

EXHIBIT NO. JTX-026 evid.  
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WITNESS \_\_\_\_\_  
CLERK: SHONÉ POWELL

FEB 26 2024

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF MISSISSIPPI  
Condice Cane, REPORTER

**The MS Standing Joint Legislative Committee on Reapportion and Redistricting  
Public Hearing on 08/11/2021**

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**TRANSCRIPT OF AUDIO-RECORDED  
PUBLIC HEARING OF THE  
STANDING JOINT CONGRESSIONAL REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE  
AUGUST 11, 2021  
ITTA BENE, MISSISSIPPI**

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1 MR. BECKETT: Okay, gentlemen. Uh, I know there  
2 will be a few more people probably come in if we get  
3 started, but, uh, we're scheduled to begin at 6:00 and  
4 since we're broadcasting this and doing some other  
5 things, I want to go ahead and get started. A coup- --  
6 just a couple of formalities before we have our -- our  
7 [inaudible] introduction.

8 Uh, just a reminder that this joint committee  
9 holds public hearings to receive suggestions and  
10 recommendations on how the -- the Mississippi  
11 Legislature should redistrict itself and its four  
12 congressional districts. Uh, during the course of the  
13 hearing, um, as chair, I will -- I will offer members  
14 of the public an opportunity to, uh, address the  
15 committee and to give -- to give statements.

16 And to the committee about the upcoming  
17 redistricting effort, um, [inaudible] we try to get  
18 members of the public a free opportunity to say what  
19 they wish, uh, in cases where it appears that they're  
20 going to be many persons who are to speak we li- -- we  
21 limit their time. And, um, as -- as to what time we  
22 impose will -- will be up to the chair and depending  
23 on how many persons, uh, want to speak.

24 And, uh, you know, at -- at this time as, uh, I  
25 want to call as called -- at -- at this time as chair

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1 I would like to call the meeting of the public -- this  
2 public hearing of the joint reapportionment committee  
3 and joint congressional redistrict committee to order  
4 and ask our council to call the roll of the members  
5 present.

6 MALE 1: Mr. Beckett.

7 MR. BECKETT: Here.

8 MALE 1: Mr. Blackness. Mr. Brown. Mr. Eubanks.

9 Mr. [Inaudible].

10 MALE 2: Here.

11 MALE 1: Mr. Mango. Mr. Reed.

12 MR. REED: Here.

13 MALE 1: Mr. Shanks.

14 MR. SHANKS: Here.

15 MALE 1: Mr. Taylor. Mr. White. Mr. Kirby.

16 MR. KIRBY: Here.

17 MALE 1: Mr. Brian.

18 MR. BRIAN: Here.

19 MALE 1: Mr. Debar [ph]. Mr. Perkins. Mr. Hops.

20 MR. HOPS: Here.

21 MALE 1: Mr. Parker. Mr. Simmons.

22 MR. SIMMONS: Here.

23 MALE 1: Mr. Tate. Mr. [inaudible]. And Mr.

24 Williams. Thank you very much.

25 MR. BECKETT: All right. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

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1 I don't -- I don't see any members [inaudible] came in  
2 late.

3 Just as a reminder, uh, we're -- we're not  
4 calling roll because we're required to have a quorum.  
5 This is not -- not a meeting that requires that, but  
6 we're simply doing it so that we'll have a record of  
7 who's present. And so I want to -- I want to thank  
8 each one of these members for their time.

9 At this time, we're -- we're here in this really  
10 -- really a nice facility here and -- and, uh, look  
11 thank -- we want to thank the president for making  
12 this available for us to use.

13 Uh, we try to use our public facilities, um, one  
14 because being -- being a state agency, uh, I think  
15 that's good. But also it gives an opportunity to  
16 showcase the different things on our campus. So Mr.  
17 Parson, we'd love for you to -- to say a few words if  
18 you want to.

19 MR. PARSON: Thank you. Chairman. Members of the  
20 committee. Uh, welcome. Thank you all again for being  
21 here supporting, uh, our university [inaudible] state  
22 and doing the out- -- outstanding work [inaudible]. I  
23 did just want to take an opportunity to thank you all  
24 for all the continuing support that [inaudible].

25 And every time I get, uh, an opportunity to speak

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1 I always start by saying it's a beautiful day to be at  
2 the Mississippi Valley State University. So we truly,  
3 truly do appreciate you all being here [inaudible].  
4 The one thing that we have at the university today is  
5 really a, uh, blessed day for one to have you all here  
6 today. But also today was the day that our freshmen  
7 are moving on campus. So we're really moving the  
8 university forward.

9 And we know that we couldn't do that if it wasn't  
10 for all the support that you all were giving us to be  
11 able to do that. Here at the university we have eight-  
12 word vision. Those eight words are one goal, one team,  
13 one Valley in motion.

14 And it's opportunities like this to share and  
15 experience that we know we are truly in motion. So  
16 again, on behalf of Mississippi Valley State  
17 University, welcome, and I know you all will really  
18 have a very productive meeting. So thanks.

19 MR. BECKETT: All right. Thank you very much. Um,  
20 tonight is our -- we have a unique pleasure. It's not  
21 very often that -- that we have our, uh, one of our  
22 United States Congressman in our -- in our audience.  
23 And Congressman Thompson we thank you for being here  
24 and we want to offer you a chance to say a few words  
25 if you care to.

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1 MR. THOMPSON: Well, I do. [Inaudible] public  
2 hearing [inaudible].

3 MR. BECKETT: Is -- the tapes are rolling and --  
4 and so --

5 MR. THOMPSON: Oh, okay.

6 MR. BECKETT: The -- the record is being kept  
7 right now so.

8 MR. THOMPSON: Well, thank you very much  
9 [inaudible] standing joint committee. Uh, welcome to  
10 the second district. Uh, we brought [inaudible] with  
11 me today. If you noticed when you got out your car.

12 Uh, it was the first thing he said, whoa it's  
13 warm out here. Uh, so that's [inaudible]. Uh,  
14 [inaudible] the second district because you know, uh,  
15 I've recommended it for about 28 years. And I know  
16 [inaudible] for quite a while.

17 Uh, there are a couple of things I'd like to  
18 share with you as it relates to this district. Uh,  
19 it's important you look at demographics of the state,  
20 uh, and to allow, um, [inaudible] the right to pick a  
21 congressperson, a Senate representative of their  
22 choice is absolutely important. Please don't split  
23 communities' interests up to the extent that you can  
24 try not to split precincts. Uh, we only have two, uh,  
25 counties in my entire 26 counties that I represent.

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1 The split I have for the most part, whole  
2 counties. Uh, when I started, I had more fractional  
3 counties, than I did whole counties.

4 And I've seen it morph over time that now, uh,  
5 people [inaudible] county don't have to ask who that  
6 congressperson is because they only have one. Uh,  
7 people in -- in, uh, other counties [inaudible] that  
8 have that other county. So it's important, uh, that  
9 you try not to split communities, try not to split  
10 voting precincts.

11 And we are one of few states that lost  
12 population. So you're going to have to make some  
13 adjustments. So when you look at those adjustments  
14 [inaudible], can we make adjustments on the  
15 congressional side with as minimal amount of, um,  
16 statistical upheaval as we possibly can.

17 Uh, I personally think you can, uh, I have  
18 [inaudible], uh, Hans County. Uh, if you look at Hans  
19 County, uh, just give me Hans County and -- and you're  
20 pretty close to [inaudible].

21 I live in Hans County. I live all my life, uh, in  
22 Hans County, so he could fix it real quick, uh, and  
23 everybody would be happy. But I -- I look to the- --  
24 these hearings [inaudible], but I think communities of  
25 interest is [inaudible] important.



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1 Uh, the Delta, the second district [inaudible].

2 Uh, we are one of the more agricultural districts, uh,  
3 in America. Uh, some of you saw, uh, what happens here  
4 between the cotton, corn, and soybeans.

5 Uh, I even bring people down and [inaudible], uh,  
6 now my Christian friends tell me when I take them to  
7 the casino, uh, the foods good. Uh, so I just leave it  
8 at that. But, uh, it's our second income producer, uh,  
9 for the district. So [inaudible] is, uh, a significant  
10 revenue producer for the district. Apart from that,  
11 this is the public's, uh, venue, uh, uh, uh, for you  
12 to hear from. It's an opportunity, uh, for people to  
13 get their positions through.

14 Uh, I don't even look at the district, uh, from a  
15 restful standpoint. It's not nearly as difficult  
16 perhaps as some of the other districts. So, um, that's  
17 about it. I'm happy to be here. Um, uh, I applaud  
18 public hearing.

19 Uh, uh, I applaud the ability for the public to  
20 come and have a say so on the public's business. So  
21 again, I compliment you for it. Thank you very much.

22 MR. BECKETT: Thank you very much. Um, also, uh,  
23 we have several other members of the Mississippi  
24 House's Senate that aren't on the committee that are  
25 here. Uh, I would welcome them to introduce themselves

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1 at -- at this time [inaudible].

2 SPEAKER: Hey. [Inaudible] from the Mississippi  
3 Delta. [Inaudible].

4 SPEAKER: [Inaudible] district [inaudible].

5 MR. HIMES: John Himes [ph], District 50  
6 Washington Bolivar [ph], [inaudible] County.

7 MR. CLARK: Brian Clark. House District 47,  
8 [inaudible] counties.

9 MR. ROSEBUD: Tracy Rosebud [ph]. District 30,  
10 representing portions of Tallahassee and sunflower  
11 [inaudible] counties.

12 MR. ANTHONY: [Inaudible] Anthony. District 31.  
13 Bolivar Sunflower Washington and Humphreys County.

14 MS. VICTORIA: Victoria [Inaudible]. Lake  
15 Madison, [inaudible] County.

16 MR. BECKETT: All right. I -- I think that's  
17 everyone. I -- I thank you all for doing that. In  
18 addition to these individuals, I want to thank our  
19 staff for -- for making this possible for all the --  
20 the work they did in preparing to just have this  
21 meeting live, but also to broadcast the meeting and --  
22 and all the work that they're going to do going into  
23 the future.

24 Um, you know, the, um, you know, uh, I just --  
25 for an opening statement before we actually get

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1 started with the -- with the public comment.

2 Yeah. I just want to say -- to say that our staff  
3 has gone through the minutes of the hearings, um, from  
4 the hearings from the 2010 public hearings that we had  
5 and the current ones, just to try to anticipate a few  
6 of the questions and concerns that the public might  
7 have.

8 So that we might answer those just to provide  
9 some information as to why we're here right now and  
10 what we're -- and what we're doing. And I want to -- I  
11 want to thank them for doing that. And I think it -- I  
12 think it's really, really good information, uh, that -  
13 - that will help. Uh, you know, a few other things  
14 that -- that are -- then I asked is you iif why -- why  
15 are we redistricting?

16 Yeah. I have people all the time. I had a call  
17 today about- -- about that while I was on my way up  
18 here. You know, why -- why do you need to redistrict?  
19 .

20 And, you know, uh, you know, I just need to point  
21 out that both the federal constitutional requirements  
22 of one person, one vote re- -- requires redistrict.  
23 Uh, bo- -- both our congressional districts and our  
24 legislative districts every 10 years following the  
25 census.

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1           Additionally, section 254 of our constitution of  
2   1890 requires that we redistrict the legislature. So  
3   we- -- were doing redistricting because it's required.

4           Uh -- uh -- when -- when we will commence  
5   redistricting, when we will commence -- we have  
6   started redistricting. We started this really with  
7   these series of meetings, but before even -- before  
8   that the formation of -- of this committee back  
9   earlier in the summer.

10          But, uh, we -- we've started in earnest, you  
11   know, and, and so, you know, because of the qualifying  
12   deadlines, uh, of next year, our, our efforts of  
13   congressional redistricting will come first.

14          And we -- uh, and will occur during this fall. So  
15   that -- so that might be finished before it's time to  
16   qualify. Um, then we'll begin working on -- on the  
17   legislature and we will do that during the months of  
18   the 2022 legislative session.

19          All right. But, you know, because of population  
20   shifts, we're going to face many challenges and I just  
21   want to make that clear to the public. That -- that  
22   we're -- that they're going to be many challenges.  
23   You're going to have parts of the state that have  
24   gained population like -- like Mississippi, Gulf  
25   Coast, and maybe the Northwest corner of the state and

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1 -- and a few other areas.

2 Then you're going to have areas like those in  
3 Lauderdale County or -- or [inaudible]. And over here,  
4 you have areas of the state [inaudible] population.  
5 Both scenarios, as you all know, cause problems.

6 Because they have their own -- their own set of  
7 difficulties that -- that we'll have to -- have to  
8 deal with because as our districts have lost  
9 population or the counties have lost populations,  
10 these maps that are in front of you, um, you know, has  
11 the county populations on it.

12 You could -- you could see that, um, that we've  
13 lost, uh, uh, a great deal of, uh, uh, people in  
14 certain places and gaining people in other places. So  
15 there will be some movement, um, of district lines.

16 You know, so why are we presenting census  
17 estimates at this hearing? And the simple fact is, you  
18 know, because of delays, uh, in producing the census,  
19 the actual numbers we use in redistricting are not yet  
20 available.

21 And that- -- that's the simple fact if we had the  
22 official numbers, we would be using the official  
23 numbers, but this is not the first time that we've  
24 used estimates. And these estimates, there are no  
25 districts who are going to be -- no district lines are

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1 going to be drawn from these estimates, but they are  
2 helpful in showing us what areas have gained  
3 population and what areas have lost population.

4 So we can begin, uh, working on that and thinking  
5 about, um, what needs to be done. Um, and so these  
6 census estimates give us a good indication of -- of  
7 where our challenges are and -- and -- and like I  
8 said, they've been used in -- in past hearings. You  
9 know, how many -- how -- how many members of the  
10 public participate in this process?

11 We-- -- we've been asked that question, and  
12 there's several ways that the public can participate.  
13 One is by -- by discussing their concerns at this  
14 hearing or our series.

15 We're having nine of these public hearings around  
16 the state so hopefully they'll be convenient to our  
17 voters. Um, and so you have to have an opportunity to  
18 -- to express their opinion at -- at the hearing.

19 You know, we're -- we're here to hear your  
20 concerns. We're not here, we're not going to be  
21 answering questions and things like that, but we're  
22 here to hear your concerns, um, this, uh, this  
23 evening, we'll -- we'll listen to any matter that you  
24 wish to bring to our attention about how and -- and  
25 where we're drawing congressional and legislative

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1 district lines.

2 Um, you know, we -- we -- we let them -- the --  
3 let -- let members of the public know that -- that  
4 they must sign a card. I think you were asked to s- --  
5 to sign an index card, if you wanted to speak. We --  
6 we would like for all members to sign in and there's -  
7 - as -- as you come in and that's simply so that we'll  
8 have a record of -- of who all attended the meetings.

9 But -- but if you would like to speak, we -- we  
10 need you to sign a card because then they're going to  
11 give it to me and I'll have it -- have it to call --  
12 call on people. Um, and so if you change your mind, if  
13 you ha- -- if you decide you want to speak just let  
14 the staff know, and -- and they'll get -- they'll get  
15 your card.

16 Um, you know, you can submit suggestions to the  
17 committee in writing or by email, uh, and you can take  
18 advantage of the opportunity to use the committees'  
19 public, uh, access, computer terminals. And, um, you  
20 know, it -- it, and, uh, and, uh, you know, what kind  
21 of concerns are -- are -- are do we expect to hear?

22 We -- honestly, we want to hear just whatever  
23 your concerns are, just -- just whatever -- wh- --  
24 whatever is important to you. Um, in the past, we've  
25 heard things, uh, ranging from voting rights act

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1 concerns.

2 We've heard about splitting precincts. We've  
3 heard about splitting municipalities. Um, and we've  
4 heard about, uh, districts being odd shaped. We've  
5 heard about splitting communities of interest.

6 So you're -- you're probably not going to come up  
7 with something that the committee hadn't heard, but  
8 still it's your right to express, uh, the concern- --  
9 the concerns that you have have it just a reminder  
10 that the rules of the House, um, govern joint  
11 committees' meetings and -- and such matters will be  
12 ha- -- any matters will be handled according to the  
13 House rules. You know, um, a question that is on the  
14 handouts.

15 This is, but I'm re- -- I'll repeat this for  
16 those who are watching and -- and -- and don't have  
17 the benefit of having the handouts.

18 So occasionally you may think, you know, why is  
19 he saying that we have it in front of us, but there  
20 are people who aren't here. And so, you know, how can  
21 members of the public contact maybe to provide  
22 information, um, [inaudible] book time on the public  
23 access portal.

24 And members can, um, members of the public should  
25 be advised, like it's -- they send US mail to Ted



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1 Booth, Staff Council Joint Reapportionment Committee  
2 PO Box 1204, Jackson, Mississippi 39215-1204. Or you  
3 can send an email to ted.booth@peer and that's p-e-e-  
4 r, uh, .ms.gov. And please be -- uh, please provide  
5 information to staffs of the address, phone number, so  
6 we can follow up.

7 Um, please don't just send them something, asking  
8 questions, and then not provide them with any way to  
9 get back with you. So if -- if you put your contact  
10 information that -- that will help. Uh, public access  
11 for congressional reduces [inaudible] will commence  
12 following the delivery of the final PL94-171 data,  
13 which should arrive at the close of September. So we  
14 hope to get that information September 30th.

15 And, uh, I don't see any reason that won't  
16 happen. We've been reassured multiple times that would  
17 happen. Um, and so the -- the public access will s- --  
18 will start, and will start at that time and will last  
19 for three weeks.

20 Um, for the legislature, it will occur after  
21 January 1, 2022, and last for three weeks. Now, um,  
22 and so, uh, I don't think anyone else is - is -- has  
23 come in, that would -- that would need to -- need to -  
24 - to recognize. Do I have any member of the committee  
25 that would like to make a statement?

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1           MALE: Uh, uh, I'll make one if I may. Thank you,  
2 Mr. Chairman, uh, first off, as you notice, uh, we --  
3 we have several people that aren't here, they're on  
4 the committee. Of course, uh, for other [inaudible]  
5 it's a long way from the coast for some of these  
6 people that are up here. And -- and as the chairman  
7 stated, we're having meetings all over the state.

8           So, uh, but we also have one that's just, uh,  
9 just getting over COVID and decided not to come in.  
10 And, uh, then of course, Senator Frazier just had back  
11 surgery.

12          So, um, but all these, uh, members that aren't  
13 here have texts, saying that they are watching and,  
14 uh, and listening. And therefore we're here for  
15 [inaudible]. And, uh, thank you for letting us be here  
16 tonight.

17          MR. BECKETT: All right. Uh, one of the things I  
18 -- I did want to mention is that we've heard a great  
19 deal of concerns about county redistricting and  
20 municipal redistricting.

21          And that's -- that's your right if that's what  
22 you want to use your time and making a statement  
23 concerning those things. But I just want to  
24 reemphasize that that's not in our pur- -- purview. We  
25 will not be redistricting counties or municipalities.

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1       So don't think we're just not interested. Or --  
2       or -- or that we're going to ignore, um, anything that  
3       you might say about those things. But we -- there's --  
4       we're not going to be doing -- we're not going to be  
5       doing that.

6       We'll be doing House -- Mississippi House and  
7       Senate and congressional redistricting. And, um, so,  
8       um, that -- that having been said do we have anyone  
9       else that would like to say anything?

10       MALE: Thank you Mr. Chair. But I just wanted to  
11       welcome Mr. Chairman and also Mr. vice chair, Dean  
12       Kirby, uh, and also members of the redistricting  
13       committee, uh, to the Delta, uh, as you all know in  
14       the public [inaudible] represent parts of Bolivar,  
15       Washington, and Oklahoma counties, and welcome to the  
16       Delta. And -- and welcome to Mississippi Valley State  
17       University.

18       MR. BECKETT: Thank you very much. All right. Is  
19       there anyone else that [inaudible]. All right, well,  
20       um, that -- that having been dispensed with, um, I'm  
21       now going to call on the individuals that -- that I  
22       have received a card, uh, that they would like to  
23       speak. Mr. Charles is, I think is [inaudible]?

24       FEMALE: [Inaudible].

25       MR. BECKETT: Okay. All right.

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1 MR. CHARLES: I'd like to say good evening to  
2 everybody. Especially to the redistricting committee  
3 for the state of Mississippi. It'll be in a statement  
4 Mississippi joint [inaudible] redistricting committee.  
5 Or Mississippi [inaudible] engagement roundtable.  
6 Mississippi State Conference, NAACP. One Voice NAACP,  
7 Sunflower County branch. [Inaudible] concerns  
8 [inaudible] Sunflower [inaudible] Bolivar, Oklahoma,  
9 [inaudible].

10 Montgomery Homes and Tyler and Lee Counties. The  
11 process of redistricting is a critical component of a  
12 [inaudible]. And who represents them at local state  
13 and federal level. All the process of drawing maps  
14 that's a very technical steel that very few can  
15 master. Everyone has a right to express how these  
16 boundaries affect their life. [Inaudible] continue to  
17 be a major issue in Mississippi.

18 [Inaudible] areas voting as well as the lack of  
19 political representation [inaudible] move to  
20 disenfranchise them as a citizen.

21 My organization, along with the Mississippi City  
22 engagement roundtable have documented years of voter  
23 suppression factors that have led to a cynical amount  
24 of mistrust in voting system here in Mississippi.  
25 Mississippi remains at the bottom of the nation or the

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1 lack of assess that it provides to citizens for  
2 voting.

3 Antiquated systems such as lack of online voting  
4 registration, lack of early voting programs and -- and  
5 an absentee voting system that requires an  
6 organization of the applicant and ballot. The COVID-19  
7 pandemic made this issue even worse.

8 Many states implemented valid job programs in all  
9 the effort to ensure the safety of both voters, and  
10 the election officials. Mississippi could have used  
11 this urgent health crisis to rise to the occasion, to  
12 put the health of it's citizens first but we did not.

13 Instead we passed legislation [inaudible]  
14 individually, who contracted the virus [inaudible] our  
15 caregivers to use this as an excuse to vote by  
16 absentee ballot. Just caused more confusion for  
17 citizens and election vo- -- workers then had to put  
18 their own health at risk to provide a ballot for the  
19 individual with the virus. This is voter suppression.  
20 Incidents like these continue to display themselves in  
21 various form and make it more difficult for people to  
22 vote.

23 Among the top of the list of the concern of voter  
24 [inaudible] confusion regarding polling places and the  
25 lack of adequate election equipment. Citizens of

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1 Sunflower County continue to witness these incidents  
2 of voter suppression. With every [inaudible] denied  
3 their rights to receive a system-wide voting sent to  
4 different voting precincts.

5 We deserve a fair voting process and handled with  
6 integrity. The development of [inaudible] boundaries  
7 at the local state and federal level can help us  
8 improve our election process, by development districts  
9 that keep our communities together and are  
10 transparent. Which includes keeping the boundaries of  
11 [inaudible] District 2, the same as we speak. Thank  
12 you very much.

13 MR. BECKETT: Thank you. [Inaudible]. Thank you  
14 for -- for coming in. I appreciate you making the  
15 effort to be here. Next, is Melvin Young.

16 MR. YOUNG: Good eve- -- good evening, everyone.  
17 It is truly an honor to be before the committee this  
18 afternoon. And after we were in Senatobia the other  
19 afternoon, it kind of put me to work.

20 Uh, my name is Melvin Young. I'm a community  
21 redistricting specialist, uh, that has helped many of  
22 our communities across the state of Mississippi,  
23 through various organizations. When one of the  
24 committee members asked the other evening, what is it  
25 that you want us to do?

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1 We decided we were going to try to give you all,  
2 uh, more than just a little conversation. We'll give  
3 you a little paper to look at.

4 A couple of things that was -- that has been  
5 brought out at all the other public hearings and I  
6 just wanted to echo this as well, is that we want to  
7 make certain for the congressional, uh, redistricting,  
8 that you all have coming up few specific things. Uh,  
9 district number one, may need to take up more  
10 [inaudible].

11 Uh, congressional district number 2, doesn't need  
12 to go into the [inaudible] County. It should be  
13 extended farther south. And obviously district 4, who  
14 has more population, it's going to lose a few  
15 counties.

16 Now I know this is a lot of information to look  
17 up all of a sudden Mr. Chair, but we wanted to answer  
18 the question that your member asked the other day  
19 about what specifically we would like to see?

20 We certainly want to make sure we protect our  
21 communities of interest in all of those, uh,  
22 districts. Very specifically since a congressional  
23 district, number 2 was created by a, uh, judge- --  
24 judges, as well as the last one that was done by the  
25 judges. Um, we took a very quick hit at this just to

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1 try to give you -- you all an idea with the projected  
2 information, what our concepts were.

3 So I -- since I'm one of those ones who helped to  
4 kind of put this on the paper, I just wanted to know,  
5 were there any other questions specifically around the  
6 congressional redistricting that you all would like  
7 for us to answer [inaudible] the evening, that was the  
8 question. What do we want you to do? And we have  
9 before you a proposal.

10 And remember, this is just like you all said,  
11 it's projected information. And once the information  
12 comes out, we will certainly be working in communities  
13 and sharing more as you all push this process forward.

14 And once again, we want to thank you for allowing  
15 us to have this input. And certainly as communities,  
16 um, we, we want to have an active voice in this  
17 process. So Mr. Joe, was there any other questions  
18 that the gentlemen had? [Inaudible] here?

19 MR. JOE: Yeah. Yeah. If, uh, if anyone has a  
20 question they -- they can. I'm sure you'll be here  
21 afterwards [inaudible].

22 MR. YOUNG: Yes. Thank you all.

23 MR. JOE: Excuse me. [Inaudible].

24 MR. BECKETT: I'm -- I'm -- I'm sorry. I just  
25 want to be clear. There is a reference at the bottom



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1 of the map to the Tunica County Redistricting  
2 Committee.

3 MR. JOE: Yes.

4 MR. BECKETT: And so I assume this is a  
5 recommendation from the Tunica County Redistricting  
6 Committee.

7 MR. JOE: Yes, sir.

8 MR. BECKETT: Thank you. Next, uh, [inaudible]  
9 like to speak? Good evening.

10 FEMALE: Good afternoon. Thank you all. Uh, the  
11 redistricting committee, allowing us an opportunity to  
12 speak on behalf -- my name is Marilyn Young and I'm a  
13 resident of Tunica County and I'm standing  
14 representing the Mississippi Education Organizing  
15 Alliance. And I'm here to make a couple of requests.

16 The first one is, uh, since the census data has  
17 not been released and you all have already started  
18 having the public hearings we are asking you all,  
19 would you please come back and have public hearings  
20 after the data is released? .

21 And you all have drawn the map so the community  
22 can view them, analyze them and evaluate them so we  
23 can see them.

24 The last redistricting cycle we did not get an  
25 opportunity to view the maps before the legislature

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1 voted on them, nor were we able to see them. That was  
2 not another process that gave the community an  
3 opportunity to help check that and look at it.

4 And so we're asking that once these numbers are  
5 out and before you all actually take a vote on it,  
6 will you please consider having public hearing so that  
7 we can review maps, uh.

8 Uh, the next thing is I would like to ask that  
9 you please try to adhere as much as possible to the  
10 principals of redistricting. We ask that the district  
11 must be composed of a continuous character.

12 Districts should be compact. They shouldn't have  
13 all types of irregular shapes. The redistricting plan  
14 should avoid truly racial gerrymandering. The  
15 redistricting plan should avoid a political  
16 gerrymander.

17 A redistricting plan would not have either the  
18 purpose or the effect of [inaudible] minority voting  
19 [inaudible] and shall otherwise comply with section 2  
20 and 5 of the Voting Rights Act. The 14th and 15th  
21 amendment of the constitution. The plan should avoid  
22 drawing districts that are odd shapes. Boundaries  
23 should cross governmental or political boundaries that  
24 at least one time is less as possible.

25 The redistricting plan should be drafted such

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1 that the districts are bound by roads, streams, and  
2 natural visible boundaries.

3 The redistricting plan should preserve  
4 longstanding communities of interest. And when we talk  
5 about communities of interest, we're very concerned  
6 about congressional district 2 in which we live in.

7 We would like, uh, for those communities of  
8 interest to stay together. We would like to request  
9 that it does not go into the Soda County, but it goes  
10 -- continue to go south as Congressman Thompson  
11 requested, uh, early on by putting Hans County and  
12 some of the other Southern territory in that district.

13 We should also, uh, ask that the redistricting  
14 plan should not draw -- be drawn so that it minimize  
15 the cost of election administration and voter  
16 confusion.

17 We would not like to see one side of the street  
18 in one district and another side of the street and  
19 another one. It just causes all kinds of confusing on  
20 election day with people not knowing where they should  
21 vote.

22 And once again, I would like to request that you  
23 all please allow us an opportunity to view, analyze,  
24 and evaluate the plans as they are drawn before the  
25 legislator takes the final vote.

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1 We understand that you all have that final  
2 authority to vote on those plans, but we're very  
3 concerned, uh, about trying to make sure that you  
4 don't rack up on a lot of unnecessary, um, seats, just  
5 because you have the knowledge to do so. We want this  
6 process to be fair, and we want to stay an integral  
7 part of the process. Thank you.

8 MR. BECKETT: Thank you very much. Um, Mr. -- Mr.  
9 [inaudible].

10 MALE: Good afternoon. [Inaudible]. I have lived  
11 in -- I have lived also in Tupelo, uh, for five years  
12 in both Lee County and here in [inaudible] County. I  
13 have worked as a paid poll worker paid by the county.  
14 I have worked as an unpaid poll watcher. I have also  
15 worked closely with a friend, now deceased, who served  
16 on the election commission of [inaudible] County for  
17 several terms.

18 I still have two friends on the election  
19 commission, although I do not do any work for them.  
20 Um, as a poll worker in several elections, as a poll  
21 watcher in a few elections, I want to echo, uh, two or  
22 three of the comments that Mrs. Marilyn, uh, Young,  
23 just made. I simply, um, wanted to say that on behalf  
24 of the circuit clerk, the five members of the election  
25 commission poll workers, um, as well as voters.

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1 Um, please try to draw your legislative district  
2 lines and the congressional district lines so that  
3 they coincide as much as possible with other district  
4 lines, um, lines, such as municipal and county over  
5 which you have no control. Um, I feel like there's a  
6 chicken and egg problem because I don't know who goes  
7 first in redistricting, whether it's legislative, you  
8 go first.

9 So okay. Um, so I -- I will try to make the same  
10 plea to my supervisors of the county city council in  
11 the city to draw their lines to coincide with the  
12 lines you draw. But the reasons are obvious as Mrs.  
13 Young stated, um, to reduce confusion in the polling  
14 place on election day. Um, it is helpful to have as  
15 few sub-district- -- sub-districts and split precincts  
16 as possible.

17 And then for the sake of the -- the printer of  
18 the ballot, the circuit clerk and the election  
19 commission, and preparing for elections, um, it would  
20 -- would reduce confusion for them as well.

21 So I just wanted to let you know a lawyer in  
22 Greenwood who sometimes is a poll worker cares enough  
23 about that to come and -- and speak to you, uh, uh, on  
24 that one topic. Thank you.

25 MR. BECKETT: Thank you very much. And, uh, we do

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1 acknowledge the difficulties created by split  
2 precincts. Um, having been a victim of that myself,  
3 uh, I think I had 23 split precincts. The first time I  
4 ran for office, I don't know, 30 something precinct,  
5 so I understand the confusion that that can cause.

6 But just so the public will understand we- --  
7 we're going to draw as few split precincts as  
8 possible, legally possible. But after we draw the  
9 districts, then a lot of the counties are going to  
10 move some of the precincts as such because they're  
11 faced with the requirements of one man, one vote  
12 requirements.

13 So they're going to feel the -- the need to move  
14 some of their -- so there's going to be some --  
15 they're going to be split there's just no avoiding  
16 that. We just -- well -- we will attempt to keep that  
17 to a minimum on our part.

18 Um, are there any other questions, ma'am? All  
19 right. At this time we don't -- we don't have any  
20 other -- other questions. Is there any member of the  
21 committee who has anything they would like to say  
22 before we adjourn? [Inaudible].

23 MALE: Uh, thank you. I don't want to go on at  
24 length about the split precincts and it- -- it's a  
25 very bad situation, but this is the dilemma.

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1           The -- the information that we have now is based  
2   on existing precincts. It's -- that's how we get our  
3   data of where we -- I mean, we have -- we have more  
4   detailed data, but what else would you use as a  
5   building block?

6           So we've got to work with existing precincts.  
7   Because counties have smaller populations, a shift in  
8   a few votes, or a few people will require a county in  
9   order to keep the dist- -- county districts the same  
10   size to move some -- some lines around.

11          So we use existing precincts and then after  
12   that's over later the counties come along and  
13   redistrict and they will move lines because they have  
14   to because of population. It's a problem.

15          Not all of the split precincts are due to that,  
16   but that's the -- a major problem that we have. So we  
17   -- we feel your pain, but I don't know that there's an  
18   easy solution.

19          MR. BECKETT: Okay. Um, I want to thank -- I want  
20   to thank our host again for -- for hosting this event,  
21   providing this facility for us.

22          I want to thank the public for their attendance,  
23   um, I want to -- I want to thank our staff. And, uh, I  
24   want to thank our -- especially I want to -- I want to  
25   thank our Congressman for his attendance and honoring

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1 us with -- with -- with what he had to say, we  
2 appreciate that.

3 I thank our other members who are not on the  
4 committee for coming and just remind the pu- -- the  
5 public that we are at the beginning of this process.

6 And then, um, you know, if they -- if they may  
7 provide us with any comments or suggestions, on our  
8 proposed plans by mailing them to Ted Booth staff  
9 council joint reapportionment committee. PO Box 1204,  
10 Jackson, Mississippi, 39215-1204.

11 Or you can send an email to  
12 ted.booth@peer.ms.gov. And, uh, with that being said,  
13 um, you'll have a good evening. And this meeting  
14 stands adjourned.

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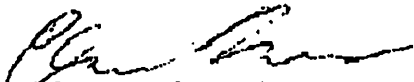
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I, Chris Naaden, a transcriber, hereby declare under penalty of perjury that to the best of my ability the above 31 pages contain a full, true and correct transcription of the tape-recording that I received regarding the event listed on the caption on page 1.

I further declare that I have no interest in the event of the action.



August 25, 2021

Chris Naaden

(Standing Joint Congressional Redistricting Committee,  
Itta Bene, 8-11-21)

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<b>thinking</b> 13:4	<b>understand</b> 27:1 29:5, 6 <b>unique</b> 5:20 <b>United</b> 5:22 <b>university</b> 4:21 5:2, 4,8,11,17 18:17 <b>unnecessary</b> 27:4 <b>unpaid</b> 27:14 <b>upcoming</b> 2:16 <b>upheaval</b> 7:16		
<b>Thompson</b> 5:23 6:1, 5,8 26:10			
<b>time</b> 2:21, 24,25 4:8, 9,25 7:4 9:1 10:16 11:15 12:23 15:22 16:18 17:22 25:24 29:3,19			
<b>times</b> 16:16			
<b>today</b> 5:4,6			



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**Itta Bena Statement**

**To:** Mississippi Joint Legislative Redistricting Committee

**From:** Mississippi Civic Engagement Roundtable

Mississippi State Conference NAACP

One Voice

NAACP, Sunflower County Branch

**Re:** Political Apportionment Concerns in Sunflower, Leflore, Yazoo, Sharkey, Humphreys, Issaquena, Washington, Bolivar, Coahoma, Tunica, Quitman, Tallahatchie, Panola, Yalobusha, Grenada, Montgomery, Holmes, Attala, and Leake Counties

The process of redistricting is a critical component of a citizens' political rights to have a say in who represents them at local, state and federal levels. Although the process of drawing maps is a very technical skill that very few can master, everyone has a right to express how these boundaries affect their lives.

Voter suppression continues be major issue in Mississippi. Barriers to voting as well as the lack of political representation are avenues to the disfranchisement of citizens. My organization, along with the Mississippi Civic Engagement Roundtable, have documented years of voter suppression tactics that have led to a considerable amount of mistrust in voting systems.

Mississippi remains at the bottom of the nation for the lack of access that it provides to citizens for voting. Anti-quoted systems such as the lack of on line voter registration, lack of early voting programs, and an absentee voting system that requires notarization of the application and ballot.

The COVID-19 pandemic made these issues even worse. Many states implemented ballot drop programs and other efforts to ensure the safety of both voters and Election officials. Mississippi could have used this urgent health crisis to rise to the occasion and put the health of its citizens first. But we did not. Instead, we passed legislation allowing individuals who contracted the virus or were care givers to use this as an excuse to vote by absentee ballot. This caused more confusion for citizens and election workers who then had to put their own health at risk to provide ballots for individuals with the virus.

This is voter suppression. Incidents like these continue to display themselves in various forms that make it more difficult for people to vote. Among the top of the list of those concerns are voter purging, confusion regarding polling places and the lack of adequate election equipment.

Citizens of Sunflower County continue to witness these incidents of voter suppression. During every election cycle, citizens are purged off voter rolls, denied their right to receive assistance while voting, and sent to different voting precincts. We deserve a fair voting process that's handled with integrity.

The development of fair political boundaries at the local, state and federal level can help us to improve our election process by developing districts that keep our communities together and are transparent, which includes keeping the boundaries of Congressional District 2 the same.

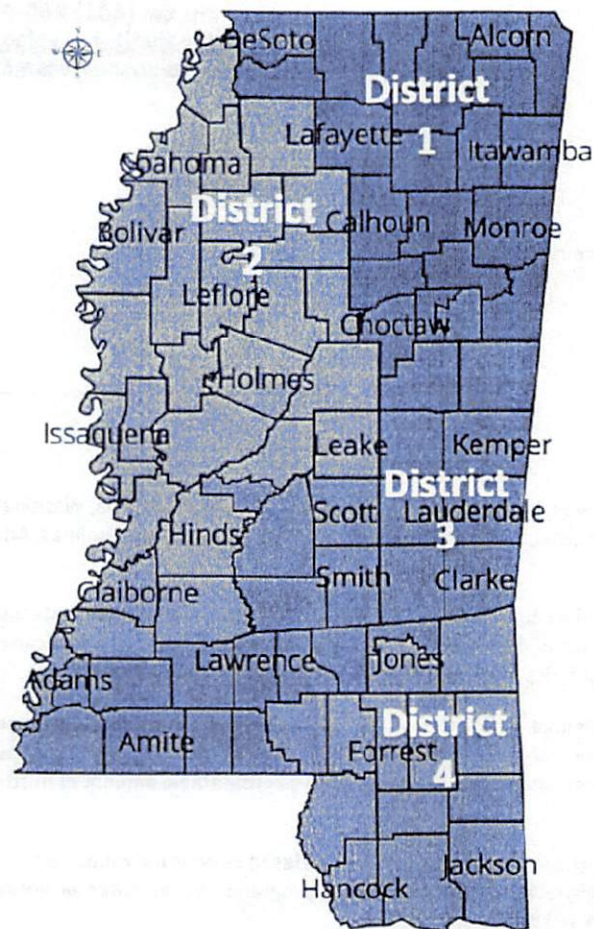
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## REDISTRICTING RECOMMENDATION MAP: CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS MS 2021

Map: ver 2021-CONGRESS-v3 Date: 08/10/2021



District	Population	Deviation
Un	0	0
1	746,062	-43
2	746,164	59
3	746,077	-28
4	746,115	10

District Details		
1		
Total Population 2019		
Pop	%	
Total	746,062	100.0%
White	498,454	66.8%
Hispanic	25,268	3.4%
Black	211,404	28.3%
Asian	8,454	1.1%
Native	3,021	0.5%
Pacific	812	0.1%
Citizen VAP 2019		
Pop	%	
Total	559,422	100.0%
White	390,086	69.9%
Hispanic	9,500	1.8%
Black	151,839	27.2%
Asian	2,492	0.7%
Native	2,193	0.4%
Pacific	98	0.0%

District Details		
2		
Total Population 2019		
Pop	%	
Total	746,164	100.0%
White	228,137	30.6%
Hispanic	15,953	2.1%
Black	499,320	66.9%
Asian	5,160	0.7%
Native	3,955	0.5%
Pacific	258	0.0%
Citizen VAP 2019		
Pop	%	
Total	555,677	100.0%
White	185,531	33.4%
Hispanic	6,582	1.2%
Black	356,315	64.0%
Asian	2,782	0.4%
Native	2,546	0.5%
Pacific	103	0.0%

District Details		
3		
Total Population 2019		
Pop	%	
Total	746,077	100.0%
White	452,466	60.7%
Hispanic	17,406	2.3%
Black	258,016	34.6%
Asian	8,552	1.2%
Native	10,018	1.3%
Pacific	441	0.1%
Citizen VAP 2019		
Pop	%	
Total	559,650	100.0%
White	355,722	63.6%
Hispanic	5,801	1.0%
Black	187,715	33.5%
Asian	3,005	0.7%
Native	6,161	1.1%
Pacific	179	0.0%

District Details		
4		
Total Population 2019		
Pop	%	
Total	746,115	100.0%
White	516,370	69.2%
Hispanic	32,555	4.4%
Black	183,575	24.6%
Asian	15,755	2.1%
Native	7,259	1.0%
Pacific	1,251	0.2%
Citizen VAP 2019		
Pop	%	
Total	558,541	100.0%
White	401,350	71.9%
Hispanic	15,472	2.8%
Black	126,303	22.6%
Asian	7,871	1.4%
Native	4,732	0.8%
Pacific	130	0.0%

D	Population		Shapes	Partisan Lean			Demographics (CVAP)							
	Total	+/-		Dem	Rep	OTH	Total	White	Minority	Hispanic	Black	Asian	Native	Pacific
Un	0			0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
1	746,062	-0.01%		35.0%	65.0%	0.0%	558,422	65.86%	30.14%	1.77%	27.19%	0.66%	0.41%	0.32%
2	746,164	0.01%		65.49%	34.51%	0.0%	555,677	32.41%	66.59%	1.18%	64.52%	0.41%	0.48%	0.22%
3	746,077	0.00%		36.98%	63.02%	0.0%	559,650	62.56%	37.44%	1.04%	33.34%	0.70%	1.10%	0.33%
4	746,115	0.00%		30.41%	69.59%	0.0%	558,541	71.90%	28.10%	2.76%	22.97%	1.41%	0.85%	0.32%
The Norm Ideal Pop	746,109	0.01%		42.61%	57.39%	0.0%	558,098	69.72%	30.28%	1.69%	27.02%	0.80%	0.71%	0.32%

Notes

- The 0.01% population deviation is within the 0.75% threshold tolerated by the courts.
- Three districts lean Republican, one leans Democratic, and none fall in the 45-55% competitive range.
- There is one majority-minority district.

This Map was created by the Tunica County Redistricting Committee with technical assistance from Melvin Young - CDDAGIS Consulting, Inc. [cdagis@tunica.com](mailto:cdagis@tunica.com) Tel.: 601-559-2476 or 662-541-2222. The Districting and Data Platform is provided by DRA7020.

#FairDistricts!

CDDAGIS

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