives.

REPRESENTATIVE BARRY IVEY: And for the public's benefit, could you explain like what happens when you split a precinct just from the electoral process?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Well it can be confusing to the locals. If you split a precinct and you traditionally always vote in a precinct but now you're in two house districts, you can see how that's confusing to a local understanding who they get to vote for and where they vote. And so, that's one of the reasons you know, I didn't want to do it but the other is I'm a big tradition you know, a tradition person. I think we've done things away for a long time and if it has worked and it's effective. There's usually a reason why we did these things and so when staff tells me, hey we've never split a precinct before, that's always in the back of my mind about,

there's probably a reason we've never done that before.

REPRESENTATIVE BARRY IVEY: Sure. Do you feel that while some of these precinct issues have been very challenging, have they been insurmountable in your opinion as far as being able to draw in those areas a map that is a representative of the communities.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Yes. It makes a very difficult. It does. And specifically in a couple of areas that I mentioned, insurmountable is a word I don't like to use because I think you know.

REPRESENTATIVE BARRY IVEY: Have you been able to overcome it in your opinion?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: I think so. I think we have. I think there's some tweaks that maybe we can continue to make and I'm going to continue to look at those but I like said, I believe this bill is a really good effort to accommodate the members, our geography, the communities of interest throughout the state.

REPRESENTATIVE BARRY IVEY: Okay. And how many majority-minority districts do we currently have?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Under our current map or under the one that's being --

REPRESENTATIVE BARRY IVEY: Under the current map.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: 29.

REPRESENTATIVE BARRY IVEY: 29 and how about how many we have on the map you proposed?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: 29.

REPRESENTATIVE BARRY IVEY: Okay. So no loss in that. Okay. Thank you very much and Mr. Chair.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Thank you Representative Ivey. And I do want to build on something that Representative Ivey brought up. When I met with you about my district, I actually talked to you about increasing minority representation in my district, isn't that correct?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Yes sir.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Because I want them to have a better voice in my district for next time going forward, isn't that correct?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Yes sir.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: And the problem we ran into and the reason why we couldn't do it was because the precincts as they were drawn by the parishes I could not, every precinct I added I had to give on up. It kept the same minority balance no matter what I did.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Yeah and we are ultimately limited by the way that the parish has choose to draw their precincts especially when the demographics are not one-sided or the other and they're mixed or they're heavily one way, that ultimately limits our ability to be able to affect these districts.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: That's probably why the ACLU map has about roughly the same amount of minority representation than your map does in my area. Isn't that correct?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: It probably does, yeah.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: All right. Thank you. Representative Duplessis has a question for you.

[BACKGROUND CONVERSATION]

REPRESENTATIVE ROYCE DUPLESSIS: It's okay. That's fine.

TRICIA: Are you sure?

REPRESENTATIVE ROYCE DUPLESSIS: It is. Unless you want to put it.

TRICIA: Yeah. Now.

REPRESENTATIVE ROYCE DUPLESSIS: Okay.

TRICIA: Let's see. Start looking.

REPRESENTATIVE ROYCE DUPLESSIS: Sorry Tricia is assisting me with finding some of the website. Thank you. Good morning Chairman.

[00:20:00]

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Good morning.

REPRESENTATIVE ROYCE DUPLESSIS: I want to just publicly acknowledge the incredible amount of time and work you have put in on this effort. It's been pretty, pretty incredible to watch because I know you've met with every member. I know you've met with staff, you practically lived at the capital.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: I appreciate that. Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE ROYCE DUPLESSIS: I would come on days and I think it was around the holidays, you were literally the only truck, I can see your truck in the parking lot. So I know you've put in an incredible amount of time, extraordinary amount of time.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: It's been a grind yeah, it's been a grind.

REPRESENTATIVE ROYCE DUPLESSIS: I guess what I'd like to do is just kind of talk big picture first and this effort I think has already been pointed out because we have certain limitations landlocked we can't go certain directions. We're only working with

the census numbers that we have. Can you just point out for the committee and for the public what you think are the biggest changes in this map?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: So for me the biggest changes is you know, early on we noticed a tremendous loss in population in North Louisiana. Tremendous. And so the best way in my opinion to accommodate that loss was to actually take a district and move it and so the decision was made to move House District 23 down to South Louisiana. Then when I looked for a place that was an optimal area to put it, it became pretty clear that the growth in Orleans was so significant that it really didn't justify moving a district there. And so that's what we did. We moved it. We have the ability to create a new majority-minority district there in New Orleans with House District 23 and so for me, that's one of the biggest shifts that we've seen here that the map to kind of answer your question yeah.

REPRESENTATIVE ROYCE DUPLESSIS: Okay. And I'm sure making that decision was not an easy one. So can you just talk us through how decisions like that get made? I know we have some criteria that we look at, but I'm just wondering how the decision was made to get to that point. We knew of district from Northern

1 Louisiana had to be moved based on population loss.
2 How do we get to House District 23?
3 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: So that was the most
4 difficult decision I had to make and still the most
5 difficult decision. Trying to decide what district
6 you're going to pick up and move has a dramatic
7 effect on the entire region and then has a dramatic
8 effect on the place that you're going to put it. And
9 so, that by far was the most difficult decision. Like
10 I said, let's talk about it where approximately if
11 you took like Central Louisiana, you went north
12 56,000 people short of house district. So, house
13 district the ideal population 44,359, you can do a
14 map on that. It became pretty evident that moving a
15 district was the choice. I called everyone in in
16 regional meetings. Many of you attended those
17 regional meetings for your area and we talked about
18 the realities of the numbers and what should we do?
19 And overwhelmingly, all the members told me please
20 look to a term limited member if you have to move
21 one, please don't take somebody who wants to come
22 back, okay? And so that, look obviously I listened to
23 the fellow members you're going to have to vote on
24 this map. There's only four term limited members in
25 all of North Louisiana if you consider Central

1 Louisiana okay. Out of those four term-limited
2 members, House District 23 had by far the least
3 amount of population there and so with all of that
4 said, with looking at that, the decision was made to
5 go ahead and choose that district to move it down in
6 New Orleans.
7 REPRESENTATIVE ROYCE DUPLESSIS: Okay. Based on
8 the population loss.
9 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Yes.
10 REPRESENTATIVE ROYCE DUPLESSIS: What other
11 factors considered outside of just who is term
12 limited and population loss, things like the fact
13 that Louisiana, we went on a roadshow you and I
14 together pretty much every city and we learned based
15 on the census data that Louisiana has had an increase
16 in African-American in terms of our percentages and
17 our ratio and a decrease in white population. Was
18 that a factor considered? Also was it also considered
19 that despite House District 23 having the most loss,
20 it was also a district that was originally in the 29
21 of majority-minority seats not just for purpose of
22 having a black candidate but there is a population of
23 black voters there, of black residents that have an
24 opportunity to select a candidate of choice. Was that
25 taken into consideration?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Yeah. So let's talk about that. So, number one, I answer your question yes. I considered everything. I considered all of the elements that you were talking about in formulating this decision. So if we really want to talk about HD 23, I think you know, some of the best evidence we have is maybe your bill and Representative Jenkins' bill. Both of you attempted to draw a house map, both of you presented one and looking at those two bills--

REPRESENTATIVE ROYCE DUPLESSIS: I haven't presented mine.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Well, it's been filed.

REPRESENTATIVE ROYCE DUPLESSIS: But I haven't presented it.

[00:25:01]

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: So the BVAP in your bill drew House District 23 at only 52% and I will tell you that there is a strong question about whether or not a minority candidate of choice can be selected in that region with that BVAP. Representative Jenkins, who has also filed a bill, drew House District 23 at only 50% BVAP. Again, a strong question of whether or not a candidate of choice can be selected with that type of BVAP in the area. That was taken into consideration as well. The

other thing that was taken into consideration was the ability to draw a majority-minority district down in Orleans to, I don't want to say offset, but in an ability to be able to draw a compact district that also, in my opinion, will allow the minority community to elect a candidate of his choice in another part of the state was something that was taken into consideration as well with that move.

VICE CHAIRMAN ROYCE DUPLESSIS: Okay, but if I'm not mistaken, the proposed district in Orleans, their BVAP is just 52% there as well.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Exactly, it is. However, I believe that the voting analysis will show white crossover voting in that area, which will allow the candidate of choice by the minority community to elect.

VICE CHAIRMAN ROYCE DUPLESSIS: But don't we already have evidence given we have a member who serves in the body right now who has shown he can be elected with that voting age percentage, that voting age population percentage of being somewhere between 51% and 52%? Don't we have an example of that right now given who currently represents House District 23?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: I would point to two things. I'll point to the fact that 10 years ago,

that BVAP was higher than in my ability the community may allow for now. And then two things, he was a returning member which throws a different element in that as well. And so, I would counter that by saying those two things.

VICE CHAIRMAN ROYCE DUPLESSIS: Okay. Just sort of following up regarding the question of keeping things the same, no retrogression. Are you of the belief that the current makeup of the House adequately represents the State of Louisiana given that we have 33% of our state who identifies as African-American? Do you believe that we are adequately represented with just 29 House seats?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: The entire state?

VICE CHAIRMAN ROYCE DUPLESSIS: Yes. In our House of Representatives.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: I believe that, you know, 10 years ago, look, 10 years ago, someone was tasked with the same thing that I have to do today and he took into mind the geography of the state, the communities of interest and the population. And they formulated a map that has produced our current makeup today. Okay? I have tried to do the same exact thing. I think, you know, it is difficult to draw a map that

1 mandates, you know, what everyone would see as the
2 appropriate representation.
3 VICE CHAIRMAN ROYCE DUPLESSIS: So, respectfully,
4 respectfully, I disagree with that. My only question
5 -- my question is not whether or not it's easy or
6 whether it's hard. My question is, do you believe
7 that we are currently adequately represented?
8 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: I think from a regional
9 perspective, in Louisiana, I believe these regions
10 have proper representation based on the population
11 that they have and the people that make up that
12 population.
13 VICE CHAIRMAN ROYCE DUPLESSIS: Okay. So
14 basically, keeping things the same is enough. We
15 shouldn't be working to try to get the statehouse
16 more proportional with the racial makeup of the
17 state.
18 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Look, if you want to
19 take what I have done and my proposal to this map,
20 you know, we haven't discussed the second element of
21 this is which is I've created a new majority-minority
22 district in East Baton Rouge Parish as well as part
23 of this process. And so, an effort was made where I
24 could see where it would be compact and effective, or
25 rather where we'd be compact and the ability for the

minority community to elect the candidate of their choice. I tried my best to be able to accommodate that. If you're asking me, I'm not going to tell you, you know, basically do I think, overall, do we have the appropriate amount of representation? That's a community's abilities to elect someone, and that's a very difficult question. You may go to one community and they believe they have the perfect person representing them, you know, and you may go to another and they don't believe they're being fairly represented. So I think that's a very difficult question to just tell you yes or no. And, in my opinion, it's just not that simple.

VICE CHAIRMAN ROYCE DUPLESSIS: Thank you for bringing up the part about the potential new area that was created, because I think that highlights and it shows that we can go further if we were to move forward with your proposed map, but not take away House District 23 from where it currently is and create an additional majority-minority seat in the proposed area. I think that's House District 62, I want to say. I think that's the area.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Correct.

[00:30:00]

1 VICE CHAIRMAN ROYCE DUPLESSIS: It goes down into
2 Baker, Louisiana, kind of Zachary area. It does
3 combine urban and rural, you know, when you talk
4 about trying to keep communities consistent. I think
5 you and Rep Magee talked about that earlier. I don't
6 know if that new district really fits that equation,
7 but it is a possible majority-minority seat and I do
8 want to acknowledge that that is a good thing in my
9 opinion because it makes the House map more
10 reflective of the state. But I guess I just want to
11 go back to the question of House District 23 in that
12 we had more than one option. We had more than one
13 option and given population loss, as I understand it,
14 Caddo Parish lost 17,000 people. They lost the most
15 in the state and I don't think any other area place
16 was close. I do recognize that House District 23 had
17 the most lost amongst the four term-limited house
18 members that were north of Central Louisiana, but I
19 don't think it's been clearly explained why that one
20 district given the fact that it is a minority seat,
21 given the fact that the current House of
22 Representatives is not made up of 33% majority-
23 minority seats, why we should be doing the least and
24 going just basically doing a swap from one area to
25 another when we have the opportunity to keep that

1 district where it is and move another seat from
2 somewhere in the north to where there has been
3 growth. I don't think I have a clear understanding of
4 why that choice was made.
5 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Well, yeah, and I've
6 explained it to you. There is, first of all, again,
7 like I said, it's the body, you know, conveyed to me
8 to look to a term-limited member, pretty limited in
9 the selections of term-limited members in North
10 Louisiana. And again, I'm going to highlight the two
11 other maps that have been submitted thus far and the
12 way House District 23 was drawn and the BVAP and both
13 of those maps. I think there is a question about
14 whether or not a candidate of choice can be selected
15 with those types of numbers. I think it's a question
16 and with that type of uncertainty, and based on what
17 the members have told me, and based on the fact that
18 North Louisiana was short in population, all of those
19 factors considered led to that decision.
20 VICE CHAIRMAN ROYCE DUPLESSIS: Okay. Do you
21 think that this this map will pass muster under the
22 Voting Rights Act?
23 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Yes.
24 VICE CHAIRMAN ROYCE DUPLESSIS: Okay. So, with
25 respect to those voters, those citizens who are

1 currently in House District 23, in Red River, DeSoto
2 and--
3 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Natchitoches.
4 VICE CHAIRMAN ROYCE DUPLESSIS: Natchitoches,
5 they will now be part of other districts, other
6 surrounding districts. I think I saw 22, 25 and a
7 little bit of House District 5. Which House District
8 5 was once more compact, now that district is much
9 less compact. I think House District 25 was much more
10 compact. That district is now much less compact. So,
11 we have effectively taken one district that was not
12 as compact and we've created two additional districts
13 that are no longer as compact. Those voters, even
14 though they were just 52 % VAP, are now going to be
15 dispersed amongst those other districts that I
16 described. And you believe that that doesn't violate
17 any principles of the Voting Rights Act in that we
18 are still giving them, those voters, an opportunity
19 to select the candidate of choice?
20 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: I believe the map that
21 I have presented to you is legal.
22 VICE CHAIRMAN ROYCE DUPLESSIS: All right. I
23 appreciate you taking the time to address my
24 questions. I don't think that as far as you and I as
25

1 conversations have gone that any of these questions
2 are new. So, I think we have to have the discussion.
3 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: No, I appreciate the
4 discussion.
5 VICE CHAIRMAN ROYCE DUPLESSIS: And, you know, I
6 have expressed my concerns from day one. And,
7 otherwise, I would tell you I think what you have put
8 forward is generally something that I could support.
9 I want to say that publicly. I have some issues with
10 House District 23, and I want to put that on the
11 record. I'm still very much working through it. You
12 know, my area, I really can't complain. You know, we-
13 -
14 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Our maps look pretty
15 similar in your area, though.
16 VICE CHAIRMAN ROYCE DUPLESSIS: Yeah, and, you
17 know, you've been great to work with on that. I just
18 want to point that out. And you have really, really
19 led this process in a very strong and committed way.
20 And I want to just say that I know you put a lot of
21 time into this. But, I'm having a lot of trouble with
22 House District 23, in particular. I know there will
23 be more conversation--
24 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Absolutely.
25

VICE CHAIRMAN ROYCE DUPLESSIS: --on this. I want to point out the fact that I appreciate that we're not going to take a vote today because the bill was just filed on Friday.

[00:35:00]

So, I do think this is a good thing that we just have a little bit more time to talk about it amongst ourselves. But, I know how hard this has been, and I know how hard this continues to be because this is really a process where you simply cannot make everybody happy, and you and I have been on panels together, and I publicly said that that is really difficult because we're in charge of this process. And when you have self-interest, it makes the process really, really difficult because we're charged with doing it. So, with that, I'm going to bring my questions to an end for now and I thank you for taking the time to answer them.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Thank you, Mr. Vice Chair.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Thank you, Mr. Duplessis. And I would also say for everybody who is paying attention, who is not in the room, Representative Duplessis has been one of the strongest advocates possible for more minority

1 representation in the state, not just publicly,
2 privately as well. And I think, me and him, we've had
3 heated conversations about it to the point that I
4 consider us friends, but it's been difficult. But I
5 just want everybody to realize how passionate you
6 have been on this issue and how much I appreciate
7 that passion. And with that, we're going to move to
8 Representative Carter.
9 REPRESENTATIVE WILFORD CARTER, SR: Oh, thank
10 you, Mr. Pro Tem. Mr. Chairman, I just got a couple
11 of questions. And, you know, you've met with me about
12 four or five times, and I sent a bunch of stuff over
13 there. I don't know how you are able to practice law
14 in all the time you put in, so I--
15 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: My dad wonders the same
16 thing. He hasn't seen me in a while, yeah.
17 REPRESENTATIVE WILFORD CARTER, SR: So, I
18 appreciate your effort. Don't get me wrong, but I
19 feel obligated to make some comments because this is
20 a matter that outsiders are going to have to look at
21 and deal with and whether or not it's sufficient to
22 satisfy the Voters Right Act is really what it's
23 going to come down to. But I can understand, and I
24 might be wrong because I'm no expert at this, that it
25 came down to you had to get rid of a district up in

1 North Louisiana. That's the worst thing that happened
2 in the whole thing look like. It was one of the
3 problems. The second problem had to be is an effort
4 to increase minority of districts, okay? So, you got
5 over 33% of the population in the state, okay, and
6 33.7 I think it is. And you have 57% white
7 population, 33.0% African-American or black
8 population, and you got others. Now, if you do the
9 simple math, you're talking about 34 districts should
10 be minority-leaning districts, 34 if possible.
11 Everything was perfect and everybody was living in an
12 area where you can attach them, and I think if that
13 was the case, I think you will try to do that, okay?
14 If it was the population is spread, minority of
15 population is spread throughout the state, and make
16 it kind of difficult to get these majority-minority
17 districts. However, if you recall, when we passed the
18 authorization legislation in what we adopted as what
19 was going to be our criteria to draw these maps and
20 do this re-apportion process, we did a good thing I
21 thought. We set down some type of perimeters, some
22 requirements you had to have in order to submit them
23 out. And I know we don't like spreading precincts,
24 though I disagree with you. There are few precincts
25 that are split, but they're normally split due to

geographic boundary line, but we try to get away from all that. And I agree with that effort. But the other requirement is section 2 of the Voters Rights Act. That is a requirement. In other words, in all of us in the map, once you make a good faith effort in order to increase the minority participation in the legislature to equal to or as much as close as possible to the minority population in the state. So, this is where we can make judgments that could affect that outcome. For example, if you're going to lose a district in North Louisiana, you're going to have to take some other district and split it up and give it to the other folks, okay? And before I go in further, I commend you for at least finding another district to keep the 29, but I think the 29 is really not sufficient. I want to hear back 10 years ago. I don't know what happened. I still can't understand how some of these maps got by Justice Department under the Obama Administration. I don't know how it happened, okay? I was not here. So apparently, it did happen in 2010 with 29 minority seats. If you came to district, I think District 5 and District 23, which were primary players it look like in your decision.

[00:40:03]

1 District 5 or District 23. You could have took
2 District 5 and split it up and probably, and I
3 believe I'm going to get your comments on your
4 thoughts on that. District 5 could have been split up
5 and taken care of problems you had with other
6 districts as well as District 23. District 23 is a
7 minority district, a basic Democratic District it was
8 before, you know, it still is in New Orleans, but in
9 North Central Louisiana, it was a predominant
10 minority district, Democratic District. District 5
11 was pretty much a Republican District. So, you chose
12 to split up District 23 and maintain District 5. That
13 what it looks like when I look at the map. And I
14 would like to know when you consider we had to, we
15 have an obligation to try to fulfill the jingles or
16 standard in the Section 2, which mean working toward
17 getting as many minorities to be equal to the number
18 of minority population in the state. And I'm sure
19 that what's on your mind because I can tell when you
20 talked about my district, you took that into
21 consideration as I asked you to. And so but when it
22 came down to 5 and 23, what problem was created by if
23 you try to make 23 the district and do away with 5?
24 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: So let me answer that
25 this way. I did not just look at those two districts,

1 you know. You bracketed in on those two. I looked at
2 every single district in North Louisiana and then
3 meeting with my colleagues, you included, posed that
4 questions to them about where should the district we
5 have to move one come from and what type of district.
6 And what ultimately happened is that the vast
7 majority of the members who came to see me said term-
8 limited. Okay? So, all of a sudden, boom, you know, a
9 lot of the members of this body universally
10 Republican, Democrat, white, black, everybody said
11 term limit. So then, I looked at the four term-
12 limited districts here in the state. Okay? Did a deep
13 analyzation of their population. And one of the
14 things that was apparently evident was that District
15 23 was the lowest populated out of those four. Trying
16 to disperse less population rather than more is a
17 factor as well. Then, we go one step further when,
18 again, and the reason I have brought up the only
19 other two house bills that have been filed is I
20 assumed that both of those other efforts had a tough
21 time creating a BVAP that was really high. And it's
22 evident. One is at 50 and one is at 52. So, from that
23 perspective, looking at the term-limited, looking at
24 the regions, again, like I'll say, I have a deep
25 question and concern of whether or not a district

1 drawn at that low of a BVAP will allow the minority
2 community to elect the candidate of its choice. And
3 that ultimately, all of those things combined, as
4 well as the ability to be able to draw a new
5 majority-minority district in Orleans, are all
6 factors that came into consideration. I would also
7 like to bring up something we haven't talked about a
8 bunch is, in my opinion, if you look down the map,
9 while you may say there are only 29 majority-minority
10 districts in this map, again, I don't like to pick on
11 my colleagues, but both of my other colleagues who
12 filed house maps, do you know how many majority-
13 minority districts are located in both of those? 29.
14 Same as my map, okay? So, just saying. So then, let's
15 talk about several other districts. I count one, two,
16 three, four districts, in my opinion, have a very
17 diverse population that could potentially allow a
18 minority member to be elected in those districts as
19 well. And so, in my opinion, I've done a good job of
20 meeting the diversity of the state and not dissimilar
21 to my colleagues who have attempted it as well who,
22 you know, I don't, I can't speak to their motivation,
23 they haven't presented their bills. But in my
24 opinion, this is a very good effort to comply with
25

1 our demographics of the state and the realities of
2 what the federal law mandates.
3 REPRESENTATIVE WILFORD CARTER, SR: Okay. So, 23
4 had less people than 5.
5 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Yes.
6 REPRESENTATIVE WILFORD CARTER, SR: I'm just
7 saying 5 because I'm familiar. But what's the
8 difference?
9 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Well, malapportionment.
10 23 currently contains 40,078 people.
11 [00:45:00]
12 Five contains 45,407 people. So, approximately
13 5,400 unchanged.
14 REPRESENTATIVE WILFORD CARTER, SR: So, you even
15 to make the other district by taking 23, the other
16 district more whole that was shot in the northern
17 part of the state, what you're saying?
18 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: What district?
19 REPRESENTATIVE WILFORD CARTER, SR: Whatever
20 district it was short. They said they had a
21 population share for 17,000 people, so, and had to be
22 more than one district that was shown.
23 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: 56,000 approximately
24 from Central Louisiana to North. And so, it was done
25 with a combination of shifting, and you saw some

shifting along the western side of the state with those districts, specifically in your area--

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Right, right, right.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: --we had to shift now, and also the removal of a district to be able to accommodate that population shift.

REPRESENTATIVE WILFORD CARTER, SR: Okay. So, you think you complied with Section 2?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: I did.

REPRESENTATIVE WILFORD CARTER, SR: Is there a requirement that we not split district or is that just--

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Precincts is not a--

REPRESENTATIVE WILFORD CARTER, SR: Precincts. And not just something we try to [INDISCERNIBLE 00:46:06].

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: We've tried to do. The Senate has done it before, though on a limited basis. It's something we try to do. I'll tell you that maybe more so I can't talk to my predecessors, but I've thought about it, okay, but I'm just, I don't want to be the first house map ever presented the splits precincts. I think there's probably a reason for that we've shied away. And I think it can be unfair to the voters who don't understand what precinct and what

house rep they get to vote for when we do things like that.

REPRESENTATIVE WILFORD CARTER, SR: And I have people say all the time they want to keep communities of interests, and there is some perception that rural community and urban community don't have the same interests. In some communities, they do. I have some rural areas in my community and we pretty much got the same interests. So, just saying you don't want to mix the urban from that is just not accurate, okay? Because whether you're a rural district or urban district, you all concerned about fair representation on both sides. Okay. All right, so now, did you look at any of the other submissions like the NAACP submission?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: I looked at the NAACP submission.

REPRESENTATIVE WILFORD CARTER, SR: And how many minority districts were created?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Oh, off the top of my head, I'm not sure, Representative. I did -- I mean, in any every single submittal that was submitted, I looked at and analyzed. But, I mean, I don't have a note on every map that was submitted.

REPRESENTATIVE WILFORD CARTER, SR: But could you recall whether or not any of them created more minority district?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Oh, I believe some did, yes sir.

REPRESENTATIVE WILFORD CARTER, SR: Because I have seen a couple of them and I was kind of shocked. I had problem with them, too, because they did split some parish a little bit than that, you know, they did look more split the precincts some places. But, there were other maps that show more minority districts than your map created.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: I don't disagree. None that have been filed in a bill form, no.

REPRESENTATIVE WILFORD CARTER, SR: That's right. None had been filed in a bill form?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE WILFORD CARTER, SR: But it were available, you would look at?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Oh, certainly. And I viewed everything, everything that was submitted to our committee during the roadshow, every written comment. I physically believe I read every single one, although, if you ask me to recite everything, I

have a finite amount of stuff I can put up here. And so, I'd ask you maybe don't test me on it.

REPRESENTATIVE WILFORD CARTER, SR: Well, thank you.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Yes, sir.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Thank you, Representative Carter. I do want to clean up a couple of things that were said. The not splitting precincts is actually part of the criteria to not split them as much as practical I think is the thing. So, it's really-- it is a principle of [INDISCERNIBLE 00:48:46].

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: It's a principle.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: It's not just we're wanting to do this.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Correct.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: And the concerns of Representative Carter of versus rural and urban and his district, you met his concerns though, right, in his district?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Yeah, I believe, so. I think Representative Carter is happy.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: You'd account for that and you didn't make adjustments based off of his concerns?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Hundred percent. With all members, and when you all, look, when members would come to me and go, you're doing this, I don't think you really understand how important this is in the region. Again, you all are the experts in your areas. And that's why I spent so much time with all of you to try to accommodate that.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: And I want to bring this up, too, because I think we're losing a little bit side of the narrative here. Although Shreveport or Caddo, however, you want to look at it, how you want the terminology, they lose a lot of people. That area wasn't though completely alone and lost because Bossier actually was a growth area.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Correct.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Is that correct?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Correct.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: So, you're trying to balance a growth area in North Louisiana, which is right by Caddo, with the entirety of the population. So, it's not just like North Louisiana. It's not as simple of a story as North Louisiana lost people, South Louisiana gained them. You actually have losses in a certain particular area, but in the adjacent parish, you had huge gains?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Absolutely. And, specifically, what's interesting about the Caddo-Bossier area is several of the house districts spanned both, and were a combination of the two.

[00:50:02]

And so, you had that to balance as well and so it's hard to think of the region and look, we have a representative here from the Bossier region. It's hard to think of those two as separate entities. A lot of the time, they have a mixed commonality and mixture of communities of interest as well.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Right. Thank you very much. Representative Jenkins has a question for you.

REPRESENTATIVE SAM JENKINS: Thank you Mr. Pro Tem and good morning Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Good morning.

REPRESENTATIVE SAM JENKINS: Let me once again also echo the sentiments of all the hard work that you put into this. I know you reached out to everybody. I note you know, you and I had a number of conversations about the map. And Representative Duplessis, he covered a lot of what my concern was. I'm not going to repeat a lot of it, but [INDISCERNIBLE 00:50:50] concerns when it comes to how we're handling the population [INDISCERNIBLE

00:50:55] in the northern part of the state and the gains in the southern part of the state and it appears what we're doing is it's moving District 23. Now District 23 is a majority black Democratic seat, isn't that right?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Under the current configuration, correct, yes sir.

REPRESENTATIVE SAM JENKINS: And I guess I'm just starting to see what would have been the most I guess this less disrupted route to deal with our population shifts as we go through this process, not to say that, you know, you didn't consider all these things. But it appears to me now that if we dismantle for lack of a better word, District 23, majority black Democratic seat, most of those persons are going to go into, if I saw this correctly District 7, District 5 and District 25 which are a majority of white Republican seats. Is that the way that population is going to be dispersed?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: So the population that was located in DeSoto Parish is wholly contained in that house district. The population that was contained in Red River Parish is wholly contained within the Newhouse District 5 district. The population that's contained in the more rural area of

1 Natchitoches is contained in House District 25. The
2 population that is contained in the core of
3 Natchitoches will be in House District 22. I'm
4 getting better, but I'm not there yet, all right?
5 REPRESENTATIVE SAM JENKINS: I guess my question
6 is, you know, we are somewhat breaking up an existing
7 back seat. I know we're not losing seats now, at the
8 end of the day, we had 29 and we all seem to be ended
9 up in that same direction. I'm just trying to see
10 what would have been an easier way maybe to deal with
11 it. And I guess that's what my questions are going
12 to. It seems like we are taking a district majority
13 by Democratic district and we're taking those citizen
14 be they black or white and we're putting them into
15 adjoining white Republican districts. That appears
16 to, if I'm looking at the map correctly, those areas
17 are going to have white Republican representatives
18 where a lot of that population is going to be going
19 too.
20 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Well, so
21 Representative, I will tell you that. I'm not here to
22 predict what the results of those elections would be
23 should this map be enacted. If you're talking about -
24 - it's hard to say the current district is this, and
25 now, you're just going to create one of these, I

1 think the election will tell us from that community
2 what's going to happen. What I will tell you is that
3 universally, all of that population has caused the
4 diversity throughout that area.
5 REPRESENTATIVE SAM JENKINS: Those are majority
6 white Republican District 7, 5, 25 where this
7 population is going to go. If we look at what the
8 current map is and what the historical election
9 patterns have been there, those are going to be
10 majority white Republican districts that a lot of
11 that population, especially minority population is
12 going to end up going under this particular plan.
13 Isn't that right?
14 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Well, there is no doubt
15 the demographics of the population in the districts
16 that they're now contained in, yes, are all majority
17 white. But again, I'll say, you know, I'm not going
18 to predict what the results of those elections will
19 be. However, if we're talking about communities of
20 interest, you know, especially in some of those
21 adjoining areas, you know, the population of Red
22 River was allowed to be wholly contained together.
23 Population of DeSoto was allowed to be wholly
24 contained together and under our current Natchitoches
25 split three ways and then to my map, Natchitoches

split three ways as well. And so again, I'm not in a position to talk about, you know, specifically what's going to be the result, but yeah, i mean, to answer your question that population is now contained in majority white districts.

[00:55:05]

However, looking at a redistricting criteria, a lot of those, you know, especially from a community of interest standpoint in the parish, we were able to accomplish a couple of things there.

REPRESENTATIVE SAM JENKINS: Okay. And then if I heard correctly, as far as a new district I think involving Districts 62 and 63, I'm thinking 63 is majority black district.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: 60-- 62 is a new majority, minority district located in majority BVAP District located in East Baton Rouge and East Louisiana and House District 23 moved from there created a new majority, minority district located in Orleans.

REPRESENTATIVE SAM JENKINS: Right. So, we shifted 23 to the south to New Orleans --

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Mm-hmm.

REPRESENTATIVE SAM JENKINS: And then if we look at this majority,-minority district, the 62, in order

1 to do that, we had to go into District 63 which is an
2 existing black district and poor black population out
3 of that to make this new majority black district out
4 of 62. Isn't that how that was crafted?
5 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Yeah I saw an
6 opportunity where the district was compact enough and
7 the minority population was concentrated enough that
8 I believe the minority community will have an
9 opportunity to elect the candidate of its choice in
10 62 and that was accomplished by making East Louisiana
11 whole and then moving down into East Baton Rouge.
12 REPRESENTATIVE SAM JENKINS: So we have two
13 majority black districts, 23 and 63.
14 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: 62. I mean, 63 is one
15 too, but 62 is the new one and 23 is the
16 [INDISCERNIBLE 00:56:55]
17 REPRESENTATIVE SAM JENKINS: Okay, let me --
18 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Maybe I'm missing what
19 you're trying to say.
20 REPRESENTATIVE SAM JENKINS: No, no. What it is,
21 I know we got current -- I'm talking about the
22 current situation.
23 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Okay.
24 REPRESENTATIVE SAM JENKINS: I'm not talking
25 about, okay.

1 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Got you.
2 REPRESENTATIVE SAM JENKINS: Currently, we got 23
3 that is an existing black Democratic district and we
4 got 63 which is a current black Democratic district
5 currently. That's what we have.
6 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Yes, sir.
7 REPRESENTATIVE SAM JENKINS: All right. What I'm
8 saying is, it looks like in the plan, under the bill
9 that you have, we would have to affect two majority
10 black Democratic districts and it's going back to my
11 original question. What would be the easier way to do
12 this? With the population loss in North Louisiana
13 with District 5, wouldn't it not just be simpler,
14 easier to move District 5 in North Louisiana, because
15 of the population loss, to New Orleans to deal with
16 the population gain as opposed to affecting the two
17 existing minority districts that we have.
18 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Well, I mean, look it
19 is a tremendous balance, so easier is in the eye of
20 the beholder in my opinion. You know, it is a balance
21 between discussing what our communities of interest
22 are, our geography, the law and again, I'm bringing
23 the members into this as well and talking with you
24 all because ultimately, the Louisiana Constitution
25 vests this power with us and it's our duty to do

this. And part of that process is the members and their ability to be able to support a map that they can agree with and so easy is a thing that you and I may see two totally different ways. And what I'll tell you is that again, this decision was made by looking at the geography of the state, looking at our communities of interest, looking at the population shifts and ultimately, talking with the members in order to come up with something that I believe works for the entire state.

REPRESENTATIVE SAM JENKINS: Do you believe that going back to District 23, that dividing an existing minority seat and sending that black population into majority white Republican seat, do you feel like that has diluted the black voting strength that they did have in District 23?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: I will tell you that in similar to the map that you presented in Representative Duplessis, it appears the black voting-age population is significantly low in those two attempts to draw House District 23 and I think there is a great question of whether or not the minority community in that are area will have an opportunity to elect a candidate of choice with those numbers.

REPRESENTATIVE SAM JENKINS: So do you [INDISCERNIBLE 00:59:53] it is better if you split them all up and send them into new districts as opposed to keeping all those communities together, at least have a district by pattern has been able to elect a candidate of their choice?

[01:00:11]

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: I believe it also depends on what you're calling a community of interest. If you were asking me is a community of interest a whole parish together, you know, that population that's located in DeSoto will be wholly located in DeSoto now. The population that's located in Red River will be wholly located in Red River and the splits in Natchitoches, you know, Natchitoches was already split up three ways, they'll be split up three ways again. So I think it again depends on your interpretation of what that community of interest can be because the community of interest can mean many different things to a lot of different people. I come from a Cajun area of the state. I'm not trying to shift [INDISCERNIBLE 01:00:47], but I do a come from a Cajun area of the state, a lot of my family and friends still speak French and we would tell you that those Cajun people speak French, that's a communities

of interest and it spans geography and a number of different things. And so again, if your pure reading of a community of interest is just the current makeup of House District 23 in that geographic region, that's one thing. If your idea of a community of interest is parishes, is culture, you know, I would ask that -- I can't answer that question without understanding jumping into your mind and understanding what a community of interest means.

REPRESENTATIVE SAM JENKINS: Well, I mean, as it relates to House District 23, I mean they have collectively -- those areas have collectively been represented by one representative. Now I'm saying that they're going to be represented by three different representatives, three different areas and I think some of the major cities in District 23, they have black mayor such as Natchitoches, Coushatta, some of those areas but they have been able to work together for the common good of that District with a representative of their choice. It just seems to me if we break that particular area up, we are sending and understand by keeping those parishes together, but we're sending them into new districts, two of which is probably going to have new representatives when they go into it because some of these people

have turned out and you'll also be putting them with different parishes because I believe that if we send them into District 25, you're going to [INDISCERNIBLE 01:02:40] Natchitoches Parish together. In other words, you got Natchitoches now being [INDISCERNIBLE 01:02:45] area may be a little bit more little bit more urban. And then you're saying District 5 which was Caddo, Bossier and Red River that we're going to be creating. I'm just saying it's going to be something very new for that group of people who have been together for some time now in District 23. I guess that's what I somewhat call a community of interest. I know they may be in different areas but now, we're blending them it more into a more broader new area where certainly, they will not be able to represent a candidate of their choice just because of the makeup of the demographics. I mean, do you have any concern about that?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: But again, I mean, you certainly, that is an element that I took into consideration absolutely. But again, I will tell you that with the current makeup of that district and the population shifts that we've seen in North Louisiana, and with attempts to draw that district two that have been submitted to this committee, one by yourself and

one by the Vice Chair, I think the question of that BVAP drawn to a level that is in those levels, I think it brings up a great question of whether or not that minority community going forward would have an opportunity to elect the candidate of its choice. You know, also with the population shifts, I'll talk about this for a second. The population shifts that we saw after Katrina, okay? This district, House District 23 is especially created as a majority-minority district was created after the population shifts after Katrina to [INDISCERNIBLE 01:04:31] effort to create more representation. Now, we've seen a lot of that population shift back towards South Louisiana that was additionally another factor that I considered as well.

REPRESENTATIVE SAM JENKINS: Right. And I can understand the consideration, it's just, I mean, I guess from my point of view look like we are lessening the opportunity for the people who live now in House District 23 and I understand, you know, like I said, I got a bill and you're right, the voting age population, all that is real, real close.

[01:05:07]

But it just seemed like to me, we are lessening the opportunity for the people of color in District

23 to elect a candidate of their choice if we disperse them into three adjoining districts that makes their numbers even lower. I just don't see how they -- I don't see how they improve with their opportunity to elect a candidate of their choice going into those. It just maybe something we disagree on, but now, it is a concern and something I certainly want us to continue to talk about as we go forward.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: I understand your opinion on that matter.

REPRESENTATIVE SAM JENKINS: And then we go to again, current District 63 is a majority black Democratic district and I think with this plan, we are looking to go into District 62, but District 62 currently is East Feliciana and West Feliciana Parish. Do you think--

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: And parts of that Parish.

REPRESENTATIVE SAM JENKINS: Okay. So under this plan, we are going to move out East Feliciana Parish and combine West Feliciana Parish with more of the Baton Rouge area.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Under my plan, West Feliciana would be joined with Pointe Coupee for that district, District 18.

REPRESENTATIVE SAM JENKINS: Okay.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: East Feliciana would be made whole under my plan and then continue to be parts of East Baton Rouge Parish as well.

REPRESENTATIVE SAM JENKINS: But aren't you picking up more population out of East Baton Rouge Parish for the new District 60?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Yeah, 62 is shedding the population that it had in West Baton Rouge, I mean I'm sorry, West Feliciana and filling out its population on through East Baton Rouge.

REPRESENTATIVE SAM JENKINS: So we're going to be picking up more black population out of East Baton Rouge to go along with West Feliciana Parish for the new district?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Yes, so the population gains specifically that caused the shift to creating a majority-minority district were primarily gained through, not all because East Feliciana wasn't whole before. Two of those were in the adjacent district that were more mixed boxes as I would call them, more diverse boxes. And so yes, East Feliciana whole

1 coming down south into East Baton Rouge Parish in
2 order to make that district a majority-minority.
3 REPRESENTATIVE SAM JENKINS: Do you have any
4 concerns about any kind of community interest between
5 East Feliciana and East Baton Rouge Parish?
6 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Sure. Well, I mean,
7 under its current -- yeah, no, absolutely that's a
8 consideration, but I mean, under the current
9 district, some of that district does come into East
10 Baton Rouge Parish already. And so, there was an
11 opportunity there to expand on that and also, in my
12 opinion, give the minority community in those areas
13 an opportunity to elect the candidate of their
14 choice.
15 REPRESENTATIVE SAM JENKINS: Okay. How much does
16 that reduce the minority population in 63?
17 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: What metric are you
18 talking about?
19 REPRESENTATIVE SAM JENKINS: Voting age
20 population.
21 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: BVAP?
22 REPRESENTATIVE SAM JENKINS: Yes sir.
23 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Currently, District 63
24 will have a 70% BVAP.
25 REPRESENTATIVE SAM JENKINS: What--

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Where was it?

REPRESENTATIVE SAM JENKINS: Yeah, where was it?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Okay.

REPRESENTATIVE SAM JENKINS: We [INDISCERNIBLE 01:08:44], I'm trying to say, okay.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: 78.4 BVAP under the current malapportionment districts as we sit today.

REPRESENTATIVE SAM JENKINS: All right. So, let's repeat, I'm trying to make sure I understand. District 63, would it have a reduction in its black voting age population?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Yes.

REPRESENTATIVE SAM JENKINS: Okay. And I guess, you know, that's another, I'm just saying, it looks like we are affecting some existing districts, traditional black Democratic districts here and I guess, like I said, I know we both see this a little bit differently because hopefully my plan to get out of here, it's just like it would have been in my opinion somewhat less disruptive to the districts that are existing now just to move District 5 in North Louisiana and I'm from North Louisiana talking about moving district. Move District 5 in North Louisiana to South Louisiana and not disrupt to existing districts and the people who live in those

1 districts, it just seem like it's been an easier
2 thing to do.
3 [01:10:09]
4 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: That's your opinion and
5 I think it could be equally disruptive if you took
6 another district and now all of a sudden the adjacent
7 districts have to now come into a parish that they
8 had never been in before in order to find that I'd
9 close to that ideal population or in the range at
10 least. And so I mean, I think you got to make the
11 counter-argument that if you're removing a district
12 from some other part of the state, all of these other
13 districts it acts like a magnet, they all have to
14 come to that population and you may be greatly
15 disrupting all these other communities of interest in
16 an effort to do that. So I think at the end of the
17 day, it's a very, very complicated policy decision,
18 you know, and drafters decision when we make these
19 kind of changes and it wasn't taken lightly and I'll
20 tell you, like I said earlier, this was the most
21 difficult decision out of this entire map I had to
22 make and await everyone's concerns and gave deep
23 consideration to this. So, I understand that you have
24 a different opinion. It just is, but I understand why
25

1 you made it, it could be something different to every
2 person.
3 REPRESENTATIVE SAM JENKINS: Right. If we move
4 District 5, that population would go into two
5 Democratic districts and two Republican districts up
6 in North Louisiana which may be a more balanced
7 approach to all of these, but that's not to say that
8 you know, what has been tendered in this particular
9 map it's not something that needs to be looked at
10 very closely. I know it's a lot of work that's been
11 put into it. I know a lot of people have some degree
12 of satisfaction with their individual districts, but
13 you know, I'm looking at it holistically, the whole
14 geography and you know, I do have concerns about the
15 route that we're going to. I know we all ended up
16 with 29 minority districts and overall, makeup of the
17 House is going to be somewhat the same too with
18 Republican makeup, independent makeup.
19 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: I would point to you
20 though. I mean Representative, we have several what
21 I would call, you know, very diverse districts in
22 this state now, maybe even more so than our current
23 map and just to say 29 I think is a little you know,
24 I mean look it is accurate because the BVAP in those
25 29 is 50 plus 1. However, I think if you look

1 throughout the map and you look at the demographics
2 of all these districts, you can see a lot of
3 diversity in several of the other ones, you know.
4 REPRESENTATIVE SAM JENKINS: And look, and I
5 wouldn't disagree with you about that. It's just
6 simply this. I'm hoping that we could look at the
7 issues that I think is a major concern to many
8 people, not just to me as Representative, about how
9 we are getting to a certain place here, especially
10 with District 23 and how we have done it with
11 Districts 62 and 63. Hopefully, that's a conversation
12 that can continue.
13 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Of course.
14 REPRESENTATIVE SAM JENKINS: Because I think if
15 we do, the greatest thing that could probably happen
16 here Mr. Chairman is if somehow we could all come
17 together and have a map that we feel pretty good
18 about for the people of the State of Louisiana and I
19 think the object of all of us to do it. So, I'm just
20 hoping that we can continue some conversation about
21 that and see where it goes.
22 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: And I agree with you
23 Representative Jenkins. Look, my goal from the
24 beginning has been to work with every single person.
25 REPRESENTATIVE SAM JENKINS: Yeah.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: I don't care what party you are, what you look like, what your concerns are, I've tried to keep my door open and accommodate every member the best I can and so, you know my doors are still going to be open and we're still going to keep talking.

REPRESENTATIVE SAM JENKINS: Right, sounds great. You have done that. Thank you so much for the [INDISCERNIBLE 01:13:39] you've shown for all of this and hard work that you've shown for all of this. I hope that this committee will keep an open mind too to look at what alternatives may be out there, you know, as we go forward and just see what else is being offered. And hopefully, we don't have a scenario where we're just tied to just one plan without giving proper consideration to the other plans.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: No and you know, as chairman of this committee, anyone who wants to have their bill heard and have a full debate, we're going to have that and I would encourage all the members to have an open mind about everything, you know.

REPRESENTATIVE SAM JENKINS: All right. Thank you Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANKSI: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE SAM JENKINS: Thank you Mr. Pro Tem.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Thank you Mr. Jenkins. I do want to follow up with a couple of the points that was made. You touched on it earlier, your map is extremely similar to Vice Chairman Duplessis' map.

VICE CHAIRMAN ROYCE DUPLESSIS: I just want to make a point of order. Can I make just a point?

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Yeah.

VICE CHAIRMAN ROYCE DUPLESSIS: There have been several moments where my map is being [INDISCERNIBLE 01:14:37]. I have not presented them yet. I have not presented them yet. I just want to make that clear for the public because I think it can be--

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Yeah. Hold on one second. I thought you'll make it a point of order. I know you have a speech, one second. I will take you out of order.

VICE CHAIRMAN ROYCE DUPLESSIS: I don't want to make a speech. I just want -- my bill has been -- the bill that I filed is being referenced and used in a way as though it is something I have put before the committee. I have not done that. In fact, I move to defer the bill so I think it is misleading to

1 continue to reference my bill that I have not
2 presented on.
3 [01:15:08]
4 VICE CHAIRMAN ROYCE DUPLESSIS: So that is -- I
5 ask that we not do that.
6 PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Well, you did file a
7 bill, and that bill --
8 VICE CHAIRMAN ROYCE DUPLESSIS: Which I have a
9 right to do, and I also moved to defer the bill, so I
10 don't think you should be --
11 PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: So okay, let me
12 respond --
13 VICE CHAIRMAN ROYCE DUPLESSIS: That is not the
14 bill I put before any members of this body.
15 PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: You have made your
16 point. I do want to say the bill is public. It is
17 available to be disseminated to everybody to review.
18 You filed it because it has your name on it. Whether
19 you presented it to the committee or not and deferred
20 it, it's still in the files of the house. You have
21 the option to withdraw that bill from the files of
22 the house. To my knowledge, you have not withdrawn
23 that bill from the files of the house. And so it is
24 still an existing public document, and if any member
25

would like to reference an existing public document, it's within their right to talk about that document.

VICE CHAIRMAN ROYCE DUPLESSIS: Well, you're absolutely right. You have the right.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: That's the answer [INDISCERNIBLE 01:15:56]

VICE CHAIRMAN ROYCE DUPLESSIS: But I want to give the framework that -- to the public who is listening to this, that it is not a bill that I have put forward. When people come in here with legislative instruments, it is said that it is just a starting point. So, to suggest that that is an -- that was an endpoint for me with that legislation, I just think it's not appropriate.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: I did not -- Nobody suggested it was an endpoint. We're referencing the bill that was filed. If you want to -- frankly, you voluntarily deferred it, but any moment, you could un-voluntarily at the moment ask for a hearing, and we will be considering that instrument at a starting point. And so, to reference that instrument that still exists is completely fair game so it's still a bill and file of the house. If you come back next week and say, "I want my bill to be heard," we're going to have to hear it and then we would have

missed out on the public discussion of your bill. So that's all it is. So, I think Representative Duplessis has filed a bill, and I'm going to reference it right now, that has a map for the city of New Orleans. Is there any difference between Representative Duplessis' map and your map? That's my question as it pertains to the City of New Orleans' Parish.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: They are very similar. I think that the main difference is Representative Duplessis chose a different district to move down into the region. But I mean, it's to be expected. I worked with Representative Duplessis. We did, you know? We worked very close on what we thought was best for the Orleans area as well as the other Orleans reps.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: But the lines, as they're drawn in -- and I know where they come from -- as they're drawn, is there any significant difference between your map and the one filed by Representative Duplessis?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: No.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Now, that map contains house District 91, is that correct?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Correct.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: That used to be a minority-majority district. Is that correct?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: It is. It was, yes.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Is it still a minority-majority district?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: It's not.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Now, that means that we have now taken a district in the state that was prior minority-majority and now turned it into not-minority-majority under both plans.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: That's correct.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: So, we have the president establish by members of both parties to decrease minority representation in particular districts. Is that not fair to say?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Yeah, and look, I do want to be clear though. I mean, my bill is my bills, you know? I took into the consideration Representative Duplessis', I have two members of the Orleans delegation sitting on my committee right now. I took into both their considerations with doing this. But you know -- But yes, I think there is a consensus about -- Let's say this, Mr. Pro Tem, there is a consensus about what's best for the Orleans area that's very similar in both though.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: And going back to what you did within District 63 and 62 -- I think those are numbers, I'm bad at math, that's why I went to law school.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Yeah, 62, 63.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: 63 -- 62 is the new minority seat, or is minority --

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Correct, 62.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: And you reduced 63 from 78 to 73?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: BVAP.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Yeah, by BVAP. Is there any concern to you that that would lead that district to no longer be what we consider a minority-majority district?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: In my opinion, at a 70% BVAP also based on the fact that there is an incumbent coming back in that region as well, I have no doubt that the minority population contained in house District 63 will have the ability to elect the candidate of their choice.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: And that BVAP would be higher than if you kept the District 23, correct?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Under the examples that have been presented that I have referenced, it

appears that people had a similar difficulty in increasing a BVAP to anything higher than a 52%.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Now, District 5, which has been referenced a lot today, did it gain or lose population through the 10-year sentence?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: It stayed pretty consistent. I think it was right at 45,000 population? Yeah.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: You think it may have gained population?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Yeah, it did. So, when they drew the district 10 years ago, the ideal was 43,000, approximately.

[01:20:02]

Our new ideal of course is 44,359. This district as it currently sits today, House District 5, is 45,000. So yes, it has gained population over the past 10 years.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: So you then -- You had a decision. One of the factors to consider is removing a district that actually had population increase.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Yeah no, that was part of this, you know? And I told you, out of the four term-limited house members in North Louisiana that

all of the members told me to look at, House District 23 was by far the lowest out of this.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: And you have to answer the constituencies of District 5 saying, "Well wait a minute, we're gaining population so why are we losing our seat?"

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: It's certainly a part of this process, absolutely.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: All right, I think Representative Lyons has a question.

REPRESENTATIVE RODNEY LYONS: Thank you, Mr. Pro Tem. I don't know, should I go left, and right? Left and right, I feel like I'm in a cage match, you know? But Mr. Chairman, I have a question too that I want to ask you from the public's perspective.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Sure.

REPRESENTATIVE RODNEY LYONS: As we talk about this, and if we talk about the factors that you consider. And I do want to commend you on your effort because I know you worked real hard on this and you work well with some of the concerns that we all have from several different areas. But, my question to you is in relation to several of the comments here, one being the make-up of the State as it pertains to minority population, and some of the decisions made

in regards to representation. Can you explain to me -- The public, via me here, the factor that's used and you've referenced it before in making the decisions, particularly in District 23 and several others that are on the State -- when you got to the point where you said the body as a whole in general and talked about the difference of turning down a member. So what position are -- in the entire process of making these decisions about what districts to move, what districts to populate, you know, even though we did discuss communities of interest and that's a vague term of description because it means different things to different people.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: It could mean different things to different people, yeah.

REPRESENTATIVE RODNEY LYONS: Right, but with it being there is still important, whatever those conditions may be. But, what position does term-limited members have in that decision making? And I say that because when we went to the road, it showed all those different locations, people from the public came up and they expressed their concern about their district. And they talked about not only interest in communities and what have you there, but for example, in a performing district -- and I reference

1 performing district meaning that for example, we're
2 talking about 23, which was a minority district, if
3 that member was not turned out, the district still is
4 low in numbers. So when you make a decision as to
5 which one of the listed districts that you choose to
6 move based on the numbers of the population, where
7 does the term-limited portion rank at in that
8 decision-making, where all of the other factors are
9 re-districting in?
10 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: So it's one element,
11 you know? And I really want to phrase it based on
12 this. The term-limited portion is really something
13 that was given to me by the members of this body,
14 overwhelmingly, when I discussed the fact that we had
15 population shifts in Louisiana. This tremendous loss
16 of population in North Louisiana gains along the I-
17 10, I-12 corridor. I discussed that with everyone as
18 a group. I invited everyone from a regional
19 perspective to come in and talk to me and
20 overwhelmingly, the members said, "If you got to move
21 a district, look at the term-limited." Everybody. And
22 so, you know, part of our -- also our re-districting
23 criteria -- which isn't the law, obviously -- but
24 it's a document that we came up and we said, "This is
25 what we want to look to." Part of that had something

along the incumbents as well. So I think it's part of the decision. It's part of it, you know? The overriding thing with all of this -- with the re-districting is population, all right? You have to follow the population. That's our goal. They do a census, they tell us how many people are living in the area, and you got to go make these districts within the range and as close to that as possible or practicable, as we like to put. So I will tell you that it is -- it was one of the factors. Ranking them, I can't tell you -- You know, I took a holistic approach and I talked to everyone. I talked about the geography, I talked about the members' interest, I talked about what the public wanted, all of these things were part of the factor, but when it came down to this particular district, again --

[01:25:00]

I'll say it again, you know, one of the factors also was the lowest populated term-limited member in North Louisiana and you know, it's just a difficult decision. And then I had deep concerns, again, about the levels of BVAP that I was seeing in that region in the ability for a minority population to elect a candidate of his choice.

REPRESENTATIVE RODNEY LYONS: Okay, and I asked that question again because that's -- the public asked that question to me several times, because their concerns were if we're following the numbers as you alluded to, then the numbers dictate what it is so it should probably be. So in reference to the population of the district, they're more concerned with their overall representation, how are they going to you know, formulate whatever is participating in the district now relative to the member, because the members as we do know should come and go. But this whole process is particularly not in favor of -- it shouldn't be in favor of the members or the candidates, but the population who is there. So when we make decisions that's just going to decide whether or not the district as whole, or it moves or it stays, and we put the factor into as to whether a member is term-limited or not, or who's going to come or not. We could just as well say, "Look, who wants to run for this district if it's going to be district?" And then we'll see who we can choose and we'd make a [INDISCERNIBLE 01:26:17]. It's almost in reverse. So you did -- You know, you did answer --

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: But to answer that question -- So let me answer it then, based on the

way you've kind of bracketed it in there. It was not my number one decision. I looked at every single district, from Central Louisiana to North Louisiana, and then I talked to you, my colleagues. You know, that's -- Like I told you, I took a member-based approach with this. I didn't say, "What does John Stefanski feel like is the best for this state and he's going to do what he wants," and you know, follow along. I asked you all, "Hell, help me with this." You know? "This is a huge issue we have these laws in North Louisiana. How do you think we should best accomplish this goal?" And again, overwhelmingly, the members came in and said that. So, it was not my number one focus or my number one goal, but at the end of the day, let's talk about it again. The Louisiana Constitution has vested this right with us. It says the legislature shall do this, okay? You all are my colleagues; you all are all members of the legislature. We got to come together to figure out something that works, okay? And so I take your considerations -- that's a big part of this. But also, take the communities that we traveled to on the road show. I take all of the public's admitalls, I take all of that into consideration.

REPRESENTATIVE RODNEY LYONS: Okay, I just wanted to make sure that they knew -- the public knew -- when we were still talking about BVAP and all those things that they're like -- what those things mean, while we start talking about the decisions that are made and why are they made and you were clear. It wasn't part of the law, it's just part of one of the a processes that we did and it was a decision made based upon other factors that in the district decide to be moved or whatever. That's not part of the actual portion that we talked about, the law or the litigation piece that we defend and through all our testimony we have I see going on. So, thank you for answering my question.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Yes sir. Thank you, representative.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Thank you, Representative Lyons. Representative Duplessis is with some more questions.

VICE CHAIRMAN ROYCE DUPLESSIS: Thank you, Mr. Pro Tem. I try not to take more than one bite at the apple, but I was kind of left with no choice today.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: No worries.

VICE CHAIRMAN ROYCE DUPLESSIS: I was given the fact that my bill was, I mean, cited on multiple

occasions. I want to just first though speak to the -- a comment that was made with respect to population. The chair mentioned that the overriding theme, the overriding thing here is population and following the numbers. I just find it interesting that here we are, talking about -- despite the fact that House District 5 did remain on par instead of population, stayed within the deviation, so I get that piece. But when you look at the area as a whole, we're talking about keeping that district when the senate on the other side of the building -- last time I checked, they're working with the same census, have voted or are voting to move a senate district from the Shreveport -- the kettle bulge area, whatever you want to call it. I just find that interesting that one area deemed the population laws to be great enough to lose an entire senate seat, which is made up of 120,000, but we have all the house seats that are going to stay intact which is just 44,000. So, I find that issue very interesting, but I just want to make that point.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Yeah, let me make a quick comment about that. So, 10 years ago when districts were drawn, you know, they weren't necessarily drawn at the same numbers around the regions, meaning you can -- you have a range that

these districts can be. Sometimes they can be high, sometimes they could be low. Sometimes, they give you right on that ideal population. So, it is difficult to do a one-for-one comparison with the senate when they're three times the size of a house district, as well as the fact that those districts may have been drawn towards the low end 10 years ago.

[01:30:01]

And it has a much more dramatic effect when that population loses, versus the house may have drawn their districts in that region on the high level to accommodate for future laws that they may have seen. I am not here to tell you what happened 10 years ago.

VICE CHAIRMAN ROYCE DUPLESSIS: I get it.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: I wasn't here. This is my first shot at doing this stuff, but it's not as simple to the public, and I've tried explaining this to people as just "Well they're taking one, you should take one from the same region." That's all the [INDISCERNIBLE 01:30:25].

VICE CHAIRMAN ROYCE DUPLESSIS: I understand and I haven't been involved in those conversations, not sure what all the thinking was, just wanted to point that out. But I'll just make this last comment and wrap up because again, my bill has been referenced as

1 though it is my intent. It's not what I -- I haven't
2 asked this body or this committee to vote on that.
3 So, I will state because I didn't say it earlier why
4 I chose to defer the bill. And I think it's important
5 because once the bill became public, I heard from the
6 community that my bill didn't go far enough in terms
7 of creating what we could see. I asked the question
8 early on whether or not the current house make-up
9 adequately reflects the racial diversity of the
10 state. My answer is no, it doesn't. Many people in
11 the state agree with me. So my bill, quite frankly,
12 didn't go far enough. And there are -- I think maybe
13 there's an opportunity for us to have a conversation
14 about how we can create even more additional minority
15 seats, so I will not allow a bill that I filed as an
16 initial instrument. Last week, the speaker said this
17 is just one attempt, it's the first step. So I'll use
18 that same language in saying that was just a bill
19 that was filed, I have asked that it be deferred, but
20 that decision was largely made because once the
21 public and the community saw my bill, they felt like
22 it did not go far enough in terms of creating
23 additional; opportunities for minority-majority
24 seats. So I just want us to be all very, very clear.
25 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Sure.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: I definitely appreciate it and I reiterate that you've been the strongest advocate for increased minority participation regardless of everything. Representative White?

REPRESENTATIVE MALINDA WHITE: Yes. Thank you, acting chair. I too want to express appreciation for all the effort to herd 105 people and try to figure out for the population of Louisiana how we can be best represented. And I will say that thank you to you and our Vice Chair Royce Duplessis, and our Speaker Pro Tem, and especially our staff and those that are not even here at this moment that traveled with us all over the state so that we could gather the information and hear what everyone had to say. But just to be very clear on this process, this is an instrument that was put together, and I know you called me several times to drive all the way over two hours and two hours back to see my map and to you know, discuss it. So we did that many times, and I appreciate that opportunity. And staff being present, there was no outside people there, it was just and staff, and I want to be on the record saying that. Now, if there's others that were working on it behind the scenes that I don't know about, well that will be

1 answered by the -- but I did. I want to put that on
2 the record that there was always staff and they were
3 helping assist you through this process when I was
4 present. We only do this every 10 years; that's a
5 decade. Every decade. And I look at my parents' age
6 of death which was 69 and 73, and I'll be 55 in
7 April. So in 10 years, so many changes can occur and
8 we want to look to the future when we look at these
9 things. When we were looking at the maps and looking
10 at the attitudes of people, and the way they express,
11 and then we look at the law and what it requires. And
12 I think that as this process moves forward and this
13 bill goes to the floor, every member has seen this
14 map, has seen other maps that have been referenced at
15 this time in this process when it gets to the house
16 floor, every member will have an opportunity to
17 discuss in detail the area that they know. Because
18 even though I've traveled all over the state, I know
19 I don't know their area as well as I know mine. So
20 when, you know, I was asked to co-author a bill, I'm
21 not going to co-author a bill when I have not heard
22 the whole house debate their areas so that you can
23 make that balanced decision at the end of the day
24 because this only happens every 10 years. We have
25 been given this responsibility and I take that as an

immense responsibility for us to pay close attention to what we heard at the road show and the people that made the efforts to be there and have their voices heard as we carefully dissect this.

[01:35:04]

But this -- One question I have for you, can any member -- once this gets to the floor -- file an amendment and -- I think there's a new rule or a -- because of amendments and particularly, with maps that would change other people's areas and all of these things into consideration. They would have 24 hours and it was going to lay over anyway for us to all have those opportunities to really air out our differences in our region if we did not come together as a region and say, "This is what we want." Is that true?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Yes, so every member. This is a legislative instrument just like any other bill that we have filed. It has the ability to be able to amend, be amended, it takes the same actions in order for it to be law, and so yes. What we did, what is different than in some years is we've said, "Members, if you want to 'mess with' or amend this instrument, it is not only just like a normal bill that you change a line, and maybe we can run into the

-- any room and say -- or right here, and say 'Hey, I want to make this choice.' It is a lot more complicated than that." And staff has a number of checks that they have to make to make sure that we're doing what we're thinking we're doing. And so, all we ask is that a day before that instrument is scheduled, sit down with staff, start prepping on that so that we can -- they have time to be able to prepare. And really, again, our house rules -- our own house rules require 24 hours. I've actually cut that down and given less time than that, but it is much more of a notice thing like "Hey, if you want to make these amendments, please get with staff early because it's such -- it's very difficult on them." And I will take the -- I will pause and say, "I cannot thank staff enough," and I'm not going to look at them because they're going to -- because we've been spending too much time together, but I cannot thank staff enough for the work they put in this. It's one thing for us as legislators to come move in here and live in here, but I mean, they take the same type of time and deliberate approach that we take and it's been a wonderful thing. I can't thank staff enough.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: And just -- I don't mean to interject by doing it, I think the other consideration is you don't want to have amendments thrown on the fly because then, the public can't digest it. And so you know, there's the -- it's not just between us, it's to make sure the public has an opportunity to see the amendments because I think it cuts the other way that if we don't do it, then you have all kinds of accusations that we're just not giving the public an opportunity to weigh in. I just want to put that out there as well.

REPRESENTATIVE MALINDA WHITE: Again -- But yes, I do understand that. It's not changing a line of words, it is changing lines with people within those lines, and so --

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Exactly, you're talking about constituents on who they can vote for and who is going to be representative for the next 10 years so it's definitely something. The Pro Tem is exactly right and I'm remiss for not bringing that up. It is a huge part of this, it's not only for the members of the public as well.

REPRESENTATIVE MALINDA WHITE: And I appreciate all that effort, I just wanted to be very clear that this is a fluid document at this time. It can be

1 changed, but it has to be considered a lot more
2 lengthy than just a regular amendment. I would say
3 that if regions have not gotten together by now to
4 work those details out, then it's going to be very
5 difficult for them to do that on the floor. But is
6 going to be -- We still have that ability to do it
7 all the way through this process because -- Right?
8 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: 100%.
9 REPRESENTATIVE MALINDA WHITE: It's going to go
10 to the senate, you know, and it's got to go to the
11 governor, so.
12 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: It's got to go. It's
13 got to go over to the senate, go to the committee in
14 the senate, go to the floor of the senate, then it is
15 subject to action by the governor as well.
16 REPRESENTATIVE MALINDA WHITE: Correct, same as
17 all bills that we file, except these lines contain
18 people.
19 CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Exactly.
20 REPRESENTATIVE MALINDA WHITE: And we want to
21 make sure their voices are heard, and I just
22 appreciate all the efforts of them placed on that,
23 and I yield.
24 PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Thank you,
25 Representative White. And I'll also add that there is

a historical precedent that the house bill has been amended on the house floor, so it's not like it's a -- it's not something that hasn't happened before. It has happened. Well then, I think that concludes all the questions you have. I believe you have a set of amendments, is that correct?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: I do, yeah, if members of you would.

REPRESENTATIVE MALINDA WHITE: Say one more thing --

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Oh sure, go ahead and I'm taking the microphone away.

REPRESENTATIVE MALINDA WHITE: You had me on a live mic, so I'm just going to say.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: I got to take that off now.

REPRESENTATIVE MALINDA WHITE: I just want to say that we are doing this -- You know, we're not doing this on the fly. There are members that are capable of making the changes to it. I feel a little flustered because I lost my train of thought on that , so -- but don't leave me with a live mic next time [INDISCERNIBLE 01:39:49].

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Sorry about that. All right, that does conclude the questions and answers.

I believe we have a set of amendments, and just for the clarification, I believe the idea is to take up the amendments now.

[01:40:00]

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Let the amendments, I mean let the bill lie over there and looked at before we ever have a chance to vote on it and come back tomorrow and vote on the bill is that [INDISCERNIBLE 01:40:06]?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: That's my intent for handling this bill. Members it would be let's adopt the set of amendments I'm happy to discuss them in detail if you would like. Once we adopt these set of amendments if there any other amendments, we will consider those and then I would ask that we defer until tomorrow and take up the bill tomorrow with the expectation that we will probably be voting on it. So that is my intent. And so, Mr. Pro Tem, I do have amendments set I believe is 41, 44.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: I think they're behind Representative Jenkins' bill in your packets. If you're looking for members, look behind. It's 57.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: So members, the amendments set, it does a few things. It affects -- it is a switch in Pointe Coupee -- no, it's a switch

in West Baton Rouge Parish as well as East Baton Rouge Parish and then it is a switch in La Salle Parish, okay? It is another switch in St. James and Ascension Parish. It is another switch in Ascension Parish and then the final one is a swap in Beauregard and Vernon. And then in the case -- hold on, let me see. Okay. And then the corresponding house district for those are 18. So the first switch in East Baton Rouge and West Baton Rouge, 18, 29, 61, 62 and 63 swap of precincts. In the second, it is House District 22 and 20 in La Salle Parish. The St. James and Ascension, it's House District 58 and 81. In Ascension Parish, it's House District 88 and 81. In Beauregard and Vernon, it is House District 30 and 24 and it is a swap of precincts between those two and I'm happy to answering the questions about those. But again, if this committee adopts these amendments again, it will lie over and we'll have an opportunity to see or study those changes even more thoroughly on how they affect the whole map.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: You don't have any questions? Do you want to move to adopt those?

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: I move to adopt.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Chairman Representative Stefanski moves to adopt the

amendments, any objections? Seeing no objection the amendments are adopted. All right. So we're going to defer this bill until tomorrow.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Well, do we have --

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Go get publics, yeah.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: We have public and I don't know if we have any other amendments as of yesterday. It was just mine if we have any other amendments as well.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Okay. Representative LaCombe has a set of amendments set. Okay. Why don't we take up that now and then we follow up with a testimony. Representative LaCombe. Yeah, you do it from there.

REPRESENTATIVE JEREMY LACOMBE: Okay. All right. I too share the sentiment of everyone. Everyone on this committee has worked extremely hard to get this bill into the posture that we got it. As we go through all of the road shows and stuff, we've heard all of things, I presented a bill. I presented an amendment set here. This amendment set basically retains two precincts that I currently have in Iberville Parish that my district has always represented. I also have Representative Brown was here through this entire process. I know Chairman

Stefanski worked very diligently to try to get these districts and maps to look a certain way. This particular precinct, these two precincts in Iberville Parish again has always been represented by my district. It's a community of interest issue in regards to the Town of Marion who is adjacent only five minutes away from my office. There's no objection from Senator Brown because he's here if anybody wanted to talk but --

[OVERLAY]

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Consider it improves to the upgraded position.

REPRESENTATIVE JEREMY LACOMBE: Yeah I'm trying not to give Chad a promotion but I'd asked that this amendment set gets adopted on.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: All right. There are no questions on the amendment set. Representative LaCombe moves to adopt the amendments. Seeing no objection, those amendments are adopted. All right. Now, we move to public testimony and present and wishing to speak is Michael Bayham. Support [INDISCERNIBLE 01:44:34] misread the card. In opposition, State Representative Kenny Cox would like to speak.

[01:45:00]

[BACKGROUND CONVERSATION]

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY COX: Thank you Mr. Pro Tem. This comes at the destruction of my district and be straight up as I see it as the destruction. It's like you threw a landmine into my district and blew it into pieces as represented by five different people. I know there's something had to be done but at this point -- first of all let me say this, our district, my district, the census did not give us a good evaluation especially of African-Americans. I'm going to tell you why because in my district 60 to 70% of the people were afraid and when nobody go come knocking on their doors so that hurt everybody in sense. Well, I heard it also stated that whether you're at 51 or 51% how can you win that district? I own that district. My brother can win that district. I mean that's not a question of when you win, it's the work you put in. When they formed the district it was 53% and 33% of the minorities were registered to vote. I put together a collective plan that put everybody together and we register folks to vote and we register people in the university. I do want to thank you for the work that you've done and you kept the university together. Thank you for that. But you cracked my district and you cracked it really bad.

All of the minorities are broken up so that there will be only like in every one of the districts, 27, 28%. You broke the heart of the people because now I brought them so them so they will have something to vote for. Now they will not have anything to vote, they may not even be represented. You put them in District 5, hmm, hmm. We see how that has been done. Someone told me well, that's Seabaugh's district. Well, Seabaugh is not going to be there. There's a lot of Seabaughs right behind him. Now, I don't have a problem with saying it. We cracked this community into so many pieces. I got several -- most of the mayors are African-American. And then you take my district where I grew up at and then you take it and you put it in completely in a district with -- in District 5. You know, it's a very difficult thing for me. You know I didn't think that this would bother me. I didn't think because I've been to war and I've had to do a lot of killing and a whole lot of other things. But this bothered me more I have not been able to rest because we have a collective group of historic district where people have something to vote for. For the first time in over 300 some years, they've had an African-American who comes along and who would set the pace and who has done as much as he

can with the situation that we've had. And our current district has been divided. It's a district of history. That district has -- actually Marie Coincoin was an African lady who formed the Cane River, who made all the people that moved out in the Natchitoches, Alexandria, Coushatta, Red River and she became a slave owner but she didn't run a slave organization like everybody else. Nobody ran away. She developed a group of people that are known as the Cane, we call them the Cane River people but there are plantations, there are tourists.

[01:50:11]

This is on the national register but here we are again dealing with destruction of a district that has finally given the people in my district the right to vote and give them a reason to vote. Let me tell you a story. When I was a kid, I was five years, six years old, my great, great grandmother took me to town and there was a white gentleman walking down the street, he had on overalls, he chewed tobacco, he has some coming down his side. She pulled me off the sidewalk and said these words, do not look them in the eyes, and I did not understand it at the time but it was a way of survival because what happened is, is that if you look wrong, they could ride on you. I

lived in that environment. That's what I grew up in and then I came home after fighting wars, fighting for everyone in here. I never asked what color you were when I fought. I never ask what party you were. We fought and killed indiscriminately for you. Of course, American hero comes back, I was at 911 they called me a hero, it ended my career. But this kind of hurts me to my heart that you would break my district up to this point where -- and people look at me and ask me why would you do this? They think I did it. I said no, I didn't do it and we're still fighting for you and we're still trying to set you a place. They don't realize that when you divide our people up like that and you now give me 20% here or 25% right there, there's no representation. They don't have any rights so this is voter suppression. I'm telling you what it's going to be. Because our people won't -- they don't have anything to stand up to go vote for. This is voter suppression at its greatest. And if handled correctly, you're pushing towards getting a super majority in the House of Representative and that's going to be a real tough seed to swallow. I won't be here with you guys but I -- you know I've come through a lot of struggles here. My district come from an enslaved environment,

then we went in to Jim Crow. I mean I even don't know what Jim Crow is man but that was a horrible time for African-American, me as a young kid growing up but I wanted to go out and do something good for this country. I came back and I became something that I never thought I would be. I didn't like legislators. I didn't know what you really did but it caused a lot of problems because I was concerned because we want to make decision in the military, we want to make it then there and get it done. We've changed a lot of it. But for my district to be fragmented, cracked and then your districts to be packed and then minimize what my people have so they -- you've taken a historic district that took over 300 years and you just threw a landmine and it's like killing a deer and skinning them out and throwing a piece to this guy and a piece to this guy and a piece to that guy. There's no representation there. I'm just a little country boy from Coushatta, Louisiana who now is in Seabaugh's district. And I say Seabaugh, I don't have anything against Seabaugh but you know how Seabaugh is at times. The 23rd District was created from minorities so they would be represented and have the opportunity to stand up but this is pressing them down suppressing the vote. I mean you don't think as

suppressing the vote but when the person doesn't have anything to vote for, he will not come out or she will not come out to vote. Louisiana when you turn around, when this comes back after 10 years, when they register everybody you all are going to be shocked because there was a lot of African-Americans that was not counted during this election, during this census.

[01:55:03]

Wow. As a young man picking cotton, working for everybody that would give us a job, you'll never know what you're going to be. But we worked hard and as my mother say, make them remember your name and I didn't understand that. She said, you'll be the best that you can be at whatever you do and when people say your name, they will say you fought for them, that you did what was right, you did what was just. And all I can do now is apologize to my people. Apologize with great disdain. I did not know that this would bother me like this. It hurts me to my core that I saw young men and women die for this country and then I see -- and I feel this is very -- it's not just to me and my people. I'm only saying that we can only -- Louisiana is sending a bad message out. I'm just telling you what this is going to turn out to be and

this is going to go courts and do all of these different things. Look, I don't have anything against anybody here. I love you all because you all -- that's what God tell us to do, love everybody. Now some of us are harder to love than others. I mean you know, let's be real about it. You all got people that's really hard to love yourselves and being that way, I struggled here as to what is best to say. I don't want anything to mess with Louisiana. I love Louisiana. I come from Louisiana. I fall for Louisiana. But we're saying that we can just crack up some districts that took 300 years to put together or over 300 years. That we will -- I want to say this, I did my best to serve this district and my apology to my people that I've never gone into a battle where I felt my hands were tied behind my back and I was pushed in the river and I don't swim very well. That's what I am. I'm swimming but I'm just barely holding on. I know I saw all going to get better before it's over with. But law, you guys got to understand that the America is at one of its worst times in the history and we are better together. But this really exist since my people are running for cover and hopefully I didn't say anything that will bother you or hurt you in any kind of way but you got

to remember that you know, when you're fighting on the battlefield, this is a battle. But you all send me out here I don't have an ammunition. I have Duplessis and Jenkins who put stuff together and I appreciate everybody's work but I want to say this one last time and then I'm going to vacate the mic or if anybody got to ask me any questions, is that from slavery to Jim Crow to the right to vote, we're suppressing all of these things. We're suppressing the right to vote. I think this is really not constitutional but I may be wrong, I'm not a lawyer but I spent a few days down here. I ask that you -- when it comes to time that you vote for this that you consider and reconsider and say hey we can do a better job of putting this together. Why would we get rid of this historic district and give it to somebody who's -- I don't know if they will even take care of them and I don't want to talk about anybody. I did talk about Seabaugh. I'm sorry Seabaugh but you know.

[02:00:00]

At the end of the day, we will all walk away from this and we were still be friends but this is a very difficult, heartbreaking, heart-wrenching, difficult time and there's others that have things that they want and let me say this one more time, this census

was not accurate and you may -- be careful that your reap what you sow. Be careful because you know, when it's all said and done God is in charge of everything and I say that because I've been in some places where I just -- all I could do was ask God to help me. I couldn't let my men know that because I had to be the rock. But when I went in my tent, I cried because I felt like maybe I was going to lose some of them. So I tell them, you fight, you fight and in this case I ain't got no solders. It's just me. And I've been chosen as a sacrificial lamb to be quartered, divided, chewed on and I asked if I get spit on. This is a very difficult thing for me so I asked that at all the hard work you did and I don't deny that you did talk to me but you know, it really was basically you know, district is gone and lets us be real about it. That's kind of how I got it. But he did say I don't have any other choices. So Stefanski, I don't hold anything personal. The next time we [INDISCERNIBLE 02:02:06], I'm not going to push you out. So you don't have to worry about that. You know, I do have a post-traumatic year. So, you all catch me up if I start pushing. You know, if I run over and get it. No. But having said all lot of that and I won't be [PH 02:02:28] delaying anymore. Just

1 remember that this is the Cane River heritage area
2 that you take in and thrown in the hands of people
3 that they don't know who they are and they won't
4 know. Listen, you know you're the representative, you
5 know you represent the people when they call and ask
6 you about their toilet that plays backing up. They
7 called and asked me and so I said, well you know that
8 ain't my job but I can tell you who you got to go to.
9 That's when you know. Now, I get sick of that but I
10 mean I don't really get sick. I just used to kind of
11 laugh and tell them the direction that they should
12 go. That's how I work in this district. People feel
13 like it and there's a couple of folks that you say
14 don't call me no more. It was the same question over
15 and over and over. It hadn't changed. I thank you
16 guys for giving me an opportunity to have the time to
17 sit here and talk to you guys. It is a very difficult
18 moment for me and I'm not willing to just kind of lay
19 my things on a table but this is heartbreaking and
20 this is how my people feel because they poured this
21 into me and I keep telling them it ain't over with
22 yet. I tell my folks that all the time. I tell
23 everybody. When we was in -- you know if the numbers
24 were insurmountable, I tell my guys it ain't over
25 with until the last bullet is out and when I say fix

bayonet and charge, that's when it's over. I thank you Duplessis and Jenkins and everyone else who worked. I think that the one thing I will say to you guys, it's honorable to serve the people but it's most honorable when you serve all the people. When I served in my district, I served black, white, Indian and I even passed the Indian bill that wouldn't come through the House of Representative but I waited until the last 15 minutes nobody paying attention, I put to the resolution in, it passed and now they'll try. Oh yeah I did that because nobody's paying attention in the last 15 to 20 minutes.

[02:05:00]

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY COX: They're all packing up their stuff. I've been here for several years, and I knew that was the thing I had to do. I did it.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Representative, you do have a question. I don't know if you want to take it.

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY COX: Yeah, I'll take any question. You know I am not --

[OVERLAY]

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Okay. Representative Lyons has a question.

REPRESENTATIVE RODNEY LYONS: Thank you, Mr. Pro Tem. It's not much of a question, more than just a

comment. What you just displayed is the essence of what true representation is about and feeling the pulse of the people you represent and fighting until the end for the people you represent in a cause that you may not be here, you know, to defend them anymore, but you're fighting through that. And my hat goes off to you. My heart goes out to you because I feel that, and there's nothing to walk away from this process to say that Representative Cox didn't leave on the line for them. And for your representation of the district and you'll fight, I commend you as a colleague and proud to serve with you and share that with you. I want to take this moment publicly to thank you for that passion, for your drive and your concern and your love for your district. And with that, that's all Mr. Pro Tem. Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY COX: Thank you.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Thank you, Representative Lyons. Representative White.

REPRESENTATIVE MALINDA WHITE: Hi, thank you Rep. Cox. We always like your salute at the end of our pledge.

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY COX: Yeah.

REPRESENTATIVE MALINDA WHITE: And it really does resonate in us always. I read your biography. You are

a hero, and I appreciate that your very presence here and that you served this district so well. I have a great appreciation for that. My question to you is when you sit down to discuss your area and being a third termer, I'm not sure how that goes r, I mean, you know, because I know that everybody was looked at third termers would be less --

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY COX: Yes.

REPRESENTATIVE MALINDA WHITE: -- hurtful, but it is hurtful anyway regardless because you know who you represent and they're special. Did you have the opportunity to say what can we do this and this and this to look at the different precincts of how you could increase your numbers to keep your district whole? Where you able to work with the Chairman and staff to do some of those things?

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY COX: No, you know, once they made a decision, we didn't -- it was not. I did not talk to him in reference to most of that. The counter decision I think was pretty much made. And once that decision was made, it pretty much took the wind out of my sail I'll be honest with you because there was -- I would have never put my brothers, my district, where I grew up at in somebody that's going

to control them from North Louisiana, I mean from Caddo. They will never -- it won't work.

REPRESENTATIVE MALINDA WHITE: So, within your region, did you have a regional meet with everyone --

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY COX: Yeah, I met with them.

REPRESENTATIVE MALINDA WHITE: -- to discuss how that it should go out --

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY COX: And I think the decision --

REPRESENTATIVE MALINDA WHITE: -- and try to preserve it with --

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY COX: Yeah.

REPRESENTATIVE MALINDA WHITE: -- amendments or are given that information to the determine --

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY COX: They told me that I can still do that. I mean, he did say that. And then what happens is that once -- the decision was not really made until, I mean, Wednesday night, I think, but maybe it was made before that, but I didn't know that. But Wednesday night was a night that I went up and I went to see them and we talked about what went down.

REPRESENTATIVE MALINDA WHITE: So, the map was different when you looked at it prior to --

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY COX: No.

REPRESENTATIVE MALINDA WHITE: -- Wednesday night?

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY COX: No. It was not different.

REPRESENTATIVE MALINDA WHITE: Your area was preserved at that time and you say change?

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY COX: No, it was not preserved. It wasn't. They hadn't drawn it yet. They hadn't drawn what was going to happen.

REPRESENTATIVE MALINDA WHITE: Okay.

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY COX: And maybe, the termer may, can explain it to you better than what I can. The one bottom line is was that somebody had to go.

REPRESENTATIVE MALINDA WHITE: Yes, the numbers tell us that.

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY COX: Yeah.

REPRESENTATIVE MALINDA WHITE: Right.

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY COX: But the problem was, was that the numbers in general was not -- my numbers weren't the worst numbers. I only needed a couple of thousand people to keep a district.

REPRESENTATIVE MALINDA WHITE: Right. And did you discuss that with the staff?

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY COX: I said that, but that was not, you know, they discussed it and discussed it

and the decision I think was finally made. I wasn't called up there. I just was -- somebody said, "Well, maybe I'll go see him." So, I went to see him. I waited outside. A guy asked me if I had an appointment. I said, "No, I don't have an appointment and I'm going in that room." And they went in and he said, "Well, Representative Cox is out here."

[02:10:03]

And he said, "Well, come on in," and they were working on some stuff. They finished it up. And then he said, "Hey, this is what we have."

REPRESENTATIVE MALINDA WHITE: Well, so when you say you're one soldier, you actually have some soldiers up there around you --

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY COX: Well, listen.

REPRESENTATIVE MALINDA WHITE: -- that are definitely going to fight for you.

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY COX: Well, that's not true.

REPRESENTATIVE MALINDA WHITE: And so, as a delegation, wouldn't you all get together and work this out before you bring it here and say on Wednesday, you just saw that you were the one cut. Did you work with your delegation which I believe -- I feel you have some pretty good soldiers there.

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY COX: I do.

REPRESENTATIVE MALINDA WHITE: I'm honest. So, and I won't mention names.

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY COX: Well, they're not -- we did --

REPRESENTATIVE MALINDA WHITE: But, I mean, did you work with that delegation?

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY COX: I did call them and we did talk about it, but --

REPRESENTATIVE MALINDA WHITE: Did you work and kind of reserved that area for your people?

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY COX: This is why I called, we had a meeting and we have -- you know, all the people come online, the ministers and all those folks. But I didn't know that it was completely being taken out until Wednesday. Let me just being straight about it. And we talked about it and people want to come and they want to do protest and all this stuff. So, Deplussis has -- and, you know, a solution. Jenkins' representative has a solution. And so, I figured that maybe we will go and I had to go with people who had that -- this is something that just new to me. I've never -- I've been here out of all of us I assume because it's really new. So, I was not -- I was going along with what they had and that was it and my people thought, "Well, maybe we're going to

stay together and if we had to go be divided", they did talk about that. We did not talk about how it came out though. The way it came out. I mean, the one thing for sure was that Northwestern State under one legislator and that is the only thing that really positive that kind of came out of the whole thing that we kept the university under one legislator.

REPRESENTATIVE MALINDA WHITE: Yes, sir. I understand that. Well, I just thought it was important for me to better understand how you -- if this map just dropped on you and you didn't realize if your delegation met. I know in North Shore delegation, we met, we discussed several times, you know, to work amongst ourselves because our population grew. It was the opposite of you.

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY COX: Yes. Yeah, I understand

[OVERLAY]

REPRESENTATIVE MALINDA WHITE: You know, so everything was a little bit different. But I just feel like you have some soldiers there with you and there are times for amendments and other bills and things like that. I would say continue to fight on to preserve your people and that's all I have to say. Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY COX: Thank you. Thank you for your comments and it has been a pleasure working with you as well. I know this --

[OVERLAY]

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Thank you, Representative White. I do want to be clear though, Representative Stefanski had a meeting with you one-on-one.

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY COX: That's right.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: And he had a group meeting with you and your delegation. And then, he sent you an email and said, "I'm always available to you. You were scheduled for me."

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY COX: Yeah.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Then, the Wednesday night, you're talking about is the third actual meeting opportunity to discuss about this.

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY COX: Yes, right.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Just be clear.

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY COX: No, honestly, he didn't have any meetings with me. He had meetings, but we had not made a decision at those points in time. It happened on Wednesday night and they were drawing the district up. I came up. I understand. It's like anything, I mean I understand if somebody's

-- it's going to happen to somebody. I just didn't -- I don't like that. I really don't like the way it happened because in all reality, we should have had another district, another African-American district, and the numbers will tell you that and it could have been done. But what we did and I say we because I'm part of this legislature. I'll get a chance to vote on it, and we push my people into 25% over here, 26% over there. And to get back to one thing that the Chairman said, "Well, we didn't, you know, with a district like that with 50.01%, probably it'd be difficult to win. It was difficult to win in the first time around. But guess what? Nobody ever ran against me again because they spent so much money. And plus, I was not beatable and I say that because that was the truth.

[02:15:00]

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: No, I think you're a valued member of the legislature. I mean, everybody loves you. I think it's nothing personal as far as that goes.

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY COX: Well, honestly, I never -- now, let me make that get it perfectly straight. I never said that it was anything personal.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: I mean, I just say that.

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY COX: I know you said that, but I want to keep it clear. It was not personal in any stretch of the imagination, I just feel like we've been cracked and divided and my people have otherwise no more.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: In my perspective, you've been a great representative of your people.

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY COX: Well I appreciate that.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: [INDISCERNIBLE 02:15:26] as well.

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY COX: You know what I told you a long time ago when we first met, so I'll just leave it at that.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Representative Deshotel does have a question for you and or comment.

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY COX: Yes sir.

REPRESENTATIVE DARYL ANDREW DESHOTEL: Thank you, Mr. Pro Temp.

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY COX: We made this guy right here. Your shadow made you [INDISCERNIBLE 02:15:37].

REPRESENTATIVE DARYL ANDREW DESHOTEL: Well, you're actually stealing my thunder. First, I want to

say thank you for your service for our country and service to our state and service to your district. You know, when I first came here, you and I hit it off pretty quickly.

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY COX: Yeah.

REPRESENTATIVE DARYL ANDREW DESHOTEL: Because we have something in common.

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY COX: Right.

REPRESENTATIVE DARYL ANDREW DESHOTEL: You know, when I started my business, it was your people, your area that gave me that start. And, you know, I was always proud to say that you are their representative because you've done a phenomenal job and I always respected what you've done. So, I just want to say thank you and I appreciate you.

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY COX: You know, to say what you did, you set up communications that later on became a big business for you. But that same communications have put together - they're putting together a technical training center that's the state of the art using some of the same communications that you have, which I think that our state needs to turn to because we don't have trained workers. And I've tried for 10 years to get us to lower the ACT Score for the top tech so that we can start training people

in school and start the -- when we do some of this. I got some things done but nobody wants to vote on that. We got the money there. We don't lower the score. We put those people in prison. But with your system that you gave, I mean, it's going to make that school produce some awesome mechanics, welders, electricians, plumbers, which we need.

REPRESENTATIVE DARYL ANDREW DESHOTEL: Again, thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY COX: Thank you, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE DARYL ANDREW DESHOTEL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker Pro Temp.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Alright, that includes all the questions. Do you have any further comments?

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY COX: All I want to say is I want to -- I guess God wanted me to go through this. Maybe and I'm somewhat saddened and humbled by this because, in battle, somebody has to lose. And to corner phrase somebody said, it ain't over until the fat lady sings and I hope nobody finds any offence that I said that this is something I read somewhere. So don't come after me trying to get me over something like that. We've gotten so sensitive now. So, I thank you guys once again for hearing me. I'm greatly disappointed and I apologize to all of my

constituents. Not that it's over with but that I didn't come out with a clear straightforward victory in the beginning. So, I thank you Mr. Pro Tem and a very good question as well.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Thank you. Representative Roy Daryl Adams is next to speak.

REPRESENTATIVE ROY DARYL ADAMS: I'm ready.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Alright, Representative.

REPRESENTATIVE ROY DARYL ADAMS: Thank you, Speaker Pro Tem, Chairman and the committee. Thank you all for hearing us today. My name is Roy Daryl Adams. I represent District 62, the beautiful Felicianas and part of East Baton Rouge. They wanted to divide, take away West Feliciana from me and give me East Feliciana and part of East Baton Rouge. Let me tell you about the District as it is today. East and West Feliciana rural areas, I have part of East Baton Rouge which is mostly the rural area of East Baton Rouge. It's north of the high school in Zachary. They're going to take it away. Angola is not in my district, which is in West Feliciana, but everybody that works -- not everybody. A lot of people that work at Angola live in West Feliciana or East Feliciana. So, I get a lot of calls from them,

and those are proud people in the Felicianas. They trust us. Each and every one of you all, they trust us to represent them, you know, not for our better is for them. We were working for them and that's what we all need to understand who we work for and they're my people. You know, they have stood up for me. I never was in politics to the special session for Kenny Harvard and I won. Then, I had to run again nine months later and I won.

[02:20:02]

And I didn't win by majority. I won. I won from the people, the core, you know. And you all want to take them away half of my district. I've talked to the Chairman. He said, "This is the way it's going to be. You know, its worth to try." You know, I can live with it. We can work. But why take them away? The Felicianas are East and West Feliciana. That is one community. We've been there. They've had the same rep since -- I can tell you the same representative, east and west Feliciana. And, you know, we have the mental hospital in Jackson, Louisiana and DCI which is part of the prison system in East Feliciana. We have the mentally insane, which is in East Feliciana. But all along, we have the judicial system in East and West Feliciana. It's one. It's the same judge. It's the

same DA. You know, but we're going to divide it up now which ain't right in my mind. That's me saying this for the people that are calling, they want to know why. Why are we dividing it up? And I never got to go by the census. We got to do numbers. My district, the population, the ratio, we were good. Even after the census, my district was good. But now, we're going to divide it up and move everybody around. And, you know, you all have the vote. We have the vote and that's my beef. I'm here for my people, the district. Wherever you put it, I'm going to represent everybody to my fullest. And, you know, that's my beef.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Thank you. Representative Royce Duplessis has a question or comment for you.

REPRESENTATIVE ROYCE DUPLESSIS: I don't know that my question is directed towards Representative Adams. I think I would like to hear his concerns addressed if at all possible because we talked about keeping communities of interest together. It sounds like what's going to happen to his district is that you're breaking up a community of interest. So, I didn't know if there was any willingness or desire from the Chair who's been leading this process to

just help illustrate the rationale behind this move. We've talked extensively about House District 23, but I don't think there's really been much conversation around this and I just want to see if that would be an opportunity for that.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Yeah. I mean, look, we have an opportunity tomorrow. He's going to come back with the bill. You want to reserve your questions for tomorrow? I mean, I think that maybe just for the sake of time.

REPRESENTATIVE ROYCE DUPLESSIS: Fair enough.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: If you want to do this, --

REPRESENTATIVE ROYCE DUPLESSIS: That's fine. I just think there just probably needs to be some public discourse on it because we talked about keeping communities of interest together, so.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: No, I hear you, and I think it's an important point and I think we do have another bill to do and some more cards. You know, we will have that shot out tomorrow. I think that's the last question. Mr. Adams, is there anything else? Representative Adams, I'm sorry.

REPRESENTATIVE ROY DARYL ADAMS: No, I'm good. That's it.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Alright, thank you. Next, we have Chris Kaiser with the ACLU of Louisiana.

CHRIS KAISER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker Pro Tem members. My name is Chris Kaiser. I'm the advocacy director with the ACLU of Louisiana here in opposition to House Bill 14. I want to start by acknowledging sincerely that I know this is a monumental task. Each of these maps are really difficult to put together. But I think this one in particular has so many moving parts and 105 districts. So, I just wanted to say that at the outside, I do appreciate what a ton of work went into this, not only from the Chair and also staff. That being said, we have this --

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Can you get closer to the microphone? I think it's not picking up your --

CHRIS KAISER: Is that better?

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Yes.

CHRIS KAISER: Thank you. With all that being said, we have serious concerns that if enacted in its current form, House Bill 14 would violate Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act. We've had a lot of discussion so far about District 23 in particular and that is important, but I want to zoom out a little

bit and talk about our concerns under Section 2 specifically. As you know, black voters and voters of color in general are significantly underrepresented in the house map as it stands and even though they've gained share of population statewide since 2010, House Bill 14 basically preserves the status quo. And so, even though we have about 33 percent of the state that is black and African-American, this map would preserve only 27 percent of our house districts that are majority black.

[02:25:00]

I think it was Representative Carter who mentioned earlier that in order to achieve actual proportionality, you'd actually have to probably six or seven districts and get up to the 35 range just for reference. Also, the fact is that there are many house districts that are currently at 60, 70, even 80% black voting-age population and these districts could be unpacked to create additional majority-minority opportunity districts. Those districts are bound and you have to remember that when a court would consider a map for Section 2 compliance, the first precondition under Gingles v. Thornburg is the question whether in a given district whether voters of color, minority voters exist in sufficient

compactness and population to support an additional majority-minority district. There are many examples of where that's true. And, yet, in House Bill 14, my count was there are 16 districts that are above 60% black voting-age population. There are nine that remain over 70% black voting-age population. And so, we just think there's a lot of opportunity here to do better and achieve Section 2 compliance. So, I know that we've talked a lot about Gingles v. Thornburg in other hearing. So, I don't want to belabor the point. I'm happy to open up to questions. But I do want to make clear that we think there needs to be significantly more minority representation in this map to comply with Section 2.

PRO TEMPORE TANNER MAGEE: Representative Stefanski has a question for you.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Thank you, Acting Mr. Pro Tem. You talked about the high minority districts, is that a similar situation which you've seen that we've attempted here in House District 62 and 63, a district that was 78% and is now going to 70? Would that meet your criteria of what you're suggesting this committee do?

CHRIS KAISER: Well, so the question would be whether those districts would perform currently for

the candidate of choice for voters of color in that district. So, perhaps, but the question is also more broadly statewide, how much representation that we achieved. And so, even granting the premise that one or two is in this map, that doesn't reach the bar for Section 2.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Exactly what you specifically referenced house districts that had a very high minority population and I'm giving you example of something that this committee or rather that this bill has attempted to do, which is take a very high BVAP district in an attempt to create a new one adjacent to it. So, my question to you is, you're the one who gave that example. You listed the numbers. With that, what we are attempting to do in House District 62 and 63 this be something similar to what you're discussing just considering those two districts, not the state?

CHRIS KAISER: Yeah, I think that a lot more goes into their analysis. You have to look at the racially polarized voting analysis in that and look at how those districts perform. So, I couldn't answer that standing here just based on that.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: But in essence, taking a district that is very high BVAP and shifting some

of that population in adjacent district to create a new majority-minority district, isn't that what you just suggested this committee do?

CHRIS KAISER: Yeah. And so, in mechanics, the way that you would create additional majority-minority districts is to unpack districts that are currently packed that could perform for multiple candidates of choice.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: And so, my question to you is and without getting down into the voting analysis, in essence what we have done in District 62 and 63 is exactly what you're suggesting we should look to, correct?

CHRIS KAISER: In concept, in the mechanics, that is what probably has to happen in many other parts of the state.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: But for 62 and 63, what you're suggesting these to happen in the other parts of the state we are doing generally?

CHRIS KAISER: I can't answer that to those specific districts because I don't know the racially-polarized voting analysis for those.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: Okay. But I just -- and I get it. You don't want to be specific. But when you come to a committee and you say, "Here are the number

of districts that are X and you need to do Y, and I tell you about a specific example where we done that and you go walking and say anything about that." You understand how that could be confusing to the committee possibly.

CHRIS KAISER: Perhaps. But, I mean, I think that I'm doing my best to explain what the limits of the analysis are here. And so, to come down and say that you've achieved something that complies with Section 2 and that's specific insight.

CHAIRMAN JOHN STEFANSKI: I didn't ask you that. In concept I'm asking, have we done that?

CHRIS KAISER: In concept, the way that you would create an additional majority-minority district on the path to Section 2 compliance is to unpack districts that are currently packed and could perform for multiple candidates.

[02:30:00]

REP. JOHN STEFANSKI: In concept, after analyzing this bill, have we done that in House District 62 and 63?

CHRIS KAISER: Again, I can't answer that based on the racially polarized voting.

REP. JOHN STEFANSKI: I didn't ask you that. I asked you in concept. You said you've made a very

1 general statement about in concept about what we
2 could do. I am asking you in concept and it appears
3 we're doing exactly what what you just suggested. So,
4 what I'm asking you is that in House District 62 and
5 63, haven't we done in concept? It's essentially the
6 exact thing you just suggested this committee that we
7 do.
8 CHRIS KAISER: That is an example of the kind of
9 mechanics that would have to take place to create
10 additional majority-minority districts on the path to
11 complying to Section 2.
12 REP. JOHN STEFANSKI: That's good enough. Thank
13 you Mr. Pro tem.
14 REP. TANNER MAGEE: Thank you. And look, and I'm
15 going to be just upfront, frank and honest with you,
16 I was frustrated the last time you testified to this
17 committee because every time we ask you about a
18 specific committee or specific district, you crawfish
19 back out of it and say, "Well, I don't know the
20 information. I'm not prepared to talk about that
21 today." But these are the things we're going to talk
22 about. This map has been published. You would think
23 you would know this is a specific issue to you which
24 you're the one who raised to this committee. Frankly,
25 I would have the expectation that you're not the

general public. You are a -- where'd you go to law school?

CHRIS KAISER: University of Cincinnati.

REP. TANNER MAGEE: And so you had -- how long you worked this area?

CHRIS KAISER: A few years.

REP. TANNER MAGEE: Right. So this is not some by coming off not knowing anything, you know this stuff. You've deep dived in all the data. I feel like there's an expectation if you're going to raise the issue and then we're going to ask you detailed information about the issue that you would know the data on all these issues and say it doesn't meet this criteria and you're sitting here and crawfishing back out of it using words like mechanics and concepts and stuff like that. But you know these two districts, you know that they did perform in the past. That information is readily available to you. You have the resources to answer it and you keep backing out. You did this last time to me and frankly, it frustrates me.

CHRIS KAISER: Mr. Speaker Pro tem, first of all, the last time we spoke I want to acknowledge I was a little confused about what you're asking about and I will say that if I recall correctly, what we were

talking about was changes that were made to district boundaries in your area of the state in our illustrative map that didn't -- they weren't necessary to create --

REP. TANNER MAGEE: I know but look, illustrative map, that is the most ridiculous statement I can think of. If you're not proposing a serious map for consideration, then why are you proposing it? We can all make illustrative maps. I mean why should we sit here and consider things you're saying if it's for illustrative purposes because when you say illustrative, it means even you don't think it's a real map. So why should we sit here and consider it when you're telling the committee that we don't think this is something that's actually practical.

CHRIS KAISER: Here's what I would say Mr. Speaker. I think you and many members of the committee have acknowledged that this is a really long and complicated process that involves a lot of back and forth. There has to be a starting point and so what we have tried to do -- just to speak to the question about calling it an illustrative map or whatever term you want to choose. We've tried to highlight places that can be unpacked to support additional minority, representation across the state.

I've called it an illustrative map because it's meant to be a starting point for conversations and I think our exchange actually is a really good example of that. After we spoke, we went back and said, "Look, can we just make those district boundaries look more like what the current map does because we got this feedback" and in fact we were able to. So I think that's what I would say about calling it an illustrative map. Not that it's not a serious proposal but you know, we need that kind of back and forth on those types of things.

REP. TANNER MAGEE: Sure. And look, I mean I think to me the interesting thing is that you've used in response to us things like when Representative Stefanski asked you for details. You will say it was about more of the factors or this is the process and when we used those terms, those terms are looked at by and lobbied back at us from -- I'm not saying you specifically, because I know I haven't heard you say that but from maybe your side of the argument that we were somehow not answering the question, but that's what you've done for the last like 10 minutes. So I agree with you that it's a lot of factors and takes a lot more analysis. It's not as easy as just looking at least three districts and all of those things. I

agree with you 100 percent of what you're saying. The point is though is that it's easy to do illustrative maps. It's easy to do things that don't have to get 53 votes to get from the next chamber, but we are dealing in reality here. We deal with political practical realities. So it gets frustrating when somebody pushes back and asks for more information from you and the questions always like well I don't know.

CHRIS KAISER: I can appreciate that. What I would say is this, we have identified in our plan and again, we're not proposing that we put out is the only possible way to do this. We've shown some ways to create additional minority representation. What we put in during the road show, we took districts that were packed in the Caddo Bossier area. We took districts that were packed in the Baton Rouge area and showed where we can draw additional majority-minority districts there. That's not the only approach necessarily but we're showing you that it's possible.

[02:35:00]

REP. TANNER MAGEE: Right? And I think what Representative Stefanski was trying to draw out and I think everybody in the room knows it was that he

actually did it in District 62 and 63. He wanted you to admit that he did it and you couldn't admit it because you're afraid if you admit that he actually did something that's helpful to your side that you're giving up the whole game and so you're going to keep pushing back on it and crawfish away from it to never acknowledge the fact that it actually happened.

CHRIS KAISER: The reason that I didn't want to define that answer like that is because that wasn't a specific example that we did in our plan and I haven't done that analysis not because it seemed like it was beneficial to either side of the argument.

REP. TANNER MAGEE: Thank you. Here's Representative Carter.

REP. WILFORD CARTER: It seemed to begin to a point of being argumentative, but I want to clear something up. You submitted a map, your organization submitted a map.

CHRIS KAISER: That's right.

REP. WILFORD CARTER: And you can't file nothing because you're not a representative right?

CHRIS KAISER: That's correct.

REP. WILFORD CARTER: So you need somebody to either accept your map and file it. You're just making a submission.

CHRIS KAISER: That's right.

REP. WILFORD CARTER: And so based on your submission, you have identified certain areas of the state that is compacted with black voters that can be decompacted a little bit and create more minority-majority districts, is that right?

CHRIS KAISER: That's right.

REP. WILFORD CARTER: So, what Mr. Speaker Pro tem and the chairman, they make these points and we all understand their points but they're making points that you are not in a position and I have to really competitively with their answers because you have to have somebody to file a bill. We can all file a bill; I can file a bill. You can't file no bill.

CHRIS KAISER: I would agree with that.

REP. WILFORD CARTER: All right, and so as we sit here today, the ACLU submission for this reapportionment of the House has not been filed.

CHRIS KAISER: That's right.

REP. WILFORD CARTER: Now, I noticed something about it that concerned me and I can understand your point about compactness, but in some areas of the state, that's not a question of why it might be compacted. There's no reason to decompact it. Like in my area of the state. I'm known as Democrat in three

1 parishes I think, okay? Down here. And so, my
2 district is around 73, 74 percent of minority
3 district. So taking my segment -- reducing my
4 compactness if you would call it that, it doesn't
5 benefit nobody other than one might argue and may
6 make some of the more -- may be more conservative
7 district near me less conservative okay? But it's
8 still going to be a Republican district. So, I don't
9 necessarily agree with all your conclusions, but I do
10 agree with your basic principle that there are some
11 districts in some places in the state such as around
12 District 23, District 62, some in the New Orleans
13 area, Baton Rouge area, up in north central part of
14 the state and northern part of the state that can be
15 deocmpacted and maybe give an opportunity for
16 creation of another minority-majority district and
17 that's what you're trying to say.
18 CHRIS KAISER: I think that's exactly right.
19 REP. WILFORD CARTER: Now, so let me ask you. How
20 much conversation have you had with the leadership of
21 this committee, of this House with having opportunity
22 to put forth some of your ideas? How many time have
23 you met? Have you been invited to discuss and show
24 your bill and have that rebuffed for whatever reason?
25

Have you been satisfied with at least an effort to hear your point of view?

CHRIS KAISER: Okay. I mean we were here at the joint meeting on January 20th and we had an exchange on both the Senate and House plans that we put in. So I mean that has happened. One comment I guess I would make to and I hear you on your concerns about the district treatment in your area is again not everything in what we put in we're saying is necessary the right or best way to do it. That's the kind of feedback that we want to hear.

REP. WILFORD CARTER: Because I noticed some of the maps ACLU and NAACP presented, even split parishes you know and you got to split parishes sometime, but it isn't like a parish like I could split my parish and split it in half. Half of it gone up north and half going around for the southeast part of the district. That may be a result of lack of awareness of how the state is set up that could be even correct that. You wouldn't have a problem correcting that if you have any opportunity to discuss the issue with proper parties.

[02:40:07]

CHRIS KAISER: I think that's right and I would also say this that one thing that came up especially

over the last few days of listening to this committee and on the senate I talked about the split precinct issue. You know we split precincts in what we submitted during the road show after hearing that conversation and how important that the legislature is treating that. We went back to drawing board and we're able to do the same thing without splitting precincts. So I mean we're taking these stuff into consideration, but I would also just emphasize that as the legislature's joint Rule 21 lays out correctly, federal laws the overarching mandate we have to first ensure Section 2 compliance and everything else is to the extent practicable. That's not to say that it's not important or that we can't achieve it, but Section 2 compliance has to stay precedent and that's why we've been so laser focused on increasing minority representation and remedying the under representation that's in the current map.

REP. WILFORD CARTER: Actually, all you can do is offer your expertise in your map with a willingness to adjust your map to try to achieve more minority participation in legislature. That's all you can do. And did you feel like you had enough opportunity to do that --

CHRIS KAISER: Well I think ---

REP. WILFORD CARTER: -- in this process so far?

CHRIS KAISER: I think we're just beginning. This is the first time that we had a chance to talk about the house map during the session.

REP. WILFORD CARTER: Okay. Okay. All right, thank you.

REP. TANNER MAGEE: Thank you Representative Carter. There are no other questions. Mr. Kaiser, do you have anything else you like to add?

CHRIS KAISER: I think that covers it. Thank you very much.

REP. TANNER MAGEE: Thank you for your testimony. Next we have Ashley Shelton with the Power Coalition for Equity and Justice. When you are ready Ms. Shelton.

ASHLEY SHELTON: Yeah, I was just checking my watch to see if it's a good morning or good afternoon. Good afternoon speaker and members of the House and Governmental Affairs Committee. My name is Ashley Kennedy Shelton and I'm the founder and president of the Power Coalition for Equity and Justice. I am a lifelong resident of the State of Louisiana. If you've ever heard me speak, I tell everyone that everything that everything that I love is in this place which is why I fight for the State

of Louisiana because multiple generations of my family live here and there's a fight that's worth fighting for. You know, one of the things that I wanted to speak on which is very similar to my colleague at ACLU which is that, you know the criteria for the redistricting process is clear that we must first comply with federal law which includes the Voting Rights Act, Section 2 specifically, and by not creating any additional seats beyond the 29 that we currently have, very likely violates Section 2 of the Federal Voting Rights Act. You know, Louisiana has the second largest black population in the country and this map does not create additional majority-minority districts beyond the 29. You know, it's problematic. The math doesn't work in terms of their being true representation for communities of color. You can look at the growth of -- you know when look at Shreveport, we understand the role of racial gerrymandering in maps throughout our state for many, many redistricting cycles. But there are opportunities just throughout our major metros in Shreveport that root in New Orleans to clearly add and expand minority voice. You know -- gosh I'm sorry. Schexnayder mentioned that tradition in keeping decisions in line with electives that came

before him; however, the elected officials that came before you unfortunately have maintained and allowed significant racial gerrymandering throughout our redistricting process over the many times. And I did participate in the last redistricting process which is very contentious and a very eye-opening experience 10 years ago. We did end up finding some resolution and getting to a better place. However, it was a very intense process to say the least. We know that there's an opportunity in Louisiana to add at least nine additional majority-minority seats. I clearly understand as it has been stated many times today and it's unfortunate that the political real a reality in our state is that no map with nine additional majority-minority seeds can pass within this current body as it stands. And so what we're saying is that, you know even if we can't get to nine, when nine is possible, but certainly when we look at our major metros, there's a possibility for additional districts.

[02:45:00]

You know, Louisiana deserves representation. We've heard many times throughout the last week that folks are trying to protect minority-majority communities or protect the black community, and

there's no protection without representation. If you do not have voice or you cannot elect a leader willing to give you voice, then there cannot be any protection and that is certainly the case for the African-American community and it's certainly been my experience in this day. This process determines the next 10 years of what happens in our state. We currently have the -- you know, we're the second poorest state in the country. We have the greatest, highest amount of flight of our young people because our communities are not growing and expanding. And as we look at this work, we have an opportunity to do something that allows our state to grow and allows us to keep our young people here in our state. The Power Coalition does voter engagement work across the State of Louisiana. We have successfully, for the last five years, had a university of anywhere between 500,000 to 800.00 people of color throughout this state that we are engaging, educating and informing about elections in Louisiana. We know for sure and have data because we buy the voter file after every election to show the participation of our universe. We know that 62 percent or more of our universe turns out to vote for every election that we do the work of educating voters and working with them, but what it

1 also tells me is that nobody's is talking to voters
2 of color in some places and that when I talk to them
3 or when we educate them, when we give them the
4 opportunity to understand that their voice and their
5 vote is their power that they do turn out, and that
6 again for the last five years 62 percent or more of
7 that universe of communities of color throughout this
8 state turn out. Power Collision has also done
9 listening sessions throughout this state. I've been
10 in every nook, cranny, bar, community meeting across
11 the state and I've been proud to understand and learn
12 and appreciate the communities of interest throughout
13 the state. And I say that because that 62 percent of
14 universe that again can goes anywhere from 500,000 to
15 800,000 people across the state in terms of
16 communities of color, we talk about what matters to
17 them and what's important to them. You know, it feels
18 important also to acknowledge in the process that we
19 did a lot of work around not having split precincts.
20 And I think that in meeting the letter of the law, of
21 course again, we must first comply with federal law
22 which means making sure that we are in alignment with
23 the Voting Rights Act, you know Section 2. And so
24 this forcing of the precinct, the split precincts, is
25 concerning because what it then does it forces black

1 communities into one district or another without
2 always considering those communities of interest and
3 the impact of dividing a community in one side of the
4 other around this split precinct piece. But in
5 closing, you know, I appreciate the work that has
6 been done. I look forward to being able to have
7 conversation or work with all of you to add
8 amendments that can increase minority-majority
9 districts on the house side. You know, I think one
10 of the things that I am always struck by is that when
11 I'm in communities on the ground talking to the
12 people in your districts, the people of this state,
13 I'm never more surprised that we're the same. I mean
14 we have some philosophical differences on a couple of
15 issues but for the most part, the things that we
16 love, the things that we care about and the things
17 that are important to us align. You know, but it has
18 always struck me though when I come up here sometimes
19 though that the chasm is much bigger than what I feel
20 when I'm in communities across the state. And so I'm
21 asking this body to really consider, you know are we
22 centering constituent voice to ensure that as we
23 think about the amendments that we ensure that we are
24 indeed considering those voices. I know I
25 participated in the road show. We made sure thousands

of people showed up across the state. It was exciting and I appreciate this committee giving us that opportunity. But I think at the end of the day, the voters of Louisiana in particular voters of color do not want to be disconnected from their vote and their voice and the voice and the values of our communities are clear that they want representation and ask that as this process continues, that you would continue to consider amendments that will be forthcoming from your colleagues around increasing minority-majority districts in the state.

REP. TANNER MAGEE: Thank you. Do you have a couple of questions? Representative Ivey has a question.

REP. BARRY IVEY: Thank you Mr. Pro tem. First of all, thank you as always for participating. We really need people who are out there in the communities to come back here and be able to help be their voice in this process.

[02:50:02]

So thank you very much for that. I appreciate that you appreciate how hard this actually is to do this. Has any map been filed by anyone that actually increases the number of minority districts in the house map.

ASHLEY SHELTON: Well, I think that you have -- I mean I think that again there are some deferrals today.

REP. BARRY IVEY: Right, but do either of those maps that were deferred increase the number of minority-majority seats?

ASHLEY SHELTON: I've only reviewed Representative Royce Duplessis' map and so it did increase minority-majority districts, but it did create an opportunity district.

REP. BARRY IVEY: Okay, some opportunity districts. Okay. And I think we can definitely throughout this process continue to see where opportunities may exist and so I'm still working toward that effort as well. So I'm looking at yours provided a map correct, the Power Coalition? How many minority-majority districts do you all have on the yours map?

ASHLEY SHELTON: So, the map that we submitted initially it only has that one opportunity district. And again, this was in acknowledgement of how hard this process is and what could be politically possible. And I think that what we heard, we had more than 250 people here last week from all across the state specifically making sure that we have districts

across the state represented and what we heard from them and what we continuously hard is that it doesn't go far enough that even if it is politically okay, it doesn't matter that at the end of the day, we should and have to fight for more minority voice throughout this state.

REP. BARRY IVEY: Sure. I do want to point out for the public's benefit that it is easy to do that basic math, and say that what maybe should be or what could be, but the actual reality may exist where it's not actually possible because population and where people actually live and how -- if it is an urban community or versus a rural community gets spread out and so once it gets spread out, it may be very difficult if not impossible to actually create as that many. I believe there's probably opportunity to create more. 29 just seems a little far-fetched and the fact that on Yours own map, you only create an opportunity district instead of creating some actual examples of additional districts. I think for me falls short on being able to tout that 29, I think that's a real misconception -- I mean an additional nine.

ASHLEY SHELTON: Yes, you see, you can't be arguing with that.

REP. BARRY IVEY: Yeah. Sorry. Yeah, 29 to get an additional nine seats, is that you also?

ASHLEY SHELTON: Yes. So actually after having our meeting last week and working with constituents from across the state, again more than 250 people have rallied here at the State Capitol as well as at the Capitol Park Museum. We actually did today submit an additional map that does show a house map that has three additional minority-majority districts.

REP. BARRY IVEY: Okay.

ASHLEY SHELTON: In addition to an opportunity.

REP. BARRY IVEY: I would love to look at that.

ASHLEY SHELTON: Yup.

REP. BARRY IVEY: And I know that some of the other advocates particularly in the congressional map, we're not talking about, but they did at least show that you can do it in multiple ways which is good. So, anyway, thank you for your time and effort and I did look on the date's redistricting site from the minority perspective. Yours map, the current one scores 85 as does this current bill's map scores the same. And competitiveness, this one scores and eight, yours scores a 6. So on the scoring splitting, this map scores better at 54 versus yours at 32. On compactness, this map scores 55 when yours scores 47.

So, I do recognize there's a million ways to slice and dice this and again just keep on working and look forward to working with you on some of the other options.

ASHLEY SHELTON: For sure and I think too the split precinct issue certainly change those numbers to a good extent because what it does is that, you know like staff made some decisions. We then conferred and try to make sure that the voices of minority communities when we were trying to bring those precincts back together did take into consideration communities of interest and certainly try to make sure that we were increasing the minority voice in those maps.

REP. BARRY IVEY: All right, thank you very much.

REP. TANNER MAGEE: Thank you Representative Ivey and just before moving to the next question, I want to ask how are you defining an opportunity district?

ASHLEY SHELTON: So, an opportunity district is a district that for example I'm going to say for the district in New Orleans, it is 50.

[02:55:10]

I don't have it in front of me, and I apologize. That's on me. But in that particular district, what it does is it acknowledges that there is almost --

it's like 49 percent African-American. So, it's not quite that make the -- you know, it doesn't make that 50 percent mark, but that there are other, you know, issues to consider in that particular district because you have such a melting pot of communities of interest within that district, which are folks that, you know, more than likely have the opportunity to allow the minorities in that district to actually elect candidates of choice.

REPRESENTATIVE TANNER MAGEE: And under that criteria as drawn in Representative Stefanski's map, would house District 91 be an opportunity district?

ASHLEY SHELTON: Which one? Give me the black pot voting-age population on 61? I'm not looking at it.

REPRESENTATIVE TANNER MAGEE: I don't have it either in front of me.

ASHLEY SHELTON: Okay.

REPRESENTATIVE TANNER MAGEE: But I think it might meet that criteria. And then, I think what about Representative Mack Cormier, would his district comply to that?

ASHLEY SHELTON: I mean, I think so.

REPRESENTATIVE TANNER MAGEE: The district?

ASHLEY SHELTON: But the problem is that like we can talk about opportunity districts. But I mean,

again, I mean, I think one of the reasons we went back and retooled our map was that community, again said, like I get what's politically possible and what politically could get out of committee, but we don't care about that. We have to actually make sure that we are on the record asking for the true representation of communities of color in the state. And that, yes, there are some of those districts that are opportunity districts. Thank you. Thank you to Bob. Better opportunity districts. You know, however, we don't ever want to create an opportunity district when we actually can create a minority-majority district. And so, it's not to say that they're impossible or that they're not helpful to increase access for minority voters to potentially be able to elect a candidate of choice. However, again, the bigger and better opportunity is to have a minority-majority.

REPRESENTATIVE TANNER MAGEE: I understand it completely. I'm just asking about these specific areas because the details do matter. Representative Marino, does he -- is that district qualify in your consideration as an opportunity district?

ASHLEY SHELTON: I'm working. So, you know, let's talk about 91 because I've got it right here in front

of me. That was the one you just mentioned, you know. So, in this particular district, you've got 19,571 white, 18,417 black. You've got 14,000 voting age population black, 17,000 voting age population white. In this particular makeup of this district, I mean, potentially it falls a little bit short of what I would call an opportunity district. But I mean there is an opportunity. I mean, because right at that threshold, there is a little bit of an opportunity for them to say that that district is a little bit -- is still a little bit cracked in the sense that it's just enough African-American voters to have an impact but not enough to truly elect a candidate of choice in that particular example, just looking at the numbers.

REPRESENTATIVE TANNER MAGEE: Sure. And I'm going to let Representative Stefanski ask some questions for you.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Thank you, Representative Tanner. Thank you, Ma'am for coming. So, you referenced report earlier in a conversation. Have you spoken to the Shreveport leaders about house districts and their thought about communities in which communities they like to be kept together?

ASHLEY SHELTON: Yes. I mean, I think that there's, you know, I mean, I think much like your map instead of you do add a District to New Orleans but you take it from -

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: I was talking about Shreveport.

ASHLEY SHELTON: Okay. But I'm about to get to Shreveport. I mean, I think that in the map that was submitted by the Power Coalition, one of the things that we did was we actually right size and ungerrymandered parts of Shreveport. And yes, we did work with the Black Caucus members in the Shreveport area and there is a way to right-size that. And I think, you know, Representative Cox made the point that in that particular area that in order to right size and address the racial gerrymandering that is existed in North Louisiana for quite some time, it was an issue last redistricting session. You know, at the time, Senator Lydia Jackson was trying to correct it 10 years ago. And so, in those conversations with folks in Shreveport, I think from the perspective of communities of color, it makes more sense to address the issue and see Bob's district than it does to address it in Kenny Cox's District.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Specifically, the three minority districts that are currently exist in Shreveport, did you talk to those three representatives about what types of communities they believe should encompass those house districts?

[03:00:07]

ASHLEY SHELTON: Yes.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: And so, I would tell you that many times from a member's perspective, it is different than just looking on paper. And that communities are very important that they be kept together, even when they have a high concentration of a population. And so, I would ask you to have those conversations again maybe with those representatives because you might have a of different opinion of how those districts should be constructed. Secondly, have you had an opportunity to analyze the Speaker's Bill?

ASHLEY SHELTON: Not fully, not fully. But I was just going to say just a point, a quick point on what you were just saying. You know, part of what's also hard about this process is that I'm happy to talk to those three members. But I mean, I did talk to them with a demographer and have those conversations. But one of the things that I think is difficult to is that even as you guys are constitutionally given the

right to redistricting the State of Louisiana, the reality is that we have to talk. You know, like we heard it on the Senate side discontinuity of incumbency. I mean, you know, as much as I love all of you, I mean, that's not the only consideration that's going to be important in making sure that we can truly address equity in this process and really get Beyond some of, like what's best for somebody to run versus what's best for black voters to have a voice.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Do you remember what your bebop was in Representative Jenkins and Representative Cox's districts were under your draw?

ASHLEY SHELTON: I do not have it in front of me. I apologize.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Was it at your map?

ASHLEY SHELTON: Yes, it was my map. But I work with a demographer. I am simply here speaking on --

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Okay.

ASHLEY SHELTON: You know, more broadly about why we did what we did.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: I understand. So, you have not had an opportunity to analyze the speaker's map, is that correct?

ASHLEY SHELTON: That is correct.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Okay. So, you did not do an analyzation of the opportunity districts that we created?

ASHLEY SHELTON: So, you know, I did not do a full analysis of the districts that you created. However, it still does not increase the number of minority-majority districts overall in the state, which is absolutely possible.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: But wasn't that an element that you brought up in Representative Duplessis' bill? We are not here to discuss his bill. Where you put in a card on HB 14. So, that's what we're here to discuss. But you brought as part of that testimony an element from his bill and highlighted the fact that an additional opportunity district was created.

ASHLEY SHELTON: Yes.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: And so, if you're testifying on this bill. And again, I'm trying not to lock it on specifics. I could ask you a bunch of numbers that I'm not going to do to you. But if you're testifying on this bill, wouldn't you have done an analyzation of the bill?

ASHLEY SHELTON: So, what I'm saying is that I have done a broad and analysis of the bill and what I'm saying --

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Have you looked at the opportunity districts that are present in House Bill 14?

ASHLEY SHELTON: Yes.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Okay.

ASHLEY SHELTON: I have been present here today as you've discussed those opportunity districts. And what I am saying is that those opportunity districts; however, a move in the right direction still require amendment to truly give voice to minority communities in the State of Louisiana.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: But again, wouldn't it be -- so again, what is the -- let me ask you this question. What is the standard that you would judge an opportunity district with? Is there any standard or are -- I'm going to not put words in your mouth, but I expect the answer would be -- it's a complicated thing and it takes an analysis? That's what most people would testify. But do you have something in your head that qualifies as an opportunity district?

ASHLEY SHELTON: I mean, again, I think my colleague make the point. I mean, there's a lot of things that go into that and it looks different in different parts of the state. When you look at all of the things that have to come together to create a district that addresses not only the numbers, compactness, contiguity, all of those things, but also communities of interest. And so, you know, I do think that, again, we in the process of even thinking about opportunity districts only went that way because it was just like thinking about what was politically possible to move an actual map through this body. And I think that, you know, again, we have since submitted -- we were in the process of submitting an additional map that does what community has asked us to do all across the state, which is to fight for additional minority-majority districts and that opportunity districts don't go far enough.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Would you agree it is not as easy to just judge a map based purely on the number of majority-minority districts that it's more complicated question than that?

ASHLEY SHELTON: It is but the math doesn't lie. I mean, 33 percent of this state is African-American,

40 percent of this state are people of color including Latin.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: So, you haven't done an analyzation on the map that you're here to testify for about how many minority members there could potentially be?

ASHLEY SHELTON: Well, I mean, I think if the analysis is already done, you know, we submitted and signed onto the map by ACLU. We know that if we --

[03:05:03]

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: I'm talking about that your again.

ASHLEY SHELTON: Okay, I know. But I'm --

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Yes, But you put in a card on HB 14.

ASHLEY SHELTON: Fourteen, right.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: And you're here to testify about this bill and why you do not believe we should pass this bill, correct?

ASHLEY SHELTON: Yes.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Okay. And so, I'm just asking you questions about the bill.

ASHLEY SHELTON: Yes. And what I'm saying --

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Isn't that fair?

ASHLEY SHELTON: That's fair. That's fair. But I'm saying is that a start. I mean, I think that we have a lot of work to do and I think that there's going to have to be considerable amendments and that even as we have worked through this process and learned through this process, what is clear to us is that after having, like I said, a good majority of community from throughout this state here that it was clear to us that we had to go back to the drawing board and actually produce the map that went beyond opportunity and actually realized minority-majority maps districts around.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: And I'll just make one comment to that. Yeah, I think it is very easy to look on paper and say this is what should happen and is very -- it is much more difficult process to meet with the communities and to meet with the members and come up with something that works for the state.

ASHLEY SHELTON: Well, I don't disagree. But I do think that the generals, the sheer magnitude of communities of color in our state do make it -- do create a pathway for us to be able to do a better job than just 29 minority-majority districts.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: And I would encourage you in those areas that especially specifically when you highlight it to talk to the members and especially the ones that are currently representing those districts. One final question. You referenced that you wouldn't necessarily call District 91 an opportunity district based on the BPAP. Would you not -- would you agree with me that there is white crossover voting in Orleans?

ASHLEY SHELTON: I'm not here to talk about rights. I mean, we're not partisan and thank you we are not --

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Don't talk about race. You've been talking about minority districts the whole time.

ASHLEY SHELTON: I mean, like but race is not the predominant only factor. What I'm saying is --

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: I understand that. But you focused this conversation purely around that. And so, I mean, it's fair for me to ask you that question, isn't it?

ASHLEY SHELTON: Yes, it is fair.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Okay. So, do you -- and look, I can't comment on that is okay. But in

my appreciation, I believe there's white crossover voting in Orleans. Do you deny that?

ASHLEY SHELTON: I do not deny that.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Thank you very much. I appreciate you giving testimony. I do appreciate your answer my questions and I apologize if I was pushing you.

ASHLEY SHELTON: No, no. Okay. Make sure that the record is clear. Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE TANNER MAGEE: Thank you very much. All right. On to the next speaker who is my friend, Will Harrell.

REPRESENTATIVE WILLIAM HARRELL: Good morning, Chairman and members of the committee. My name is Will Harrell. I'm the Senior Policy Counsel at vote. I apologize for not having been here early in the morning. I was at a Fines and Fees Commission meeting where Tanner Magee was not, but I'm here now.

REPRESENTATIVE TANNER MAGEE: I wish I could chair two committees at the same time. It's a very cute thing.

WILLIAM HARRELL: I am here on behalf of Vote in opposition of this bill, but it's not -- I do not claim to be a demographer, an expert in the law of voting rights. But when I am as a student of history

1 and I'm glad that Representative Cox evoked Jim Crow
2 in this conversation because one reason we oppose
3 this map, as well as most others is that it's the
4 ghost of Jim Crow lurks within. These maps are based
5 on a fiction that incarcerated people are actually
6 represented in the districts where they are housed.
7 We reject that notion. We observe that just like the
8 State of Louisiana's failure to require unanimous
9 juries for 138 years. This is a relic of the same or
10 it comes as the same origins of the Jim Crow South.
11 We believe that people who are incarcerated should
12 count for purposes of reapportionment and other
13 matters in the districts from whence they come.
14 That's where they're going to return to. In many
15 cases and the vast majority of places before the next
16 census in 10 years, that is where their families are.
17 That is where their school districts are. That is
18 where their roads are. That is where they should
19 count. There is an alternative and I realized a lot
20 of work has gone into crunching the numbers and
21 figuring this out rather than go back to that table
22 simply do what this body did in 2018 or '19 it was,
23 which was to restore the right to vote for people
24 with felony convictions. If we are going to count
25 incarcerated people where they are housed, let them

vote there. Let them be represented where they are counted. Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE TANNER MAGEE: Thank you, Sir Harrell. Hold on. There's no questions, Mr. Harrell.

[03:10:00]

Next up here present wishing to speak is Katie Bernhardt with the Louisiana Democratic Party.

KATIE BERNHARDT: Hi, I'm Katie Bernhardt of Louisiana Democratic party. A lot of people have spoken today and mentioned some of what is imperfect about this process and certainly having members who are take an oath to serve their districts have all of us come in and try to get them to do what's in the best interest of the whole state can be quite challenging. And so, there are inherent conflicts there. And I think everyone has raised some good points today, but one of the things that I think that would be a miss if I didn't bring to the attention that is not a factor that will be considered in court, but is very relevant here is that we all have a basic understanding of our constitution and that it brings a balance of powers that we have separate branches of government and that we have faith that with our three branches that we have confidence that things will be fair. And something that this bill

1 proposes is to really shift that balance, and we're
2 talking about losing Caucus members and the
3 Democratic Caucus. And so, again, that's not a legal
4 factor here. But if we do have super majorities in
5 our legislature, it does reduce the ability for us to
6 have a balance of power in our state government,
7 which can be a dangerous proposition for the people
8 Louisiana. So, it's certainly something I think
9 should be considered. Also, I think that we need to
10 look holistically when we're asking these questions
11 about what is possible. Well, what is possible and
12 what maps have been brought forward are greatly taken
13 into consideration of what the members will agree to.
14 And so, there's been some crazy stuff proposed. I've
15 seen all sorts of things circulating on social media
16 and some very interesting maps. But I don't know that
17 we'll see those in this building because it is not
18 likely that the members would support them because it
19 doesn't preserve members' districts, right? So, we
20 have to work in the system that we're all currently
21 operating in. And I think that did a lot of the
22 groups here that have participated are trying to
23 operate in reality, and we have to work with all of
24 you to pass these. So, I think some of the questions
25 are a little challenging to answer when we've trying

to been working with something that can actually come into fruition. But I did want to mention that it is quite concerning to me and to many others that we talked about representation in one district and these communities of interest. But if we look at our overall interest in the state, it doesn't give us much hope when may be one small community has a voice. But as a whole, we have no capacity to accomplish anything for those communities. So, that's quite concerning from my perspective and the people that I answer to. So, I wanted to bring that to your attention.

REPRESENTATIVE TANNER MAGEE: No, thank you. I do want to be clear that we're not losing in minority district.

KATIE BERNHARDT: Correct, but we are losing Democratic Caucus members potentially. And so, what happens whenever you remove Representative Cox's district and you move it to Roy Darrell's District, that guess we pick up a minority district in that. But we also potentially lose a caucus number, right? So, we could have a minority member elected and the Feliciana. But we're losing one up there. So, the negative --

REPRESENTATIVE TANNER MAGEE: Roy Darrell is not a democrat right now.

KATIE BERNHARDT: He is not, but he's a member of the Caucus.

REPRESENTATIVE TANNER MAGEE: And before him, a Republican held that seat, isn't that correct?

KATIE BERNHARDT: Correct? I think so. Actually, I have no idea.

REPRESENTATIVE TANNER MAGEE: Yeah, a Republican held that seat before him.

KATIE BERNHARDT: But my point in that is that when you're looking at what can be accomplished for these members and for these communities of interest, all of these things impacted. So, simply keeping the minority members the same isn't the only thing that needs to be known about that, and I understand there's only certain things that can be considered legally into these factors. But I think it is valuable information for all of the members of this community.

REPRESENTATIVE TANNER MAGEE: And let me ask you a question, Ms. Bernhardt. As map is currently constructed, is there a current -- and I mean, by party registration democrat who does not -- who's

1 sitting that you believe no longer can run for re-
2 election based off of the map?
3 KATIE BERNHARDT: I think that a registered
4 Democrat, I don't believe so. But a member of the
5 Democratic Caucus, yes.
6 REPRESENTATIVE TANNER MAGEE: Sure. Okay. Thank
7 you. I appreciate your testimony. There's no
8 questions for you.
9 KATIE BERNHARDT: Thank you.
10 REPRESENTATIVE TANNER MAGEE: Next, we'll have
11 Frankie Robertson with NOLA MCH Coalition and
12 MetroMorphosis. I hope I got that right.
13 [03:15:05]
14 FRANKIE ROBERTSON: Yeah.
15 REPRESENTATIVE TANNER MAGEE: Good.
16 FRANKIE ROBERTSON: Great job.
17 REPRESENTATIVE TANNER MAGEE: Thank you. Good
18 morning. So, my name is Frankie Robertson. I'm
19 actually testifying today on behalf of the New
20 Orleans Maternal Child Health Coalition.
21 REPRESENTATIVE TANNER MAGEE: Can you get close
22 to the mic? I think the combination of the -- yeah,
23 just to make sure that you're good.
24 FRANKIE ROBERTSON: Yeah, the combination of the
25 mask and too far away, that's not a good combination.

REPRESENTATIVE TANNER MAGEE: Yeah.

FRANKIE ROBERTSON: So, I'm actually testifying today on behalf of the New Orleans Maternal Child Health Coalition. But yes, I did submit a red card for MetroMorphosis as well. As I stated, well, good afternoon, Chairperson Stefanski, Vice-chair Royce Duplessis and members of the house and governmental affairs committee. My name is Frankie Robertson, and I'm here again today as a member of the New Orleans Maternal Child Health Coalition where we aim to improve outcomes, experiences and access to quality respectful care during pregnancy, birth and the postpartum period by centering the experiences of black birthing people and their infants in New Orleans with an emphasis, of course, about the overall wellness of the state. Just to remind you the Maternal Child Health Coalition is an advocacy group made up of over 100 diverse stakeholders in maternal and child health based out of New Orleans. Our members include researchers, health care providers, doulas individuals employed by local and state government offices and representatives of community organizations creating public health solutions for and providing direct services to New Orleans families and the perinatal period. And I would like to speak

1 today standing in solidarity with Ms. Ashley Shelton
2 and other advocates advocating today for an increase
3 in majority-minority districts. I just want to stress
4 as I testified earlier in the week, I'm not going to
5 share that same testimony again. But just want to
6 remind you of why it's important to be here today
7 representing the Maternal Child Health Community. As
8 some of you may know as we've talked about for many
9 years, the social and political determinants of
10 health are very important to the overall health of
11 birthing people throughout our state, to all birthing
12 people throughout our state. But particularly they
13 have a disproportionate impact on black and brown
14 birthing people or black and brown women in our
15 state. And as we look at the redistricting process
16 and how systemic it is, how central it is to the core
17 of the systems and processes in our state. This being
18 here today to talk about how the decisions that
19 you're making today redrawing political maps,
20 ensuring accurate representation, and voice of
21 community members to express concerns that
22 particularly community members have is very important
23 and central through this process. I know that many of
24 you are familiar with advocacy and maternal and
25 health and Senate welfare or house Health and

1 Welfare, excuse me, and other committees. But the
2 structural issues and the distribution of political
3 power and ensuring fair, accurate representation of
4 communities also is equal to this conversation. We
5 know that there is conversations about medical issues
6 and looking at hospital structures in terms of
7 implicit bias and explicit bias. But we can't ignore
8 the fact that the social and political determinants
9 of health do have some of the greatest impact on the
10 overall wealth and health and well-being of birthing
11 people in our community with an emphasis on black and
12 brown birthing people. So, I stand in solidarity
13 today with community advocates representing the New
14 Orleans of Maternal Child Health Coalition demanding
15 fair and equitable maps. For months again, you've
16 heard from concerned citizens across the state about
17 developing or supporting maps that would address
18 systemic issues and systemic failures of our state.
19 Those same failures impacting the social determinants
20 of health that directly contribute to the death and
21 severe injury of birthing people in our state, which
22 leads to maternal death rates across the nation. It
23 has high rates of maternal, excuse me, infant
24 mortality and preterm births in our state which, of
25 course, leads the list and health outcomes in those

areas. We have some of the highest rates. As advocates have shared repeatedly throughout this week including over 250 present in proceedings last week, Black Americans make up over a third of population in the state of Louisiana, and we echo the voices of advocates to increase majority-minority representation across the state and as Michelle's know the power of coalition is sheared already. Our community-based coalition members are advocating for maps that support this representation. And I stand in solidarity with them to the mayor to demand fair Maps reflect in this composition. Also, I have additional information I could share. But I'll yield in case there's any questions. But also, I'm prepared to share testimony that's been shared with the house ways and means committee directly quoting a social determinants of health nationally known researcher by the name of Dr. Fleda Mask Jackson who has specifically done research on stress impacts on black women and how that adversely affects birth outcomes. And I'm prepared to share excerpts of that federal testimony today as well. Thank you.

[03:20:09]

REPRESENTATIVE TANNER MAGEE: Thank you. There are no questions from the board. We appreciate your testimony.

FRANKIE ROBERTSON: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE TANNER MAGEE: Yes. In addition to just doing some housecleaning as well. Mr. Feliz O'Daniels was president, but did not want to speak in opposition. Edgard Cade who are together was also present and not wish to speak, in opposition as well. That concludes this bill as we discussed earlier as we have -

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: [BACKGROUND CONVERSATION]

REPRESENTATIVE TANNER MAGEE: Yeah. Chairman Stefanski moves to defer to the marks, the advocacy ratio and the amendments that were added. See, is there an objection to doing so? Seeing no objections, that will happen. The next one is House Bill 15 by Representative Jenkins. Representative Jenkins had to leave and he wanted to take it up tomorrow anyway with House Bill 14 together. So he asked that I defer it. So, I'm going to move to defer House Bill 15 on behalf of Representative Jenkins. Is there any objections? Seeing no objection. That is deferred tomorrow, as well. Seeing -- what's that?

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Ethics.

REPRESENTATIVE TANNER MAGEE: Oh yeah, ethics. I'm sorry. I'll ask the palate.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Representative Ivey.

REPRESENTATIVE TANNER MAGEE: Representative Ivey.

REPRESENTATIVE BARRY IVEY: Thank you, Mr. Pro Tem. Yeah. I'm going to make a motion and also, I'm going to pass it off to my colleague, Vice-chair Duplessis for motion. Members, as you recall, we did a lot of interviews for the Ethics Board. We had a lot of really tremendously qualified candidates, and I've conferred with many of you. And so, there are two lists. One from list A, List B, and the other were two incoming candidates, one from each list. I'm going to make the motion that for List B, and I don't have the right document in front of me. Thank you. Mr. Vice-chair. I'm going to make the motion that we from Group B, that we make the recommendations to endorse Ms. Marianne Coleman for the Ethics Board.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Members. Is there any discussion or objection to that that Motion? Discussion? Hold on. Yep, hold on. Representative Horton for questioning?

REPRESENTATIVE DODIE HORTON: What if we would have make a -- I'm not so-called against it, but what if we want to make another nomination from B? Who's the incumbent? Grant? Yeah, yeah.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: So historically, we've always recommended two.

REPRESENTATIVE DODIE HORTON: Right.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Okay. There, one or two. And so, I would say that we have that debate here in committee about the qualifications and we discussed that here in committee and send the body, two selections. That would be my recommendation. So, if you'd like to -- that's one, no more than two from each list. Okay? So, but I would recommend that we send one from each list so that it is easier on the body and we've done our job here to have that consideration. So, Representative Horton, you can certainly make a motion that we consider someone else. We can vote on it and I'm happy to have that discussion. I wasn't present here for a lot of it. I watched everything and so I'm deferring to the committee a little bit on that based on that.

REPRESENTATIVE DODIE HORTON: Well, I'd like to make the motion and nominate Robert Grand, the incumbent from Group B.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Okay, that'll be a substitute motion?

REPRESENTATIVE DODIE HORTON: Substitute motion, yeah.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Okay. To recommend that. Members, are there any questions? Any further discuss -- Representative, yeah hold on Represented Ivey?

REPRESENTATIVE BARRY IVEY: All right. Members, the part of the main reason why I feel that this individual, Ms. Coleman is most qualified. Her years of experience just dealing with the Ethics Board, making these recommendations within her capacity. I felt she demonstrated very strong, fundamental knowledge of what the role is and had really a knowledge base that I haven't -- I didn't see any of the other candidates and even incumbents, to be honest. We all know that there's a large learning curve whenever we take office. And so, I felt Ms. Coleman could hit the ground running pretty hard and, could be a valuable asset to the Board of Ethics. And that's of course, the incumbent, Mr. Grant, I really appreciated him and I appreciate his service. But again, we've had a lot of good candidates here. So, it is difficult.

[03:25:14]

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Representative Horton?

REPRESENTATIVE DODIE HORTON:

I agree. It's very difficult. Every one of them were just above reproach and so impressive. As Robert Grant had been serving for the last three years. He's well-respected in North Louisiana. He has a lot of common sense as well. And I just feel that with all the knowledge that he's learned and gleaned, that he'd be the better representative from that group. Not to take away from anyone else at all.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: That's no problem.

REPRESENTATIVE DODIE HORTON: Thank you, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: I also have a comment for Representative Lyons.

REPRESENTATIVE RODNEY LYONS: So, thank you, Mr. Chairman. So, we're doing one group at a time. Are we doing Group B, first and then Group A?

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: My suggestion to the committee is that we recommend one from each. And so, if a motion has been made by Representative Ivey, we'll have a substitute motion, we'll vote on the substitute first, and then we'll go back and vote on

Representative Ivey. So, if anyone else has an additional motion, anyone else wants to make some comments?

REPRESENTATIVE RODNEY LYONS: Well, that's my question. So, his motion is for someone that's in Group B.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Correct.

REPRESENTATIVE RODNEY LYONS: So, I can make a motion for someone that's in Group A that's --

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Exactly. Exactly.

REPRESENTATIVE RODNEY LYONS: Okay.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: And I believe, just to give you a little heads up. I believe Representative Duplessis was going to make a motion for someone at Group A, but you can certainly -- if it's different than yours, you can -- if we can have that discussion?

REPRESENTATIVE RODNEY LYONS: Well, I like to make a motion in Group A, which is the incumbent, is this Ms. Roberts?

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Okay.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: It's incumbent. Yes.

[BACKGROUND CONVERSATION]

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Point of Order.

REPRESENTATIVE CANDACE NEWELL: I need a Point of Order.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: All right.

REPRESENTATIVE CANDACE NEWELL: Just some clarity.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Absolutely.

REPRESENTATIVE CANDACE NEWELL: So, this is one list. Group A is not a list separate and independent of Group B?

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: It is. We're going to make one recommend - I will recommend to this committee to make one recommendation on each group, on each list. One for A and one for B.

REPRESENTATIVE CANDACE NEWELL: Okay. One from each group because --

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Yes, ma'am.

REPRESENTATIVE CANDACE NEWELL: In my mind, this is one list.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Yes, so I understand --

REPRESENTATIVE CANDACE NEWELL: And one from each group. Okay. Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Yes. Representative Horton, I mean Representative Thomas.

REPRESENTATIVE POLLY THOMAS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. What were the criteria for putting candidates in Group A versus Group B?

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Hold on, I'm going to have my staff explain it. This may bring some clarity. Ms. Lowrey.

PATRICIA LOWREY: Okay members, the House of Representatives has two spots on the Board of Ethics that they must select. And so, the nominating committee is required to submit a list of at least five qualified nominees to the house to choose from for each vacancy. So, the Group A slot is for one of the vacancies. Those were the five people on the list submitted to the house for one of the vacancies and the Group B list is again, the five names that were submitted to the house for that other vacancy. You cannot pick two from Group A and/or two from Group B. You must pick someone from group A for one vacancy and someone from Group B for the other vacancy.

REPRESENTATIVE POLLY THOMAS: So, the nominator from the Louisiana Association of Independent Colleges are the ones who decided who's on Group A and who's on Group B. Is that correct?

PATRICIA LOWREY: That is correct.

REPRESENTATIVE POLLY THOMAS: Okay. Thank you.

PATRICIA LOWREY: And you'll see that they have the incumbents because the House of Representatives' incumbents are not termed unlike the Senate's two vacancies. They have term-limited members who can no longer serve.

REPRESENTATIVE POLLY THOMAS: Okay.

PATRICIA LOWREY: But so, the incumbents would tell you, so Mr. Grant is the incumbent in Group B and Ms. Roberts is the incumbent in Group A. They could still serve, however, their term is up and they must either be reselected or someone else elected to fill their spot.

REPRESENTATIVE POLLY THOMAS: Thank you.

PATRICIA LOWREY: You're welcome.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Thank you, Representative Thomas. Members, do we have any more discussions about these two candidates that have been made a motion for?

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: If not, then what we will do is I will take up Representative Horton's motion first since it is a substitute motion, and we will voice vote on that selection. Representative Horton has recommended Robert Grant for the appointment out of that group. We are going to call the roll, all those in favor say, "yay". All those

opposed say "nay". Mrs. Ammersbach will call the roll.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: Chairman Stefanski?

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Nay.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: No. Vice-Chairman Duplessis?

REPRESENTATIVE ROYCE DUPLESSIS: Nay.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: No. Representative Beaullieu?

REPRESENTATIVE GERALD BEAULLIEU: Yay.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: Yes. Representative Wilford Carter?

[03:30:00]

REPRESENTATIVE WILFORD CARTER: Nay.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: No. Representative Deshotel?

REPRESENTATIVE DARYL DESHOTEL: Nay.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: No. Representative Farnum?

REPRESENTATIVE LES FARNUM: Yes.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: Yes. Representative Gadberry?

REPRESENTATIVE FOY BRYAN GADBERRY: Yes.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: Yes. Representative Hodges? Representative Horton?

REPRESENTATIVE DODIE HORTON: Yes.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: Yes. Representative Ivey?

REPRESENTATIVE BARRY IVEY: No.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: No. Representative Jenkins? Representative Mike Johnson?

REPRESENTATIVE MIKE JOHNSON: Yes.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: Yes. Present Representative LaCombe? Representative Lyons?

REPRESENTATIVE RODNEY LYONS: Yes.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: Yes. Representative Magee? Representative Newell?

REPRESENTATIVE CANDACE NEWELL: Yes.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: Yes. Representative Thomas?

REPRESENTATIVE POLLY THOMAS: Yes.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: Yes Representative White?

REPRESENTATIVE MALINDA WHITE: Yes.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: Yes. Nine "yays", five "nays".

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Nine yays, five nays. So, that is the recommendation. Members, I will tell you that my recommendation to this body is that we only send one. So, if you agree with me on that then that will be the recommendation. But I'll entertain -- with that?

REPRESENTATIVE BARRY IVEY: I will withdraw my motion.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Okay. Representative Ivey withdraws his motion. Next, I

will recognize Vice-chair Duplessis to make another recommendation.

REPRESENTATIVE ROYCE DUPLESSIS: Thank you. Mr. Chairman. If I can make a motion for Group A, I know we did B after A. As was pointed out, we heard a lot of great presentations from many great candidates and all were fabulous including both of the incumbents. But at this time. I would like to move for Group A, Ms. Cherrell Simms Taplin that we recommend.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Members, any discussion? Representative Farnum?

REPRESENTATIVE LES FARNUM: Thank, Mr. Chairman. I think that it is very critical that we cover the whole state with representation on this board and Ms. Robert represents the Southwest Louisiana region and does it quite well. So, I would very much support her and her renomination for this.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Representative Lyons?

REPRESENTATIVE RODNEY LYONS: That's okay, because I thought I had made a motion earlier when you went to make the correction, but I'll withdraw that and Mr. Farnum has made a motion. So, we good.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Well, it's actually Representative Duplessis' motion. I didn't realize you had made one early. I must have mistaken.

REPRESENTATIVE RODNEY LYONS: Okay. Yeah, I made one earlier.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Okay. I apologize. Do we have the same person? Do you want me to take yours up first?

REPRESENTATIVE RODNEY LYONS: I had a different person because at that time I nominated the incumbent, Ms. Roberts.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: That is the incumbent, Representative Lyons.

REPRESENTATIVE RODNEY LYONS: That's wat I said, I nominate the incumbent.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: We are going to go ahead and take up.

[BACKGROUND CONVERSATION]

So, since I recognize -- since I didn't hear Representative Lyons and I heard by Vice-chair Duplessis, we are going to take up Representative Lyons as a substitute motion. Okay? And we are going to vote on representative Lyons' recommendation on Ms. Roberts first, members? Okay? And I will allow Ms. Ammersbach to call the roll.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: Chairman Stefanski?

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Hold on, hold on. Yes, ma'am?

FEMALE: I just want to make sure that she is the incumbent, is that correct?

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: Yes.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Correct. That's correct. Okay.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: Chairman Stefanski?

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Yes.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: Yes. Vice Chairman Duplessis?

REPRESENTATIVE ROYCE DUPLESSIS: No.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: No. Representative Beaullieu?

REPRESENTATIVE GERALD BEAULLIEU: Yes.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: Yes. Representative Wilford Carter?

REPRESENTATIVE WILFORD CARTER: No.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: No. Representative Deshotel?

REPRESENTATIVE DARYL DESHOTEL: Yes.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: Yes. Representative Farnum?

REPRESENTATIVE LES FARNUM: Yes.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: Yes. Representative Gadberry?

REPRESENTATIVE FOY BRYAN GADBERRY: Yes.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: Yes. Representative Hodges? Representative Horton?

REPRESENTATIVE DODIE HORTON: Yes.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: Yes. Representative Ivey?

REPRESENTATIVE BARRY IVEY: No.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: No. Representative Jenkins? Representative Mike Johnson?

REPRESENTATIVE MIKE JOHNSON: Yes.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: Yes. Representative LaCombe? Representative Lyons?

REPRESENTATIVE RODNEY LYONS: Yes

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: Yes. Representative Magee? Representative Newell?

REPRESENTATIVE CANDACE NEWELL: Yes.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: Yes. Representative Thomas?

REPRESENTATIVE POLLY THOMAS: Yes.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: Yes. Representative White?

REPRESENTATIVE MALINDA WHITE: Yes.

ROSALIE AMMERSBACH: Yes. 11 yays.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STEFANSKI: Sorry, 11 yays, 3 nays and members. Again, I'll make the same recommendation to this body that we just go with one. I think it's easier on the whole body and I believe that's Representative Duplessis is in agreement with

that -- Vice-chair Duplessis is in agreement with that. The democrat process is in flight right here. We had a good diverse votes on both sides. So, members, that concludes our business for today. We will start up tomorrow morning at 9:30 with considerations of the any either of the House Bills. I'll talk with the authors. House Bill 14 will certainly be on the agenda and I will talk with the other two authors to see if they would like to put theirs on the agenda as well for consideration. With that said, that concludes our business. Representative Carter has made a motion that we adjourn without objection.

[03:34:40]

[03:35:00]

[04:00:00]

[04:05:00]

[04:06:52]

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I, Anders Nelson, hereby certify that the document "F884468-louisiana-redistricting" is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, a true and accurate transcription from English to English.

Anders Nelson
Project Manager

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