[BACKGROUND NOISE 00:00:00-00:30:00]

[BACKGROUND CONVERSATION]

SHARON HEWITT: If you all would take your seats, please. I'd like to get started. Good evening and welcome to the Joint Senate and House Committee on Governmental Affairs. Before we get started, I'd like to remind everyone to silence your cell phone so that we don't distract from any of the presentations or the testimony, and also be aware that this meeting is being live streamed and recorded. The Senate and Governmental Affairs Committee and next to me is Representative John Stefanski who is Chairman of the House and Governmental Affairs Committee. We'd like to welcome all of you, those of you here in Covington that are here with us in person, as well as those of you who are watching on the internet to the 6th of 10th public meetings of the Joint Committee of the Senate Government Affairs and Housing Government Affairs Committees. The two committees and our staffs have come together to provide you with information regarding the redistricting process. At some point early next year and prior to the next regular session, the legislature will call ourselves in the special session for the purpose of redistricting the House, the Senate, Congress, the Board of Secondary

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and Elementary Education, the Public Service Commission, and possibly some judicial districts. It is our goal and responsibility to redraw some of these districts, in particular Congress and the PSC, prior to the 2020 fall election cycle. The legislatures and districts must be redrawn by the end of 2022. We've scheduled all of our regional meetings in the evening hours so that most people can participate in this outreach. It is our desire, goal and objective to make this an open, accessible and transparent redistricting process. In addition to our physical presence here, we're utilizing every technological tool with our ability to provide you the greatest access to the process. We have our Legislative Redistricting web page on our Joint Legislative website and we're utilizing social media, including Facebook and YouTube to keep the public informed about the process. Every slide and all data presented here today can be found on our website. Persons who do not feel comfortable giving testimony in person may submit a prepared statement in accordance with Senate and House Rules in lieu of appearing before the committee. Statements or testimony which were received timely have been distributed to the members prior to the meeting.

Statements or testimony received after our deadline of 05:30 p.m. the day before the meeting, will be transmitted to members as soon as possible. All such statements and testimony will be made a part of the public record. Finally, your voice, thoughts and ideas are absolutely vital to this process. This is a listening session. It is our goal to take whatever information that you provide to us and use it as we begin the process of drafting redistricting plans. I can assure you that as Chairwoman of the Senate Committee, your ideas and recommendations matter to me and they matter to us.

[00:40:05]

Following the staff presentations, you will have an opportunity to make comments or suggestions and offer ideas. If you haven't completed a witness card, please fill it out and give it to a member of our staff. In an effort to give everyone a chance to speak, I would like to ask that you keep your comments to five minutes and relevant to our purposes today. In addition, I'd like to remind the audience that this is a legislative hearing and ask that you not applaud or speak out during the hearing. Again, thank you for your presence and your interest in this

very important process. Madam Secretary, would you please call the roll for the Senate.

LAUR'EN CIMINO: Chairwoman Hewitt.

SHARON HEWITT: Present.

LAUR'EN CIMINO: Present. Vice Chairman Milligan.

VICE CHAIRMAN MILLIGAN: Present.

LAUR'EN CIMINO: Present. Senator Allain.

SENATOR ALLAIN: Yeah.

LAUR'EN CIMINO: Present. Senator Foil. Senator Harris. Senator Price.

SENATOR PRICE: Yeah.

LAUR'EN CIMINO: Present. Senator Reese.

SENATOR REESE: Yeah.

LAUR'EN CIMINO: Present. Senator Tarver and Senator Womack.

SHARON HEWITT: Thank you, and Madam Secretary, please call the role for the House.

LAUR'EN CIMINO: Chairman Stefanski.

CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: Present.

LAUR'EN CIMINO: Present. Vice Chairman Duplessis, Representative Boui, Representative Carter, Representative Deshotel, Representative Farnum.

REPRESENTATIVE FARNUM: Here.

LAUR'EN CIMINO: Present. Representative Gadberry.

REPRESENTATIVE GADBERRY: Here.

LAUR'EN CIMINO: Present. Representative Hodges. Representative Horton. Representative Ivey.

REPRESENTATIVE IVEY: Here.

LAUR'EN CIMINO: Present. Representative Jenkins. Representative Johnson.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHNSON: Present.

LAUR'EN CIMINO: Representative LaCombe.

REPRESENTATIVE LACOMBE: Present.

LAUR'EN CIMINO: Present. Representative Lyons. Representative Magee. Representative Newell. Representative Thomas.

REPRESENTATIVE THOMAS: Here.

LAUR'EN CIMINO: Present, and Representative White.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITE: White, here present.

LAUR'EN CIMINO: Present. We have a core.

SHARON HEWITT: All right. Terrific. Thank you. I'd also like to recognize a few other folks that are here in the audience and are joining us here on stage as well. Lieutenant Governor Billy Nungesser is with us tonight. Welcome, Billy. Thank you for being here. We also have some additional senators and house

members here that you'll recognize that are generally from the local area. On the Senate side, we have with us Senator Patrick McMath, Senator Bodi White and Senate President Pro Tem Beth Mizell. Excuse me, he's part of the committee. Although if you want to be introduced twice, I'll introduce Senator Bret Allain. All right. I'd also like to introduce our staff who's with us tonight and you can see quite an entourage of folks from the capital, both legislative members as well as staff. We have with us Secretary of the Senate, Ms. Yolanda Dixon. First Assistant Secretary -- thank you. First Assistant Secretary J.W. Wiley, Second Assistant Secretary Sue Moran, Committee Attorney Matt Deville, and Committee Secretary Laur'en Cimino. We've got a number of security and communications folks with us as well. We've got our Senate Sergeant at Arms John Keller, our Assistant Sergeant at Arms [PH 00:44:08] Lewis Carell and Faith Mitchell are also our Assistant Sergeant at Arms and we can't forget our friends from the state police. We appreciate you all being at all of our redistricting meetings and helping to ensure the security and the safety of everyone in attendance. We have with us Trooper First Class Derek Clark, Sergeant Joseph Hall, and Lieutenant Huey McCartney. Thank you all

very much. There's a lot of technology here as well, thanks to the Legislative Communications Office and those folks that are with us today that have set up all this equipment. [INDISCERNIBLE 00:44:48], Senior Digital Media Specialist Jeremy Hall, Anthony Long, Steven Moe, [PH 00:44:54] Erik Shell, Cory Stewart the Chief Communications Officer and Jason Young. So thank you all very much for all the work that you do to prepare for this. Alright, and now I'd like to invite Chairman Stefanski to introduce the house staff and members.

[00:45:13]

CHAIRMAN STEFANSKI: Thank you, Madam Chairwoman. I want to thank everybody for coming out today as well. The purpose of this hearing is really for the community for this area to come and tell us what you want these maps to look like. So, we're excited to hear that. I would encourage you, if you have an interest in these maps, if you have an interest in these districts, fill out a card, let us know what you think. That's what we're here for, that's the purpose of this. With that said, we have a number of local reps who are here. We have Representative Nick Muscarello, Representative Bill Wheat, Representative Larry Frieman, Representative Bob Owen,

Representative Ed Larvadain, and Representative Richard Nelson. We also have a couple of former representatives here. We have former Speaker Jim Tucker. Nope. I didn't have Mark's name on here. We have Representative Mark Wright here as well and then we have former Representative and Mayor Greg Cromer. Also, we have house staff as well. We have our Senior Legislative Analyst Patricia Lowrey-Dufour. We have H&GA Attorney Laurie Lucas. We have our H&GA Committee Administrative Assistant Rosalie Ammersbach. We have House Attorney Claire Stevenson. We have our Clerk of the House Michelle Fontenot. We have our Demographer Dr. William Blair and we have our House Assistant Sergeant at Arms Danny Leming. Thank you.

SHARON HEWITT: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and just to take another moment of personal privilege, I see several local elected officials here. I appreciate you all being here. You already had -- were introduced to Mayor Cromer, Mayor in Slidell. We have Parish President Mike Cooper, in the back. Mike, thank you for being here. We've got Judge [PH 00:47:39] Penzada, I saw earlier. Judge, thank you for being here. Our Clerk of Court, Melissa Henry is here and who else have I missed? Not sure, the

lights are awful here. I can't see very well. Stand up if I missed you, please let me know. Councilman Bill Borchert. I don't see Bill. Usually, he's hard to miss. There he is. Thank you, Bill, for being here. Alright, Susie.

[BACKGROUND CONVERSATION]

SHARON HEWITT: Terrific. Thank you all for being here. All right. I appreciate everybody being here. If I missed you again, you'll have to wave at us. But we appreciate you being here. This is a once in a decade event and we're working really hard to make this a very open, fair and transparent process. So let's get on. Let's get the show on the road. We've got staff here that are ready to tell you everything there is to know about redistricting in the next 30 to 45 minutes. So hold on to your hat. They're going to talk about 2020 Population and Population Trends, Redistricting Terms, Concepts and Laws, The Redistricting Criteria, Malapportionment Statistics and Maps, and The Redistricting Timeline and then we will open it up for comments and input from you all. Our first speaker to kick us off is Dr. William Blair, our legislative demographer.

DR. WILLIAM BLAIR: Thank you very much. Hello, everyone. Thanks for your interest in legislatures

for district efforts. We appreciate it. It's my job to provide a brief introduction to the Louisiana census data and demographic trends. So let's talk about the census data first. There are two things we need to know before as we begin. First, the Census Bureau historically releases two sets of data. One, we call apportionment data and the second we call redistricting data, and second, the release of this data was delayed for several months this decade. The apportionment data by around five months and the redistricting data around seven months. That's why we're visiting you now rather than the previous spring.

[00:50:16]

So, let's have a look at Louisiana's apportionment data. Sets of numbers here. The apportionment data is Louisiana's statewide total population data, and there are two different numbers up here. The first is what we call the true apportionment data. This is the 6 million -- I'm sorry, 4,661,468 people, which includes 3,711 overseas military and civilian personnel and their families. This apportionment data is what is used to allocate the 435 congressional seats among the 50 States and based on our relative growth compared to

1 the other 49 States, we have maintained six
2 congressional districts. The second number we call
3 our resident population data removes that 3,711
4 overseas population to give us a total of 4,657,757.
5 This is the population used for statewide
6 redistricting plans such as congress and the state
7 legislature. It is also used to determine the "ideal
8 population of a statewide plan." This concept, this
9 ideal district concept, we'll be explained in greater
10 detail later in this presentation. So how does our
11 apportionment data compare to the rest of the
12 country? Not that great. From the slide, you can see
13 Louisiana's comparative growth rate, this pattern you
14 see up there follows a historical trend for Louisiana
15 and lagging behind our nation and the region. We grew
16 at 2.74%, pretty far behind the United States growth
17 rate of 7.35%, which by the way, that's the lowest
18 growth rate for this country in 80 years, and we lack
19 far behind the Southern regional average of over 10%.
20 So let's discuss the second sort of census data that
21 has released the Louisiana redistricting data. This
22 data is called the P.L. 94-171 Redistricting Data,
23 named after the federal law that enacted its
24 standards. This is the population by race and
25 ethnicity that jurisdictions around the state will

use to conduct their redistricting. This is your parish data, your precinct data down to the census block data. It's used by everyone from congress to your local municipal city councils to conduct their own redistricting. This data was released in two formats, first on August 12 and secondarily on September 16. The September 16 data is in an easy to use format that is available on the Census Bureau's primary data dissemination tool at data.census.gov. This is where the public can easily access the information that your jurisdictions will use to redistrict including the state legislature. Now, let's turn to Louisiana's population and composition change. This map shows you the change in population over the past decade in Louisiana. It will be the first of many, many, many color coded maps you will see during this presentation. If it's red or orange, you've lost population. If it's green and maybe yellow, you had some population growth or maintained your population. The main three takeaways you can take from this map are one population declines in the northeast and northwest of Louisiana. Population gains along the I-10, I-12 corridor from St. Tammany Parish to Kalkaska Parish and finally, population gains in suburbanized areas around the state. Now

this pattern will look familiar as we move to our next slide. Here we have our population change since 1980 and while we do have some unique experiences in several decades, such as a Hurricane Katrina effect in the Southeast during the 2000s at the bottom left, and higher growth rates across the state in the 1990s on the top right, the overall patterns are similar in all decades.

[00:55:05]

Again, losses in the north of Louisiana, population gains along our I-10, I-12 corridor and suburbanized area population gains. Now let's have a quick look at in more detail of our individual parishes and cities. These are the 12 parishes with the largest population declines over the past decade. These declines are fairly evenly distributed around the state, with the notable exception of Southeast Louisiana. As we can see by our next slide, these are the 12 parishes with the largest population increases over the past decade. Here, growth is concentrated around again, I-10, I-12 corridor par0ishes. So most of our growth is in that area, this past decade and finally, here are largest 12 municipalities and their growth or decline rates over the past decade. This follows the same sort of general trend based on our

regions. So, finally, let's see how our population composition has changed over the past decade. Now I have to give you two points before we talk about this final slide. The first point, be advised that the Census Bureau reports race and ethnicity separately. Ethnicity is reported in two categories, either being Hispanic or Latino or not. Race is categorized into one of six broad categories White, Black or African American, American-Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, or some other race. Now, the [INDISCERNIBLE 00:57:00] allows you to indicate multiple races, which theoretically can lead to having hundreds of combinations of race in the census data. It can be very cumbersome. The data you see on this chart represents the aggregation of those multiple categories. A complete description of the legislature's aggregation decision is available on our redistributing website under a document titled Allocation of 2020 Census Population for Database and Reporting. The second point, be aware that the Census Bureau has made changes to their questions on race and ethnicity for the 2020 Census, and the Census Bureau believes that these changes produce a more thorough and accurate depiction of the race and ethnicity self-identification of people in this

country. So the chart. Given those two points, the first two sections show you the racial and ethnic composition for our state in 2010 and 2020. The third bottom section shows the change over the decade and again, there are three main takeaways from this table, I think. One, an over 6% drop in the white only population in the state. Two, an increase in other groups proportion of our population in Louisiana and three, a very large increase in those self-identifying in the other category. Now, when you break that out, that means if somebody is in the other category, it means they're white plus one other race, Hawaiian single race or another race that is not black, Asian or American Indian. All of which leads to the conclusion that Louisiana, like the rest of the nation, has become more diverse. Now, I will turn over this over to Michelle Fontenot, the Clerk of the House, to present the discussion of redistricting terms and concepts.

MICHELLE FONTENOT: Thank you and good evening. So the first thing that we're going to talk about in my portion is centers around redistricting terms. The terms apportionment and districting are often used interchangeably, but those are not the same things. They are two distinct terms. Reapportionment or

1 apportionment is the process of allocating seats in
2 the legislature and for example, as Dr. Blair just
3 described in the U.S. House of Representatives, the
4 State of Louisiana is currently entitled to six
5 congressmen in accordance with the constitution and
6 the formula established by federal law called the
7 method of equal proportions. We have been apportioned
8 six seats following the 2020 census and now the
9 legislature must draw those congressional districts
10 in accordance with that census. So districting is
11 actually the process of drawing those lines of each
12 districts, with districts being the geographical
13 territories from which those officials are elected.
14 [01:00:09]
15 So, why do we redistrict? In part, because the
16 constitutional Louisiana requires that we do so.
17 Article III, Section 6 of the Constitution, includes
18 the duties and deadlines for legislative
19 redistricting, and for this decade, that deadline
20 will be December 31, 2022. There are other statutes
21 of the laws that contain redistricting duties and
22 deadlines that are applicable to local governmental
23 bodies, including parish governing authorities,
24 school boards, and municipal governing authorities.
25 Further, there are two general legal requirements

that also must be taken into consideration, and those are Equal Protection Clause and Voting Rights Act of 1965 that will be discussed in detail later by my colleagues. So, who is redistricted? The legislature is charged with redistricting the State House, the State Senate, Congress, Public Service Commission, State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, and the Courts. How is it accomplished? It's accomplished the way that any other legislation is through a bill. It begins with a bill that can be introduced in either the house or the senate, and generally speaking, it follows the same constitutional requirements and procedures that any other bill does that comes before the legislature. Your local governmental entities, such as parish governing authorities, municipal governing authorities, and school boards are not redistricted by the legislature and each of those must redistrict themselves in accordance with provisions of law. The Constitution of Louisiana contains many requirements relative to legislative redistricting. Article III, Section 1 requires that it redistrict single member districts. Article III, Section 3 provides a maximum number of members. So, for the senate, there's a maximum number of 39 senate districts, and for the

house, 105 house districts. Article III, Section 6, provides a deadline for the legislature to complete that legislative redistricting, which again is December 31 of 2022 and it also requires the use of census population data for that redistricting. The census population data use is P.L. 94-171 data that Dr. Blair previously mentioned. And now I'll turn it over to my colleague, Claire Stevenson, Attorney of House Judiciary Committee.

CLAIRE STEVENSON: Good evening. My name is Claire Stevenson, and I will be discussing equal population. One person, one vote. The starting point of the One Person, One Vote concept is the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, which states that no state shall deny to any person equal protection of the laws. The concept was further developed through a series of court cases in the 1960s in which the court held that there must be substantially equal legislative representation for all citizens of the state. Therefore, a state must have legislative districts of roughly equal population. Population equality, how is it measured? It's measured by determining the ideal population, which is equal to the total population of area being redistricted divided by the number of districts.

1 Deviation is the amount by which the district's
2 population differs from the ideal. There are
3 different standards for equal population regarding
4 congress and state legislative districts, the
5 standards are based on different legal provisions.
6 For congress, the standard is as nearly equal in
7 population as practicable. Again, that is based on
8 Article I, Section 2 of the Fourteenth Amendment that
9 says representatives shall be apportioned among the
10 states according to their respective numbers. The
11 deviation for congressional seats must be as close to
12 zero as possible and again, as nearly equal in
13 population as practicable. States must make a good
14 faith effort to avoid deviation and be able to
15 provide a legally acceptable nondiscriminatory
16 justification for any deviation. The standard for
17 state and local legislative districts is different.
18 That standard is substantially equal as possible. An
19 overall deviation of 10% or less is generally not
20 enough to make a prima facie case of discrimination,
21 but this is not a safe harbor. States must be able to
22 support the need for deviation with a justification
23 showing significant state interest. In Louisiana, we
24 try to keep that deviation to a plus or minus 5%. So
25 again, talking about equal population. Equality of

population must be the overriding objective. Objective of districting and any deviation from this principle is permissible.

[01:05:00]

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

LAURIE LUCAS: Good evening. I'm Laurie Lucas, the Attorney for House and Governmental Affairs. Now, I'll be discussing discrimination against minorities. There are several legal considerations involved in redistricting that one should be aware of. The Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendment, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and vote dilution issues in regards to racial gerrymandering. First, I'll provide some background leading up to the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth

1 Amendment prohibits the states from purposefully
2 discriminating between individuals on the basis of
3 race. The Fifteenth Amendment, adopted in 1870,
4 declares that the right of a citizen to vote shall
5 not be denied or abridged by the United States or
6 other states or the states on the account of race,
7 color, previous condition of servitude. The amendment
8 was ineffectual after adoption in eliminating the
9 problem of voting discrimination, and the Voting
10 Rights Act was enacted in 1965 as a means to ensure
11 that all citizens have the right to vote regardless
12 of their race, color or membership in a language
13 minority. Language minority groups are included as
14 American Indian, Asian American, Alaskan Natives and
15 persons of Spanish heritage. Specifically, Section 2
16 of the Voting Rights Act prohibits any state or
17 political subdivision from imposing a voting
18 qualification, standard, practice or procedure that
19 results in the denial or abridgment of any U.S.
20 citizens right to vote on account of race, color or
21 status. Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act was
22 amended in 1982 to clarify that a violation of
23 Section 2 is established if based on the totality of
24 circumstances, it has shown that the election
25 processes are not equally open to participation by

1 members of the protected class and that its members
2 have less opportunity than other members to elect
3 members of the electorate and participate in the
4 political process and elect representation of their
5 choice. The extent to which members of a protected
6 class have been elected to office is one circumstance
7 which may be considered. However, nothing establishes
8 the right to have members of a protected class in
9 equal numbers to their proportion in the population.
10 In 1986, those amendments were reviewed by the
11 Supreme Court in Thornburg versus Gingles. The court
12 imposed three preconditions that a plaintiff must
13 prove before court proceeds to detailed analysis of
14 the redistricting plan and to establish a prima facie
15 case. Those three conditions are as follows. The
16 minority population is sufficiently large and
17 geographically compact to constitute a majority in a
18 single member district. The minority population is
19 politically cohesive in that absence of a special
20 circumstance, bloc voting groups by the majority
21 defeats the minority's preferred candidate. Once
22 those preconditions are established, the court will
23 then proceed to consider several other objective
24 factors, including the totality of circumstances,
25 including but not limited to the extent of the

1 history of official discrimination touching on the
2 class participation in the democratic process,
3 racially polarized voting, the extent to which the
4 state or political subdivision has used unusually
5 large election districts, majority vote requirements
6 or other practices to enhance the opportunity for
7 discrimination. Denials of access to the candidates
8 leading process for members of the class. Extent to
9 which members of the minority group bears the effect
10 of discrimination in areas like education, employment
11 and health. Whether political campaigns have been
12 characterized by racial appeals.
13 [01:10:00]
14 The extent to which members of the protected
15 class have been elected, whether there are
16 significant lacks of responsiveness by elected
17 officials to the particularized needs of the group,
18 and whether of the policy underlying the use of the
19 voting qualification, standard practice or procedure
20 is tenuous. The points must show that the totality of
21 circumstances will support a court's finding that the
22 contested voting scheme is dilutive of the minorities
23 electoral power. When drawing a minority district to
24 avoid a violation of Section 2, the line draw must
25 take care not to create a racial gerrymander that

1 runs the file of the Equal Protection Clause of the
2 Fourteenth Amendment. As stated earlier, the Equal
3 Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment
4 prohibits the state from purposefully discriminating
5 between individuals on the basis of race. A racial
6 gerrymander is the deliberate and arbitrary
7 distortion of district boundaries for racial
8 purposes. A redistricting plan that expressly
9 distinguishes among citizens because of race must be
10 narrowly tailored to further or compelling
11 governmental interests. That means that the plan or
12 individual districts drawn were drawn narrowly to
13 satisfy the compelling governmental interests. What
14 is a compelling governmental interest? It would be
15 remedy past discrimination, avoiding retrogression or
16 avoiding a violation of Section 2 of the Voting
17 Rights Act. These interests must be strongly
18 supported in evidence. This applies not only to plans
19 that expressly distinguish citizens because of race,
20 but also plans that although race neutral are on
21 their face in explicable on other basis other than
22 race. Courts have said that the legislature is always
23 aware of race when drawing district lines, just as it
24 is aware of age, economic status, religion and a
25 variety of other demographic factors. That sort of

1 race consciousness or race awareness does not
2 inevitably lead to impermissible race discrimination.
3 So, race can be considered. However, race cannot be
4 the predominant factor in drawing districts. Critical
5 to determining the factors involved will be the shape
6 of the district, the regard given to traditional
7 districting principles, and the motivations that
8 drive line drawing decisions. When a majority
9 minority district is created, it must be created
10 giving due regard to traditional districting
11 principles. Otherwise, the district will be subject
12 to strict scrutiny. To avoid the pitfalls of
13 gerrymandering, one must be aware of bizarre shapes,
14 drawing districts that are reasonably compact, not
15 making race a dominant motive and following
16 traditional districting principles such as
17 compactness, contiguity, respect for political
18 subdivisions, respect for communities of interest,
19 maintaining traditional boundaries, maintaining core
20 districts, and protecting incumbents from contests
21 with each other. I will now hand it over to my
22 colleague, Matt DeVille, Secretary of the Senate and
23 Governmental Affairs Committee.
24 MATTHEW DEVILLE: Good evening. My name is Matt
25 DeVille and it sounds like I just got a promotion.

1 I'm the Staff Attorney for the Senate and
2 Governmental Affairs Committee, and I'm going to be
3 discussing the criteria for all redistricting plans
4 submitted to the legislature for consideration. These
5 criteria were adopted by the legislature during the
6 2021 regular session that wrapped up in June, and
7 it's contained in Joint Rule Number 21 that
8 establishes the parameters for any submitted plan.
9 Some criteria will apply to all plan types, whether
10 it be the State House or Senate, Congress, the BESE
11 Board, the Public Service Commission or the courts.
12 Other criteria are more plan specific, and I'll point
13 those out as we go. We'll start off by looking at the
14 requirements that every plan has to meet. All
15 redistricting plans have to comply with all
16 applicable federal and state laws, including the
17 Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment
18 and the Fifteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution,
19 as well as Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act of
20 1965, which were just presented. All redistricting
21 plans have to be composed of contiguous geography
22 within the district and by contiguous geography,
23 meaning if you were to trace it with a pencil and you
24 started at one end, you wouldn't pick the pencil up
25

until you were completed with the other. You can't have an island in a mainland, so to speak.

[01:15:10]

All redistricting plans have to contain whole election precincts to the extent practicable. If a precinct must be divided, it shall be divided into as few districts as practicable, using a visible census tabulation boundary or boundaries which can be geographic like a river or drilled down to the more granular level of the census data, which is known as the census block, the smallest one. All redistricting plans have to respect established boundaries of existing political subdivisions, which include parishes and municipalities, and the natural geography of the state to the extent practicable. However, this criterion is subordinate to and shall not be used to undermine the maintenance of communities of interest within the same district to the extent practicable. Continuing with some requirements that all plans must meet; all plans must utilize the most recent P.L. 94-171 data released by the U.S. Census Bureau as validated through the Data Verification Program of the State House and the Senate that validated data can be accessed by the public on the redistricting website. Anyone is free

to submit a proposed plan, but must be submitted in a specific electronic format, which is known as a comma delimited block equivalency file and that's a typical export format on publicly available redistricting websites, and if you do choose to submit a plan, we encourage you to include any additional information that could assist in consideration of that plan, including rationales for decisions made in the plan, maps, shape files, et cetera. As for plan specific criteria, each House, Senate, Public Service Commission, BESE and Supreme Court plan has to be a whole plan that assigns all the geography of the state. It's easy to draw a single perfect district, the challenge comes when you have to make the puzzle pieces around it fit. So you have to accommodate that perfect district by adjusting the boundaries accordingly, and consider the whole state in that process. Continuing to focus on specifics, each redistricting plan for the House and Senate, the Public Service Commission, the BESE Board has to contain single member districts, has to contain districts that are substantially equal in population which for our purposes means they must be within at least plus or minus 5% of that ideal district population figure and they must give due

consideration to traditional district alignments to the extent practicable. Now let's talk about congress, which is subject to a different standard. It also has to contain single member districts. However, those districts must have as nearly equal population to the ideal district as practicable as opposed to that substantially equal figure, which is a more stringent standard than for state plans. We're talking about fractions of a percent as opposed to that plus or minus five figures and with that, I will now turn over to my colleague J.W. Wiley, the First Assistant Secretary of the Senate who will begin the presentation of the malapportionment data.

J.W. WILEY: Thank you, Matt. Good evening, everyone. Now that we've given you a lot of legal concepts and terms, now we get to flip back to the color coordinating maps and numbers. We're going to start out first with the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, also known as BESE. This is a map illustrating the current eight BESE districts that were enacted by the Louisiana Legislature and precleared by the U.S. Department of Justice after the 2010 census. When these districts were drawn in the 2010, the ideal population of a BESE district was 566,671. The new ideal population for each BESE

1 district following the 2020 census is 582,219. This
2 new ideal population reflects an increase of 15,548.
3 This is all due to population growth of the state.
4 This chart shows the current population in each BESE
5 district and the difference from the ideal
6 population. As you can see, districts three and eight
7 are in red, meaning they're underpopulated. In
8 districts six and seven in green, meaning they're
9 overpopulated. This map illustrates the population
10 deviations with the dark red and dark orange colors
11 representing population below the acceptable range.
12 The orange representing the low side of the
13 acceptable range and the light yellow representing
14 the high side of the acceptable range, and the light
15 and dark green representing overpopulation.
16 [01:20:04]
17 Now we will discuss the Public Service
18 Commission, also known as the PSC. This is a map
19 illustrating the current five PSC districts that were
20 enacted by the Louisiana Legislature and precleared
21 by the U.S. Department of Justice after the 2010
22 census. When these districts were drawn in 2010, the
23 ideal population of each PSC district was 906,674.
24 The new ideal population for each PSC district after
25 the 2020 census is 931,551. This reflects an increase

of 24,877 in the ideal, all due to the population growth in the state. This chart shows the current population in each PSC district and the difference from the ideal population. As you can see, district one, which is in green, is overpopulated. This color-coded map illustrates the population deviations with the orange representing the lower side of the acceptable range, the light yellow representing the high side of the acceptable range, and the light green representing overpopulation. Now, I will turn it over to Patricia Lowrey-Dufour to present the malapportionment of Congress.

PATRICIA LOWREY-DUFOUR: Hi everybody. It's a pleasure to be back here in Covington in this auditorium ten years later. So, let's talk about the malapportionment of Congress. This map illustrates the current six congressional districts as they were drawn by the legislature following the 2010 census and precleared by the Department of Justice. When the legislature drew these districts in 2010, the ideal congressional district population was 755,562. According to the 2020 census, the new ideal population for congressional district will be 776,292 or an increase in 20,730 per district reflecting the population growth of the state. This is a chart

showing the current six congressional districts and their current populations and the difference from the ideal. This chart is not color coded because if you remember from the discussion earlier in the legalities regarding population of congressional districts, which must be as close to the ideal population as possible, none. Not one of these congressional districts would meet that standard requiring equal population to the extent practicable. This is a map illustrating those deviations from the population, with the dark orange color representing population the furthest below the ideal, the orange color representing population below the ideal, with the light-yellow representing population above the ideal, and the light green representing population, the furthest above the ideal. Now let's talk about the Supreme Court. As you remember from the discussions earlier, the Supreme Court is not subject to the equal population requirements that are contained within the constitution. This is a map illustrating the current seven Supreme Court districts as they exist in the state. When these districts were drawn in 1997, according to the 1990 census, the legislature did draw them substantially equal in population, and those districts were roughly

602,000 per district with a deviation of about less than 2%. If we would have drawn these districts in 2010 following the 2010 census, the ideal population would have been 647,624, but in accordance with the 2020 census, the new ideal population for Supreme Court district would be 665,393. This is a chart showing the deviations of each of the existing Supreme Court districts from that ideal district population, and again, it is not color coded because it is not subject to the equal protection requirement. However, they are substantially unequal in population. As you can see, district two is 4.11% under a 27,000, district six is 34,059 under, district four is 78,544, district seven is 188,839 and district one and two are both over 60,000 above the ideal.

[01:25:11]

This map shows those deviations from the ideal population, with a dark red representing the population the furthest from the ideal, the dark orange representing population below the ideal, the light orange showing population within that plus or minus 5% but again below the ideal district population, and the green showing population well above that ideal population. Now we're going to move

1 to the malapportionment of the House of
2 Representatives. This is a map showing the current
3 105 House districts that were enacted by the
4 legislature and precleared by the Department of
5 Justice following the 2010 census. When the
6 legislature drew these districts in 2010, the ideal
7 district population was 43,174. According to the 2020
8 census, the new ideal population for a house district
9 will be 44,359 or a change of 1,185 per district. So,
10 in order for no district to have to change, every
11 district across the state would have had to grow
12 equally by that 1,185. As you can see in this chart,
13 that did not happen. We have 29 house districts that
14 are above the acceptable plus or minus five
15 deviations for a house district. We have 39 house
16 districts that are within that plus or minus five,
17 and we have 37 house districts that are below that
18 ideal population. This is a map showing those
19 districts as they exist across the state. As you can
20 see again, the dark red and the dark orange
21 representing populations outside of the acceptable
22 deviation and below that ideal population, with the
23 orange representing the low side of the acceptable
24 range, the light yellow representing the high side of
25 the acceptable range, and the light and dark green

representing population above the acceptable range. So, the population inequality that's represented here means the district must change, and a redistricting decision made elsewhere in the state can absolutely affect how the districts are confected in your particular area. Now, I'm going to discuss the districts as they are in your immediate and surrounding areas. This is a map illustrating the configuration of the 14 house districts that are in whole or in part contained within St. Helena, Livingston, Tangipahoa Parish, Washington, and St. Tammany parishes. Of these 14 districts, you can see that 10 are within the acceptable range of population. There are two house districts, house district 72 and house district 75, that are severely under populated, and two districts which are substantially overpopulated, with house district 77 based here in Covington being the most populated house district in the state. This map illustrates those deviations from the ideal district population and again, you can see the dark red and the dark orange representing those populations below the acceptable range with the orange representing population below the ideal but within the range, the yellow representing population above the ideal but

within the range and the green representing those seriously overpopulated districts. Now, I'm going to turn it over to my colleague Yolanda Dixon, the Secretary of the Senate, to discuss the malapportionment of the Senate.

YOLANDA DIXON: Good evening. Thank you, Patricia. So, this is the map illustrating the configuration of the current senate districts in the state. They were enacted by legislation after the 2010 census and precleared by the U.S. Department of Justice. When these districts were drawn in 2010, the ideal population of the senate district was 116,240 and after the 2020 census, the senate ideal population is 119,429 reflecting a change in each district of 3,189.

[01:30:00]

This chart then shows that there are 10 senate districts in which the current population exceeds 5% above the ideal population. There are 14 districts that are within that ideal deviation and there are 15 districts that are below the ideal deviation. Now, this is the color-coded map which illustrates the population deviations. The dark red and dark orange colors representing the population below the acceptable range, the orange representing the

population on the low side of the acceptable range, the light-yellow representing population on the high side of the acceptable range, and the light and dark green representing population which is above the acceptable range. What I'd like to point out here is that as you can see, four senate districts, the red and orange districts, the number of those districts in the Northern part of the state, which will have to grow population from somewhere. So, they're going to be pushing down looking for population, obviously in this area which is green and dark green, which represents more population. Now, as we focus in on the districts for the Northshore for the senate, you'll see that we have districts encompassing and surrounding the Northshore. Districts 1, 11, 12, 6, 13, 17 and 18 encompassing Washington, Tangipahoa, St. Tammany, Livingston and St. John. Here are the maps, population numbers from the districts just shown on that map. You will see that most of the districts here are in green. One district, district 17, which has a substantial decrease in population, but all of the rest of the districts are showing just an incredible amount of growth. Next slide, please. So, here are the districts in the color-coding format which I mentioned earlier, and the districts in the

dark green and the light green showing the most growth. The district 12 in yellow showing modest growth, and the district in dark orange showing a loss in population. So, you see that district 12 had a modest growth, but it's still within the deviation. Districts 17 and 19 are under populated, but all other districts are outside of the deviation with a growth of over 5% of the ideal population. This concludes my presentation and now I'll turn it over to the Chair.

SHARON HEWITT: Thank you Ms. Dixon and thank you staff for another [INDISCERNIBLE 01:33:02] here on the board our last few roadshows, we call it the roadshow hearings will be in Lake Charles on December 15, in New Orleans on January 5, in the home of Thibodaux area January 11, and then back to Baton Rouge on January the 20. Members you have in your folders, of course, you have input that was emailed in to us, and I just want to enter into the record the authors of those emails, John [PH 01:33:36] Hires, Yvonne and Donald Freeman, Steve McCain, the Grant Parish Sheriff, Stephanie Burrell, Chris Kaiser and the ACLU of Louisiana, Judge Warren Willett, the 35th JDC, Jay Lemoine, the Grant Parish D.A., Randall Briggs, Grant Parish Clerk of Court, and Don Arnold,

the President of the Grant Parish Police Jury. You can probably tell we were in Alexandria on our last trip and some of this is email that didn't get in by the deadline. All right, and you'll see, we'll leave this website address up on the board as well. That is our website where you can find everything you want to know about redistricting. So this presentation will be there, all the public input that we get, it's all held in that one place. So, now is the time where we quit talking and we start listening and we'd like to invite again, members of the public. If you have turned in a white card, I will call you up one at a time. There's a microphone here in the center aisle. We'll give you an opportunity to address the legislative delegation. Remember, we have a five-minute time limit so that we can make sure everyone has a chance to be heard tonight. So, our first person is Mr. Randy Bush. If you would tell us also, please, if you're representing a group or an organization or where you're from.

[01:35:01]

RANDY BUSH: Yeah, I was praying that I would be first, thank you. Randy Bush, can I take this off?

SHARON HEWITT: We can hear you, yes, sir.

RANDY BUSH: I'm sorry. Randy Bush. I'm from Tantrum Parish, and I'm a Tantrum Paris School Board Member and I had an opportunity to watch the last two roadshows in Alexandria and Southern. Learn a lot of stuff, it's been really great paying attention. You get tired of doing those presentations. I think I can do it now after watching it. I'm going to spend and I'm early and you get to talk more in five minutes. When you first at the end, that man right there puts the clock on you at the end, but --

SHARON HEWITT: I'm running this meeting. I already started the clock.

RANDY BUSH: I got to go fast. Tantrum Parish is a great place to live, and I think that the title of my little five minutes' speech would be less is more. We have a great interstate system that runs east and west, north and south, railroad, airport, private schools, public schools, Northshore Technical Community College, Southeastern Louisiana University. When Parish President Robby Miller put on the side of the trucks move here. That's what people did. We are eight in the last 10 years in growth percentage wise and we're number 10 in the parish, number 10 in the state for population. We've come a long way in 10 years. The map shows we've come a long way in 40

1 years. 2016 we had major floods, we've had major
2 snow, ice events, tornadoes, Hurricanes. Ida
3 devastated our area up on Ponchatoula and the corona
4 virus and through all of that, we still are moving
5 forward. Out of the top 15 parishes in the state
6 contains over three million people, other 49 parishes
7 contain over just one million. We live in Ascension
8 Parish, East Baton Rouge, Livingston, Tangipahoa, St.
9 Tammany, Orleans and Jefferson. Those seven parishes
10 contain over right at two million people of our
11 parish. One gentleman mentioned this is a once in a
12 decade opportunity. I'm here to say that our parish
13 has a once in a lifetime opportunity. We have eight
14 legislators that represent us. Three of our
15 representatives are here tonight is [INDISCERNIBLE
16 01:37:25] is Bill Wheat, I love dearly, Nicky
17 Muscarello who I love dearly and Representative
18 Freeman. I just met you a few months ago. I don't
19 love you that much yet but I'm sure I'll get to it
20 and Representative Carter is not here tonight. We
21 also have four senators that represent us and three
22 are here tonight. Senator White, Mizell, Senator
23 McMath less is more. Senator White, we're going to
24 miss you my friend. He's term limited out and his
25 district is really big and it goes a long way across

Livingston and East Baton Rouge. But Tantrum Parish has grown so much and I'm asking this committee to consider uniting us a little bit more. Less geographical area in senate district six would allow the people and whoever that senator might be in two years an opportunity to really bond with their population, with our community and so try to look at that, and as I look at all the green on the maps and we're one of them. Of course, you can tell I'm a proud Tangi person. We're green the next 10 years, we have multimillion-dollar developments going on right now. Not exaggerations. We have thousands and thousands and thousands of homes that have been approved already to be built. I think I'm looking back in 10 years and we might be number nine in the state population and not number 10 and we've been a wheel that's been squeaking and we got the grease and in closing and I'm not a history guy as much as some of the people here tonight, but I don't know if we've ever had a senator that lived in Townsville parish that represented us in Baton Rouge and I'm asking tonight that unite our towns, our south end of our parish and let us have more representation because it is more and Senator McMath before I leave and Bill Wheat already knows this. Thank you for your

efforts in the recovery for Hurricane Ida. It did not go unnoticed my friend, because our town was devastated and I know you were there numerous times and I appreciate that. I hope you all had a great Thanksgiving and let me just say Merry Christmas to everybody and let's remember exactly what the Christmas season is about. Thank you, ma'am.

SHARON HEWITT: Thank you, Mr. Bush.

[01:40:00]

All right, I'd like to remind you all that we're not going to applaud. All right. Our next speaker is Tyler Baker with the Tangi-RPEC from Tickfaw.

TYLER BAKER: Thank you, representatives. We thank you so much for putting this together for all of us this evening, and we appreciate everything you do. Again, my name is Tyler Baker, represent the Tangipahoa Parish Public Executive Committee. Like I said in Tangipahoa Parish, I don't envy the task ahead of you because it's daunting one. I know we go through every 10 years, but again, my hats off to you for the efforts that you're about to go through. Randy was going to speak about the local legislator issues and some of the growth that you guys are obviously reporting on. What some of our constituents are bringing up to us that I wanted to make sure we

voiced tonight was the larger congressional aspect of it. Ten years ago, when the districts got drawn, the line could not have been drawn in a better location according to a law of our constituents what they believe as far as fifth and first congressional district the separation line if you will. We had representatives that knew the two areas very, very well. We had the southern half, which if you look at it obviously as you have, it's where we've seen some of the most growth. It's more metropolitan centric areas of the Parish. The northern area being some of the more rural areas that are constantly battling to get on the map development and whatnot. And the two congressional seats that we have currently right now have done an excellent job of pushing those issues, sure many of you have seen. So, the biggest thing that our constituents are pushing is that you try to do your best to keep that in mind whenever you are drawing these lines, that we try to center these districts wherever the lines may fall. We know they're going to change somehow or another. But please keep that in mind on what the needs are in those areas as far as their growth and what they're trying to accomplish in those areas. Thank you.

SHARON HEWITT: Thank you, Mr. Baker. All right, our next speaker is [PH 01:42:09] Camille Shaw. I apologize if I didn't say it right.

CAMILLE SHAW: Thanks for the opportunity. My name is Camille Shaw and I live in Slidell, Louisiana, State Representative, District 90, State Senate, District 1 and Congressional District 1. I'm a strong, fair map advocate and mainly that's what I came here just to say that I am a little newish to Louisiana, I've been here only seven years as compared to many people who have been here generations. But at the same time, I still believe very much in the opportunity of all in this country no matter where I am. And so, in order to have that opportunity, I do believe that good government is really essential and fair maps are a foundation of that good government and that everyone should be able to have fair representation so that they're all segments of the community can be heard. To me, that needs keeping communities together so that we can have a chance at electing government officials who are knowledgeable and responsive to our unique needs. So, over these weeks, I know that you guys have been on a journey and you've heard a lot of opinions around the state. And so, again, as everyone said,

you have a really big task ahead of you. I would only encourage you all to be open minded and be truly listening to what the people want. And I would ask you to not protect those in power but draw maps in this redistricting cycle that are fair and equitable for everyone. Thank you.

SHARON HEWITT: Thank you, Ms. Shaw. Our next speaker is John Frankie Hires from Jefferson Parish.

JOHN FRANKIE HIRES: John Frankie Hires [INDISCERNIBLE 01:44:36] Boulevard traveling from Jefferson Parish because the second most populated Parish with over 440,000 people contributing the most sales tax revenue to the state can't get a meeting. I'm expected to go to Orleans during bowl week. Anybody want to put a wage on how many different Jefferson Parish citizens are going to travel to Orleans Parish to the meeting during bowl week?

[01:45:01]

The only reason we go to Jefferson -- any Jefferson Parish citizen goes to Orleans is really two simple reasons. As a host of Jazz Fest because I have fun with this every year usually. Only two reasons we go to Orleans, go to St. Tammany or drop off one of our tourist friends to the French Quarter. No Jefferson Parish is going to be there except me.

And who I can convince to show up for this nonsense. I'm a Jeffersonian Republican, so I'm going to give you a little bit of them. On every question of its construction let us carry ourselves back to the time when the constitution was adopted recollect the spirit in which it was manifested, and rather than squeeze from the text or invent against it, conform to the problem one in which it was passed. In questions of power, then this the distribution of power. Then, no more be heard about the confidence of man. I have none. Now, he says let no more be heard about the confidents of men but bind him down from mischief through the change of a constitution, we have one. I've yet to find anybody that's willing to explain the following phrase to me. You all said it, everybody wants to bear lip service to some sense of fairness or equality those are arbitrary. We have a constitution so we don't have to rely upon you all for redistricting. Apportionment should follow principles. It is the principle by which we are supposed to be directly taxed and representatives. The only reason we formed a Union was because we could figure out that we didn't want to be arbitrarily taxed. We didn't want to suffer to virtual representation. The doctrine of virtual

representation has been discussed and resolved. It was a revolutionary war. I know no safe deposit over the ultimate power of society, but the people themselves. And if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them and put it in the hands of commission or even legislators. No, the remedy is not to take it from them but to inform their discretions by education. This is true corrective abuses of constitutional power. The phrase is simple, and if anybody wants to explain it to me, I won't have to come to the next three meetings, right? Representatives shall be apportioned among the several Parishes according to their respective numbers. Every Parish should have one, none more than some ratio. As far as the Senate goes, we don't even need one, it's redundant. We could add that to the representatives and just every Parish that has over 60,000 a senator. That would compensate for the fact that 49 Parishes don't even fulfill the ratio like 80,000, you can't even get a second representative. However, if we haven't obliged you and nobody feels compelled or has endeavored to comprehend the document that everyone in here at that side, myself included sworn a note to support and

1 defend the constitution, I've done so, that's why I'm
2 here. I'm compelled to, but if we haven't compelled
3 you to understand the document how could we hold any
4 faith that you'll live up to that oath? Sadly, these
5 principles were abandoned so long ago that none of
6 you could know. Once in a lifetime, it's been 180
7 years since the federal government observed
8 principled representation. We've been arbitrary
9 completely since 1872. Nevada has admitted to the
10 Union with 43,000 people. California has over a half
11 million. Nevada has gifted half the power. In
12 Louisiana, we have 50 something Parishes that share
13 representation among other Parishes. You're serving
14 more than one master. You can't get it done. That's
15 called virtual representation. We had a revolution
16 over it. In his advice to George Washington at the
17 first immersion, he says the constitution declares
18 the representatives and direct taxes shall be
19 apportioned. That's important. Direct taxes our
20 income or property taxes. If you have it or do it and
21 we tax it that's a direct tax. Nobody knows what it
22 is, challenge your favorite accountant. The reason
23 why we don't know is because it was abandoned. The
24 concept was abandoned in 1916 as a result of the
25 robber baron era. We said eat the rich.

Unfortunately, what ends up is the rich then end up pitted against the poor because everybody's arbitrarily taxed just as we're arbitrarily represented. Without explaining any principle at all. He says to show the conformity or guide for future apportionments, right? We're not supposed to have to debate this except maybe the ratio itself. We put the cart before the horse by declaring that we are going to have no more than 105 representatives. No more than 39 senators. Not one person in this room I guarantee you. Well, explain to me how the numbers 105 or 39 bear any respect to the 64 Parishes, the number 64 that we all live in.

SHARON HEWITT: Mr. Hires, you're running out of time.

JOHN FRANKIE HIRES: Thank you, I appreciate that. No devotion to all of our good intentions can unpaved this road to its inevitable destination. Consider principled representation. Thank you.

SHARON HEWITT: Thank you.

[01:50:00]

Our next speaker, James K. Harlan from Covington.

JAMES K. HARLAN: Yes, I'm James K. Harlan from Covington. I bring a perspective both as a congressional candidate who ran in the first

1 congressional district in 2008 when that
2 congressional district was comprised of St. Tammany,
3 all of Tangipahoa and then basically Jefferson
4 Parish. I'm also a member of the Democratic State
5 Central Committee representing House District 77 and
6 active in democratic politics in St. Tammany, but I
7 wasn't necessarily planning to speak tonight, except
8 that it occurred to me that I wanted to remind you
9 all of the importance of a few principles for the
10 process that you're about because of the need to do
11 this process in a way that gives effect to the
12 interest and rights of all people to be fairly
13 represented in their communities. And I noted that in
14 the introductions around about 80% of the people here
15 or sitting elected or staff, there are very few
16 public here. I don't have any idea what the
17 statistics say about who's listening, but you're
18 running a process that is about elected officials by
19 elected officials. And that is in fact one of the
20 reasons people are so frustrated with government
21 because they see it being about the politicians not
22 about their own interests. So, I would encourage you,
23 as you go through the very difficult process of
24 drawing these lines to remember these districts do
25 not belong to individual politicians. They belong to

1 the people in the communities that are supposed to be
2 represented. Now, with respect to the criterion, the
3 last criterion in all those criterions that were
4 listed was let's not have competition among
5 incumbents. I don't really care about that criterion
6 nor do I think you should. It should be about the
7 basic way to draw lines that represent compact
8 communities of interest. If some politician gets
9 adversely affected in that process, so be it. I
10 recognize the investment of effort time and
11 reputation required to become an elected official,
12 but this is the people's work and the lines should be
13 drawn to make the people comfortable that their
14 communities are being compactly represented. Now,
15 with respect to the maps that are up there, one of
16 the things that is glaringly obvious is you don't
17 color in Lake Pontchartrain. Lake Pontchartrain is a
18 great DeMarker between North, Southeast Louisiana and
19 South-Southeast Louisiana, and the Northshore is a
20 different community than New Orleans, and it's
21 Jefferson Parish suburb. I would echo the fact that
22 it's incredible that a process of this importance is
23 not having a meeting in the second or first largest
24 Parish in the state, which is much different than New
25 Orleans. That's a mistake. But I will note and this

is based on my own experience running for congress in 2008. When one of the opponent Steve Scalise in the Republican Primary gave me data that said that 94% of people on the Northshore wanted a congressperson from the Northshore. That's one of the reasons I ran. The split between Jefferson and St. Tammany is a dysfunctional split with respect to the first congressional district. It makes sense to have Washington St. Tammany, Tangipahoa and as far to the west as you need to go to get the numbers to work. Because that is a compact similarly culturally dominated by the interstate corridor economy modern dedicated to education. So, let Jefferson Parish go beyond itself and pick up the southern parts of the state and the entire area where all those people that tried to live on the coast and have to move from the coast. They're going to move to Jefferson Parish if they don't move up here.

[01:55:01]

And that's the compactness criterion. The other thing that I would strongly urge you to avoid is the gerrymandering that has taken place. And I've seen it in myself because in things like the public utility district where you have pockets of black voters that are actively excluded.

SHARON HEWITT: Mr. Harlan, you need to wrap it up, please.

JAMES K. HARLAN: Okay. Because this is about fairness and confidence of the voters, because our democracy is under a lot of stress. And this process, if it is handled fairly without the partisan effort to draw lines that favor parties or politicians but just represent compact communities can contribute to trying to rebuild and strengthen the fabric of our democracy.

SHARON HEWITT: Thank you, sir. All right, our next speaker is Stephen Kearny with Fair Districts, Louisiana.

STEPHEN KEARNY: Hey, guys, thanks for doing this. We'll be submitting our formal testimony as well as the maps that we're proposing at the New Orleans session. But I was hoping to use this session just to broach the topic of competitiveness. As you know, in the legislature, we have almost no competitive districts. And in congress we have zero competitive districts. Wouldn't you agree that our democracy would be greatly improved if we had more districts, where we had two opponents of a different party actually finding it out based on the quality of their ideas? So, that's just something I want to

1 introduce now and we'll be on presenting our promo
2 testimony later, too. Thank you.
3 SHARON HEWITT: Thank you. Jean [PH 01:56:55]
4 Domeskitt?
5 JEAN TOMACHEK: Here I am.
6 SHARON HEWITT: On Ridgeland. I'm sorry.
7 JEAN TOMACHEK: It's okay. I'm used to it.
8 SHARON HEWITT: Pronounce your name for me
9 correctly.
10 JEAN TOMACHEK: I will, my name is Jean [PH
11 01:57:09] Tomachek, and I live in the unincorporated
12 area St. Tammany Parish. Just a stone thrown outside
13 of Mandeville. I'm sure you're aware of the
14 television coverage regarding redistricting
15 throughout our nation. It was this coverage that made
16 me wonder what is going on in Louisiana? Regarding
17 redistricting and so I decided to do some research
18 which brought me here this evening. So, I am one of
19 those minorities here that just got into this. In
20 many ways, I like so many others in the area where I
21 live, won the lottery of life, why? Because the color
22 of my skin is white, which means my life has been
23 much easier than those who do not win that lottery of
24 life. Easier in life does not mean that I am better
25 than someone else. Instead, I feel that we are all

1 equal. After all, we all came into this world the
2 exact same way and we are all made in God's image and
3 likeness. And so, since we are all human beings, I
4 feel that this means that everyone ought to have the
5 same equal chance in bettering ourselves and not
6 inhibited in any way by decisions from our leaders.
7 And so, I ask that as you draw lines on the
8 redistrict maps, that you do this with transparency
9 and explain why and how you're unable to make sure
10 that there is equal representation throughout our
11 state if that is what happens. I've never heard
12 anyone running for political office say that it is
13 his or her purpose to make sure that all of the stars
14 artificially aligned so only the people they want to
15 be treated fairly are just so that you are reelected.
16 But often, that seems to be the reality. So again, if
17 you decide to draw the lines to include a certain
18 precinct in a district which resulted in two
19 different districts leaning in a certain way, be
20 transparent about your decision. Say why you decided
21 not to treat every person as equal resulting in an
22 imbalance of representation for all of us who are all
23 children of God. I ask that you be persons of honesty
24 and integrity, be open to share how and why you came
25 to your decisions. But more importantly, on behalf of

all the citizens of this state, I ask that you work tirelessly to draw equitable maps and let's have the news coverage for the State of Louisiana. Show that all of us including our politicians believe in justice and equality over any personal gains. Thank you for allowing me to speak.

[02:00:06]

SHARON HEWITT: Thank you very much. All right, our next speaker is Lester Dorey.

MALE 1: [INDISCERNIBLE 02:00:19].

SHARON HEWITT: Thank you. Okay. All right, former State Rep. Melissa Flournoy. You weren't in the room earlier when we did the introductions. Thank you for being here.

MELISSA FLOURNOY: Well, thank you, Madam Chairman Hewitt and Mr. Chairman Stefanski and the members of the legislature here tonight. I'm Melissa Flournoy and I'm the Board Chair of Louisiana Progress, and I want to thank all the members of the committee and the legislature and the house and senate staff who've been doing this road show now for almost a month and a half. And I've participated in many of the regional meetings because we believe at Louisiana progress that this is an important step promoting transparency and accountability. It's

1 important to hear from the representatives and the
2 citizens in each region. We've learned today about
3 population shifts moving south and essentially
4 reconfiguration of the house and senate and
5 congressional positions based on this shift in
6 population to Southern Louisiana. North Louisiana is
7 going to be very unhappy as it moves forward.
8 Louisiana progress is really trying to communicate
9 the details about redistricting. We published a guide
10 called "Make Every Vote Count" on the Louisiana
11 progress website. So, if members of the audience
12 would like more additional information, that's
13 available. But I'm here tonight to talk about the
14 Northshore and trying to balance the interest of
15 rural voters and urban voters and encourage you to
16 draw districts that fairly represent the citizens of
17 Louisiana and not gerrymandered to protect incumbents
18 or political parties. As you've demonstrated, all of
19 the maps in Louisiana because of this population
20 shift will need to be redrawn. Louisiana progress is
21 focusing on two metrics. I think Mr. Kearny mentioned
22 a couple of those. These metrics are competitiveness
23 and racial proportionality. We think the focus on the
24 congressional maps really needs to be weighted really
25 to give serious consideration because many of the

1 five of the congressional seats are not competitive
2 between political parties. They're safe republican
3 seats, and only one seat is a safe democratic seat.
4 When we talked about population shifts, Louisiana is
5 now approximately 40% minority, and we think that the
6 legislature should seriously consider trying to draw
7 two minority districts. So, as you consider the
8 specific challenges for the Northshore and as the
9 population has shifted and we see the growth in this
10 area. We think it's appropriate to consider a
11 congressional district that includes both Baton Rouge
12 and the Northshore and to hold the Florida Parishes
13 together. As other commoners have mentioned. We think
14 there's an opportunity to really think of the
15 Northshore of Louisiana really as Louisiana's Gold
16 Coast. We look at the development here along the I-10
17 and I-12 corridor. It's the center of economic
18 development and energy around redevelopment,
19 commercial development, population growth. And as
20 people are forced by hurricanes really to become
21 climate migrants, we think that there'll be even
22 additional growth in this I-10, I-12 corridor over
23 the next ten years. So, as you consider redrawing
24 these maps, we know it will be difficult to make
25 everyone happy. We do think that there's an

opportunity to create a Northshore congressional district, a second minority district to look at the possibility of a second minority district for the supreme court and the public service commission. And we hope that you will adhere to these certain priorities and principles of proportionality, competitiveness and minority right. You have a difficult challenge ahead. Thank you for taking the time to visit each district in each region of the state to listen to the interests of community leaders, elected officials and citizens as well as the faith community and the advocacy community to draw districts that represent the best of us and represent our people well. Thank you.

SHARON HEWITT: Yes, ma'am. Thank you very much. Our next speaker is Debbie McCloud from Bogalusa.

[02:05:00]

DEBBIE MCCLOUD: So, I'm here from Washington Parish, and I'm going to speak for the little guys, the small rural Parishes. My name is Debbie McCloud. Excuse me, I'm nervous. I apologize. I'm a resident of Bogalusa of Louisiana. And for those of you that don't know, in contrast to a former official who thought that Washington Parish was in Mississippi, we are definitely in Louisiana. Like many small rural

1 Parishes, we have frequently been used as a voting
2 block to move around wherever it's convenient. We'll
3 put you in the fifth district. We'll put you with the
4 second district wherever it's convenient we need a
5 voting bloc. And frequently, we're used to protect
6 larger and bigger political interests. And I'd like
7 to speak to all those small Parishes that have been
8 kind of misused that way, not just us, but other
9 Parishes where our concerns don't matter at St.
10 Tammany or New Orleans or whatever. So, it's
11 important that our lecturers understand the unique
12 issues specifically, that we in Washington Parish
13 have on the Northshore. We have a vested interest in
14 the Northshore, St. Tammany, New Orleans. A lot of
15 our people shop there. We need the transportation
16 that comes from the Northshore but we're rural, too.
17 We're one of those unique Parishes where we're
18 sitting amongst giants, and we need to have our voice
19 heard. And I think that that's true for all
20 Louisiana, that we should have communities of
21 interest that represent what is culturally unique to
22 each area. So, that when we're talking about the
23 coastal parts of Louisiana and we're talking about
24 Hurricanes and coastal erosion, we want
25 representatives who know what that's about. When

we're talking about the flooding on the Mississippi, we want a representative who knows what that's about. We're not on the Mississippi and we're not on the coast. We want a representative who knows about us, knows about our unique interest and the fifth congressional district, does not represent Washington Parish. To get to any other part of the fifth district except that little splice of the Florida Parishes, you have to drive out of your way to find a bridge that you can cross the Mississippi to go and meet with your congressman, that's absurd. I'm sorry. And the same is true for our house and our senate district although less so for the senate district. And you showed it the way that the 74th congressional district is designed, where it goes up from Tangipahoa, picks up Washington Parish goes down slices across and picks up part of Abita Springs in St. Tammany. Makes absolutely no sense. There's no commonality of interest. There's no rational reason for doing that. When I talk to the people in Washington Parish and I say, did you know that we have two districts? They say, no. I say, do you know who your other representative is? And they say, no. They have absolutely no idea. And it's time that we start looking at maps as though it's about people and

not about politicians, okay? And pay attention to those small Parishes, quit using us as pawns in some bigger political picture. And the other thing is that I really want to say that I support developing a second minority majority district and I think that that's really critical. Thank you very much for your time.

SHARON HEWITT: Yes, ma'am. Thank you. And member, just a moment of personal privilege here. I just got a note from Representative DuBuisson's husband. She was planning on being here. She represents an area in Slidell. She is going into emergency surgery at Slidell Memorial Hospital. It's a fairly routine thing, she's expected to do very well, but will be, of course, overnight at the hospital. So, keep her in your prayers if you would and she certainly intended to be here. Our next speaker is Linda Hawkins from Abita Springs.

[02:10:02]

LINDA HAWKINS: Thank you very much for having me. And thank you for coming to the Northshore and visiting us. We've been waiting for you. My name is Linda Hawkins. My husband and I have lived in the Abita Springs for 16 years. The land my home sits on has been in my family since the 1920s. I am a member

of many local Parish and state organizations, including Illegal Women Voters of Louisiana and St. Tammany. My current concerns today basically are community of interest factors in redistricting. I have some specifics, House District 74, which is mine, Senate District 11, which is mine and Congressional District 1, which is mine. Abita Springs, let me tell you about Abita Springs. Many of you know the name Abita Beer. Abita Springs the land around Abita Springs is 4.6 square miles, that is it. Population, 2,600. The median income is 62,000. The white is 2,179, black 144 with Hispanics and others included. The educational level in Abita Springs is BA or higher 37.6% the same as the state. The median age is 37. That sort of lays out what Abita Springs is. Town is evolved into a suburban residential community. While Abita is only a town with historic ambiance, it has a vibrant, energetic lifestyle similar to the cities of Covington and Mandeville. Volunteers work together in community organizations such as Abita Springs Trailhead Museum, Men's Club, Senior Citizens Club, Historic Commissions Planning, Zoning Commissions, all volunteers by the way. Abita is a home of the Abita Opry, Buskers Festival, Push Mower, Mardi Gras Parade, Full Fest on and on. The

town boast of historic trailheads, pavilion and originally built in 1884 in New Orleans. The Tammany trays and four state highways run through the town and bring multi visitors to us. I'm going to speak about House District 74 right now. Why does that matter? Well, 74 meanders down from heavily ruled less dense areas of Washington and Tangipahoa Parish to pick up and drop down and pick up Abita Springs. This mapping ignores the aspect of community interest by encompassing significantly different geographic areas. Washington and Tangipahoa Parish are rural geographic areas dotted with farmlands, forestry and marshlands. The concerns of these rural areas are not the same as Abita Springs. The concern is that Abita's economy interest in issues is weakened when linked with other rural areas when faced with competing and desperate unrelated issues. Washington and Tangipahoa Parish is may be negatively affected by having the same representation as a suburban community like Abita Springs. Solution: Place Abita Springs in a district with other communities with common interests. For example, Covington and Mandeville. Senate District 11 with boundaries that encompass vast differences in geographic areas. It cuts through the landscapes of St. Tammany and

1 Tangipahoa Parishes, diverse populations, economies
2 and communities with little common interests we can
3 all out voices with our representatives on issues and
4 interests. Our in the public interests, best interest
5 is not served and even compromised because of the
6 rural nature of Tangipahoa Parishes issues and needs.
7 And their needs are not being met. Solution: Remove
8 and replace Tangipahoa Parish from district 11 rework
9 it. And I'm sure Tangipahoa Parish could group
10 together and their common interests would be enjoyed.
11 Congressional District 1, St. Tammany District,
12 Congressional District 1
13 is what I'm in as well.
14 [02:15:01]
15 Relocate the remainder of district one into
16 district with common attributes in communities. Abita
17 Springs community interest in geographic area is
18 aligned with St. Tammany Parish in the Northshore of
19 Lake Pontchartrain, not Plaquemines Parish, New
20 Orleans nor Jefferson.
21 SHARON HEWITT: Ms. Hawkins, you need to wrap it
22 up, please.
23 LINDA HAWKINS: Okay. I'm almost there. The
24 social, cultural and economic and geographic
25 relationships make district one configuration and

anomaly and distortion. We're asking you to redistrict process to make it effective, transparent, fair maps. Ensure that maps are drawn fairly and accurately, and all voices considered and equitably represented. Thank you very much for your time.

SHARON HEWITT: Yes, ma'am. Thank you. Our next speaker is Carlos Pollard, Jr. with the Power Coalition for Equity and Justice from LaPlace.

CARLOS POLLARD, JR.: Okay. Good evening, Madam Chair and Mr. Chairman. My name is Carlos Pollard, Jr. and I'm one of the redistricting fellows for Power Coalition and today I'm asking that members of the state legislative to draw congressional maps that are fair and equitable. I would like to emphasize that this is possible to not draw maps that are unfair. We ask that you use your power to draw maps that create competitive districts and stop packing and cracking minority communities. Thank you for taking your time to listening to the public today. I'm in this urgent matter that determines our life for the next ten years.

SHARON HEWITT: Thank you. Our next speaker is Gay Digiovanni from Slidell.

GAY DIGIOVANNI: Hello, and thank you all for being here having this meeting. My name is Gay

Digiovanni. I live in Slidell, and I represent no other organization than a concerned citizen in Slidell. One of my main concerns is, just looking at the maps of various jurisdictions. It does not account for the cohesiveness of the Northshore, which has also been brought up this evening. But just looking at Slidell, we have three legislative districts that go through Slidell with the Slidell mailing address. We have District 90, District 76, and District 104, 105. Slidell is a town, a community that has been in existence as a community on the Northshore for a long time. And to have that split into three different legislative districts just doesn't seem realistic. The Northshore is a cohesive cultural and historic area. North of Lake Pontchartrain which is a natural boundary, should keep us together and not include St. Bernard Parish, not include Metairie. That is not part of our culture and our heritage. So, we also have similar -- on the Northshore, we have similar concerns, transportation, economics, recreation, tourism, school districts. All of those concerns are similar on the Northshore, which are very different than New Orleans than Metairie than St. Bernard Parish. So, I would like you to please consider these concerns. And I know

that you have a daunting task to try to make things fair, but not only fair with the numbers but also fair with the communities involved and the people that are represented by those lines. If it's 30% people of color, let's have a district with an equitable number of people of color in it. The second minority district would be in line with the way Louisiana is populated at this time. So, I would like you to consider that when you do the work at hand. Thank you.

SHARON HEWITT: Thank you very much.

[02:20:00]

SHARON HEWITT: Our next speaker is Bonnie Schmidt with the League of Women Voters from Slidell.

BONNIE SCHMIDT: Good evening. My name is Bonnie Schmidt and I'm here as a member of the League of Women Voters of St. Tammany. My mailing address is Slidell, although I live in an unincorporated area of the Parish close to St. Tammany's only nudist colony. Most people know where that is. You may not. I have two areas of concern that I'd like to address with you. First, I am a constituent of Senate District 1. I see from the district geography that St. Bernard Parish is a major factor in Senate District 1. St. Bernard Parish and Slidell have very little in

common. St. Bernard needs to be affiliated with other coastal parishes that have issues of fishing, coastal restoration and oil refineries. Slidell is a much more fitting to go into Senate District 11 that share the shoreline of Lake Pontchartrain. The residences, levees and flooding that occur there are the interests that are shared and should be kept together. Finally, with the population of Louisiana consisting of 30% African-Americans, I think now is the time to create a second majority minority district to give greater representation to the people who live in our state. I look forward to an open and transparent redistricting process with fair maps. Thank you for coming to Covington. I know your job is daunting, and I don't envy you, but thank you for your efforts.

SHARON HEWITT: Thank you, Ms. Schmidt. Our next speaker, Linda B. Gay from Mandeville.

LINDA B. GAY: Thank you for having the opportunity to speak. I'm Linda B. Gay. I live in Mandeville, and I'm speaking only for myself. Although I'm a member of many groups. I'm speaking justice of resident of St. Tammy Parish. Forces in our country have been trying to break us apart, set us one group against the other. There's unlawfulness

1 going on, and we're dealing with COVID, and the
2 government's going to make sure that we're conscious
3 of COVID for a very long time. I don't think we need
4 anything here in St. Tammany to tear us apart. St.
5 Tammany through all of this has been functioning
6 very, very well, and I want to thank all of our
7 elected officials because they're the ones who've
8 made us be successful. So, I'm speaking to keep us
9 functioning well here in St. Tammany. Thank you very
10 much.
11 SHARON HEWITT: Yes, ma'am. Thank you. Our next
12 speaker, John Raymond RPEC in State Central
13 Committee.
14 JOHN RAYMOND: Hey, guys. John Raymond,
15 Republican State Central Committee, and also
16 Republican Parish Executive Committee member at
17 [INDISCERNIBLE 02:24:01] in St. Tammany. I just want
18 to say thanks for coming out here. I've learned so
19 much from a very wonderful presentation and also
20 learned a lot from the questions that are being
21 asked, and so, this is very informative for me, and I
22 don't have any suggestions to make. I don't have any
23 requests to make, and I certainly don't presume to
24 give you an advice. But as I was sitting there a
25 little while ago, it dawned on me that here is after

Thanksgiving, before Christmas, and you guys who are supposed to have a two or three month of your job are combing the State, looking at all the Parishes and all the districts and putting in hours and hours and hours of effort, and I want to specifically thank the legislators here in St. Tammany Parish for making this the best place in Louisiana to live, work and play Senators Sharon Hewitt, Beth, myself, Patrick and Mat, and, of course, our Representative Richard Nelson, Mark Wright, Bob Owen and Larry Frieman that are here. I just love being a part of this Parish, and I just look at you right now, and I just really want to say thank you for doing all of this work. It doesn't go unnoticed. Thank you very much. Merry Christmas and happy New Year.

[02:25:02]

SHARON HEWITT: Yeah. Thank you, Mr. Raymond. Our next speaker is Linda Doyle on Lakeview Drive. Okay. Next speaker is Larry [PH 02:25:24] Deque, St. Tammany Parish DPEC.

LARRY DEQUE: Hi. Thank you for getting our inputs today. I really appreciate that, and thank you for an apparently very transparent process it seems to be. I'm a resident of Slidell. I've lived in Slidell since 1987. A father of three daughters.

They're born and live in Louisiana. They're 100% Louisiana people all the way, and I came here from New York back in the early 80s. But anyway, I decided to do a little research today on numbers, on voting numbers over the past ten years to see, are we really proportionately divvying up our congressional districts? And I pulled up some numbers from 2010 to 2020, and I've noticed that the proportion of Louisiana voters voting for democrats has ranged anywhere from below of 21% in 2012 up to about 36, 37, 38%, and to me, those numbers are telling me that out of the six districts, we should be having two that are represented by democrats to reflect those percentages, and I just wanted to make that point. Thank you.

SHARON HEWITT: Yes, sir. Thank you. All right. Councilman Bill Borchert, Slidell City Councilman.

BILL BORCHERT: Thank you, Madam Chair and other members of the committee. I just want to echo what John Raymond said. Thank you for your time and your efforts doing this. It's got to be a monumental task. The Slidell City Council introduced our redistricting at a special meeting on Monday night, and we have a whopping nine council districts to deal with. We had an hour and a half meeting. Our meetings normally

lasted about 15 minutes, so you can tell, and we had some changes that came up. We'll be hearing it again at our last meeting in December. But what I just want to do is thank you for the effort that you're putting in, and it doesn't need to be said, but I think that you guys will do your best to make sure that everyone in the State is equally represented regardless of the position that the candidate would run for and I just wanted to thank you for your efforts and wish you guys/gals and all Merry Christmas and happy new year. Thank you.

SHARON HEWITT: Thank you. Thank you very much for that. All right. The last card does not wish to speak and they did not print their name. I'm having a hard time reading it, but the comment was leave districts alone on the back of the card. So, a person that short and sweet. I appreciate that. All right. Is there anyone else? These are all the cards I have. Is there anyone else that has an interest in speaking and has turned in a card that I didn't receive yet? All right. Well, the input has been terrific. We appreciate everyone being here. Motion from Chairman Stefanski to adjourn, drive safe.

[BACKGROUND CONVERSATION]

[02:29:21]

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I, Anders Nelson, hereby certify that the document "F865555-louisiana-redistricting-2021-northshore" is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, a true and accurate transcription from English to English.

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