

**State Defendants' Response to Brooks, LULAC, and  
MALC Plaintiffs' Joint Motion for Preliminary Injunction**

**Exhibit BF**

Senate Special Committee on Congressional Redistricting Thursday, August 7,  
2025,:10, <https://senate.texas.gov/videoplayer.php?vid=22443&lang=en>.

TRANSCRIPTION OF VIDEO RECORDING

SENATE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON

CONGRESSIONAL REDISTRICTING

THURSDAY, AUGUST 7, 2025

9:00 A.M.

TRANSCRIBED BY:

JULIE THOMPSON, CET

1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 SENATOR KING: Well, good morning.

3 The Senate Special Committee on Congressional

4 Redistricting will come to order.

5 The clerk will, please, call the role.

6 CLERK HERRELL: Senator King.

7 SENATOR KING: Here.

8 CLERK HERRELL: Senator King.

9 SENATOR KING: Here.

10 CLERK HERRELL: Senator Creighton.

11 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Here.

12 CLERK HERRELL: Senator Alvarado.

13 (No audible response)

14 CLERK HERRELL: Senator Hinojosa.

15 SENATOR HINOJOSA: Present.

16 CLERK HERRELL: Senator Hughes.

17 SENATOR HUGHES: Here.

18 CLERK HERRELL: Senator Miles.

19 SENATOR MILES: Here.

20 CLERK HERRELL: Senator Parker.

21 (No audible response)

22 CLERK HERRELL: Senator Paxton.

23 SENATOR PAXTON: Present.

24 CLERK HERRELL: Senator Sparks.

25 SENATOR SPARKS: Here.

1                   SENATOR KING: There being seven  
2 members present, a quorum has been established. The  
3 purpose of today's hearing is to lay out a bill and  
4 to hear public testimony on that bill. If you  
5 intend to provide verbal testimony or would like to  
6 register a position on the bill, please register at  
7 one of the kiosks located behind the committee  
8 hearing room.

9                   We're going to -- because of the  
10 number of witnesses today, we're going to limit  
11 testimony to two minutes, but you're likely to be  
12 asked questions by some of the Senators, and if you  
13 are, that time certainly doesn't count against you,  
14 and the Senators can ask as many questions for as  
15 long a period as they wish.

16                   I'm going to close registration at --  
17 we'll do it an hour after the committee hearing  
18 begins. So let's call it, we'll close registration  
19 at the kiosks at 10:15 this morning. And, Members,  
20 just so you'll know, registration was opened at 8:00  
21 a.m. today.

22                   To ensure that everyone will be heard  
23 in a timely manner, we will ask four witnesses to be  
24 seated at the witness table at a time. So I'll call  
25 your names, and I may let you know ahead of time

1 that you'll be in the next panel if I can pull that  
2 off.

3 Any member of the public may also  
4 submit written comments and attachments to the  
5 committee via the PublicInput portal. If necessary,  
6 we will take a five to ten-minute break every few  
7 hours so that members can stretch their legs.

8 And also, I just want to mention, if  
9 you see a member get up and walk out, please know  
10 that it's not an indication that they aren't  
11 interested in what's going on. We have to take a  
12 quick break on occasion, too, and if they have to go  
13 back to the back room and grab a cup of coffee or  
14 for the restroom, the audio plays back there as  
15 well, so -- as well as the video, so they'll know  
16 everything that's going on when they step out.

17 Members, I know that there's -- a  
18 number of you may have some comments today. I'm  
19 certainly available to answer any questions when we  
20 lay out the bill. I also will reserve some time.  
21 I'm hoping we can take the bill up for vote today,  
22 and if we can, I'll certainly reserve time at the  
23 end for you to make any closing remarks that you  
24 wish to make at that time.

25 If -- we have no committee amendments

1 on file for today's hearing. We also have some  
2 overview -- overflow room, but -- and if we end up  
3 needing that, I'll announce where those are at. And  
4 with that, I'm going to pass the gavel to last  
5 Chair Creighton. Again, I want to thank everybody  
6 for being here today.

7 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Okay. Thank you,  
8 Members. At this time, the Chair lays out Senate  
9 Bill 4 and recognizes its author.

10 Chairman King, you have the bill.

11 SENATOR KING: Thank you. And,  
12 Members, the layout's a little bit longer on this  
13 than we normally do in committees, but this is such  
14 an important issue. I'd like to, with your patience  
15 and grace, go into a little bit more detail. I --  
16 and I want to thank all the members of the committee  
17 who are in attendance today, and we're all taking  
18 time away from home and family and business and  
19 everything for this special session.

20 The purpose of this layout is to  
21 provide an overview of the bill for the committee  
22 and for the public. And just a little context of  
23 the special session: On July 9th, Governor Abbott  
24 called this special session, which began on July 21,  
25 2025. The duration of the special session is 30

1 days.

2 All the topics of the special session  
3 are set by the governor, not the legislature. One  
4 of the topics for this special session is  
5 congressional redistricting. And, of course, that's  
6 the subject matter that we're -- we have before us  
7 today. House Bill 4, HB 4, was introduced in the  
8 House on Wednesday, July 30th, and was passed out of  
9 the House Committee on August 2, 2025.

10 Note that today, we are considering  
11 the Senate Bill, which is a companion, which was  
12 filed by me on Monday, August 4th. So the House  
13 Bill and the Senate Bill are identical at this  
14 stage. It is the Chairman's prerogative to set a  
15 schedule for review of the bill under our Senate  
16 rules. The goal -- my goal is to complete  
17 redistricting within this 30-day window offered by  
18 the current special session.

19 Now, there's been a lot of activity on  
20 the House side, but we, today, are focused at our  
21 job at hand for the Senate, which is to address the  
22 bill before us. Now, I want to take a moment to  
23 discuss the public input we've had on redistricting.  
24 I want to take us back to 2021, because all of the  
25 data that we will be using and are using for this

1 redistricting process is from the 2020 Census data.

2           So since 2021, the Senate has held 21  
3 regional or public hearings, and the House itself  
4 has had many additional hearings. I think they had  
5 -- I actually had some in 2019, I think 14 regional  
6 hearings in 2019. Now, these hearings have given  
7 the legislature an opportunity to hear the public's  
8 concerns about the 2020 Census data and about  
9 redistricting in general. This plan, as I said, is  
10 based on the 2020 Census data.

11           Four Senate regional public hearings  
12 and one additional public hearing, specifically for  
13 invited testimony, have been held during this  
14 special session. Now, let me comment a minute on  
15 those regional hearings. We had -- we divided them  
16 up regionally. However, anyone was able to testify  
17 on any portion of the state at each hearing if they  
18 desired. But we had the South Texas and Central  
19 Texas hearing on July 25, 2025. We had the North  
20 Texas hearing on July 26, 2025. We had the East  
21 Texas hearing on July 28. And the West Texas, which  
22 included the El Paso area, on July 29.

23           Over the course of these four public  
24 hearings, regional hearings, we heard from 205  
25 individual witnesses. We had 205 people



1 individually testify before this committee. And as  
2 we were utilizing virtual testimony and live  
3 streaming, we had approximately 3852 clicks to the  
4 Senate live stream that were recorded. In other  
5 words, at over 3850 times, people entered in to  
6 watch the hearings online.

7           Testimony included invited witnesses,  
8 the names of which had been given to us by the  
9 Senate Democrat Caucus Chair, and sitting members of  
10 Congress. Congressman Mark Veasey testified, as  
11 well as Congresswoman Lizzie Fletcher, Sylvia  
12 Garcia, and Congressman Al Green. We provided the  
13 opportunity for the public to provide testimony by  
14 remote means, as I mentioned, and sessions were held  
15 on Saturday and after hours.

16           We were aware that some people might  
17 be prevented from participating due to a long drive,  
18 the long distance, obviously, from Austin if we had  
19 the hearings here, or by work or family obligations.  
20 And so we did this in this virtual fashion, so that  
21 as many people as possible could offer their input,  
22 and we had just that.

23           We had people testify from all over  
24 the state. It was interesting how many people said,  
25 Thank you for doing this. I'm down in the RGV

1 today, or I'm some other place, and I couldn't be  
2 there, or there's a House hearing that I wanted to  
3 attend and couldn't get to, or I went to the House  
4 hearing and wasn't able to testify, so I appreciate  
5 you all doing this today so I could do this without  
6 driving again to Austin.

7 In addition, on August the 6th, the  
8 Senate held -- this committee held a hearing for  
9 invited testimony, and we invited the following  
10 interested parties. Again, these were names that  
11 were given to us at our request by the Democrat  
12 Caucus Chair, and many of these testified during our  
13 teleconference hearings:

14 Nina Perales with MALDEF, Gary Bledsoe  
15 with the Texas NAACP, Ellen Katz with the University  
16 of Michigan Law School, Michael Li with the Brennan  
17 Center for Justice, Niyati Shah with the American --  
18 Asian Americans Advancing Justice, Leah Aden with  
19 the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, Luis Figueroa with  
20 Every Texan, Roman Polomares with LULAC, Tania  
21 Chavez with La Union del Pueblo Entero, and also we  
22 invited the entire Democrat congressional  
23 delegation.

24 Again, this was all for the August 6th  
25 invited testimony hearing. This hearing was held

1 specifically because there were comments at the  
2 regional hearings earlier that a map was not  
3 available on which to testify. And so we wanted to  
4 give these interested parties and stakeholders a  
5 specific opportunity to come and testify before the  
6 committee on SB 4, on the bill before us today.

7           We held that public hearing yesterday  
8 with, as I said, over a dozen invited witnesses and  
9 all of the Democratic congressional delegation, but  
10 they all chose to either decline the invitation or  
11 not respond at all. So today is -- we're here for  
12 the public to testify, which is another reason I  
13 wanted to bifurcate, to separate, these into two  
14 hearings, invited testimony and public testimony, is  
15 because I didn't want you to have to wait two or  
16 three hours until invited testimony would be over,  
17 as we had seen happen in the House, which wasn't  
18 their fault, but I just didn't want you to have to  
19 wait a long time.

20           During this special session, we also  
21 reopened -- actually, I think before the session  
22 began, the Public Comment Portal, through which any  
23 member of the public may provide comments and  
24 present documents. As of noon yesterday, we have  
25 received 3,668 public comments through the public

1 portal. All of these public comments are being and  
2 will be distributed to the committee members, and we  
3 are in the process of making these available to all  
4 senators and the public on this -- the Senate's  
5 website as soon as possible.

6 We've been processing about 400 of  
7 these a day, and my staff's not crazy happy about  
8 that, but it just takes a while to go through them.  
9 We have to redact personal information. We don't  
10 want to make it -- if you filed something with the  
11 portal, we don't want to make your personal email or  
12 phone number or home address or anything like that  
13 available to the public. So we're having to go  
14 through each one of those that comes in. We're  
15 doing about 400 a day, and we're trying to redact,  
16 black marker out your personal information. But  
17 those are being made available to the committee and  
18 will soon be available to all the public and all the  
19 Senate members.

20 Now, that brings us to where we are  
21 today, in this -- laying out this bill. And I want  
22 to take just a moment, if I may, to discuss  
23 redistricting history and some principles and legal  
24 standards. I believe that I'm correct in saying  
25 that redistricting has been addressed during special

1 sessions of the Texas Legislature as far back as at  
2 least 1871, when they did school district  
3 redistricting, and then they did congressional  
4 redistricting in a special session in 1882.

5 This also includes special sessions in  
6 the past six redistricting cycles, and they did  
7 redistricting in special sessions in 1971, 1981,  
8 1991, 1997. That was actually for the education  
9 again -- Board of Education. In -- we did special  
10 session redistricting in 2003, 2011, 2013, and 2021.  
11 The 2021 was delayed because the census data did not  
12 come out until the Senate had adjourned in its  
13 regular 2021 session. So we had to come back and do  
14 redistricting in the special session.

15 My point is: the legislature can  
16 choose and has chosen many times to redistrict  
17 during a special session. And we can frankly,  
18 lawfully and by precedent, redistrict at any time  
19 the legislature so desires, including mid-decade, as  
20 we are today. And the states have very broad  
21 authority -- all states have very broad authority.  
22 This is recognized by the Courts under the U.S.  
23 Constitution and its election clause to choose when  
24 to do redistricting.

25 Now, the U.S. Constitution requires

1 that congressional districts be drawn with  
2 population as close to equal as possible to achieve  
3 the one-person, one-vote standard. We have some  
4 flexibility when we're doing House and Senate maps,  
5 but we do not with the congressional districts.  
6 This standard is from the -- this one-person, one-  
7 vote standard is from the Supreme Court's 1964  
8 decisions in Wesberry v. Sanders and Reynolds v.  
9 Sims. It's also grounded in the 14th Amendment in  
10 Article 1, Section 2 of the U.S. Constitution.

11 So for our purposes of this map that  
12 we're considering today, the ideal district size is  
13 766,987 in population. SB 4, I will tell you, meets  
14 the one-person, one-vote standard. Now, please also  
15 note for any of the Senators on the committee or the  
16 remaining -- the other Senators in the body, please  
17 also note that any amendments that would be  
18 presented in this committee or on the floor must  
19 meet this same population criteria, as well as all  
20 other legal criteria.

21 Every proposed amendment, here or on  
22 the floor, the proponent must be able to demonstrate  
23 that their proposed amendment meets these legal  
24 requirements. So please be prepared to discuss that  
25 if you have a I think it'll be a floor amendment,

1 because I -- we don't have any amendments filed for  
2 the hearing today.

3 Now, a little bit about the legal  
4 basis for district design: The area of  
5 redistricting law is robust, to say the least. I've  
6 consulted with our legal counsel and I am confident  
7 that SB 4 complies with the law in all regard. The  
8 House came to the same conclusion with their -- with  
9 HB 4, our companion. Therefore, starting with the  
10 position that our map is legal in all regard, I've  
11 tried to focus on two major issues:

12 My first objective -- in adopting the  
13 House map and presenting this map today, my first  
14 objective is to create a plan that elects more  
15 Republicans to the U.S. Congress. In contrast to  
16 the complications involved with race-based  
17 redistricting, political performance, in this case,  
18 my objective of electing more Republicans to the  
19 U.S. Congress, is a permissible basis for drawing  
20 electoral districts. This was recognized by the  
21 Supreme -- U.S. Supreme Court in Rucho v. Common  
22 Cause and in, I guess it's pronounced, Vieth v.  
23 Jubelirer. Those were 2019 and 2024 cases,  
24 respectively.

25 My second objective -- and the first

1 was to elect more Republicans to the U.S. Congress.  
2 My second objective -- and I'll admit I wasn't  
3 initially intending to focus on this, but we, during  
4 the public testimony, heard repeated comments from  
5 citizens that districts weren't compact, meaning  
6 that there were so many districts that were  
7 irregularly shaped, oddly shaped. Now, districts  
8 that are drawn to be compact tend to aid in  
9 representation because they avoid the risk of  
10 distant communities be not -- being united when they  
11 may not have everything in common.

12                   And I'll mention my Senate district.  
13 I have Urban, Fort Worth, and Arlington, and then I  
14 also have rural counties, one with only 4,000. And  
15 the districts are different, and the needs are  
16 different. So you want to try to make districts as  
17 compact as possible. It also allows that -- a lot  
18 more ease for the -- in this case, the congressional  
19 members to travel across those districts.

20                   Now, I will say, this is a particular  
21 difficulty in Texas because we are so large. We are  
22 not New Jersey. We are -- we're a state of 254  
23 counties and 31 million people. And particularly  
24 when you get into West Texas, so many of those  
25 counties have only 5 or 10,000 in population. So



1 when you're trying to put a district together that  
2 has 766,987 people in it, you tend to have to reach  
3 in often and grab population from an urban area, but  
4 then add a lot of rural counties to it because  
5 that's simply the only way you can meet the one-  
6 person, one-vote requirements that we have in this  
7 very large county.

8                   It's not such an issue in the urban  
9 areas or in the areas closer to the urban areas  
10 because we can make those more compact. And what we  
11 heard from a lot of citizens is that there are a lot  
12 of -- there are a number of districts that could be  
13 more compact but were not. And so that became a  
14 second objective in looking at this SB 4.

15                   Now, I will tell you that SB 4  
16 accomplishes both objectives. Even a quick look at  
17 the plan -- and we've put maps up. As you can see,  
18 we've got maps on easels at the back, both maps of  
19 the district, the current districts, the proposed  
20 districts under SB 4, and then the regional areas,  
21 and there's also copies of maps available for the  
22 public in the back of the room.

23                   But this map accomplishes both the  
24 objectives. Even a quick look at the plan shows it  
25 is more compact in many ways, and we'll look at a

1 couple of those in a minute. And it has better  
2 political performance, from my perspective, than the  
3 enacted plan, the current district map. Let's talk  
4 about the impact a little bit of this proposed map.  
5 Let's go through some of the high-level changes.

6 SB 4 redraws 37 of 38 congressional  
7 districts, but let me say, most districts are  
8 changed in only very minor, even non-substantive  
9 ways. The most significant changes -- excuse me.  
10 Thank you. The most significant changes affect five  
11 districts, and those districts will now lean  
12 Republican in political performance. That would be  
13 CD 9 in Houston, CD 28 in the RGV, the Rio Grande  
14 Valley, CD 32 in Dallas, CD 34 coastal area in South  
15 Texas, and CD 35, which is primarily the San Antonio  
16 area.

17 Now, by drawing race blind, which is  
18 what I did, I have not looked at nor considered  
19 racial data in drawing this map. By drawing race  
20 blind, SB 4's districts are substantially more  
21 compact with more reasonable geographic  
22 configurations that provide a better basis for  
23 representation.

24 I'd like to show you a couple  
25 examples. Let's start with -- and again, if you

1 picked up a map at the back, those of you in the  
2 audience, or just looking at the large ones in the  
3 back. But, Members, I'll -- and with regard to  
4 District 32. And you can't see this very well from  
5 here, I know, but if you look at District 32, it  
6 has -- where am I at?

7 SENATOR CREIGHTON: 32.

8 SENATOR KING: Yeah, right. Good.  
9 Sorry.

10 If you look at District 32 as it's  
11 drawn today, it covers a very -- it's over two  
12 counties, but it's very disjointed -- and I know  
13 this area very well. It's very disjointed in the  
14 communities it reaches into and the roads it  
15 follows. And it comes all the way here through  
16 South Dallas up through Central, goes way up into  
17 Denton, and it curves down in odd structures and  
18 comes here. The way it is done under this map, it  
19 is very compact and combines counties in a very  
20 really, I think, appropriate way.

21 Another example is District 35. This  
22 is probably the best example. It's one people often  
23 point to and pointed to often in testimony when they  
24 spoke of districts that were not compact. This  
25 district begins way down in Bexar County. And you

1 can see it has some population down here. It gets  
2 very, very thin, exceptionally thin as it converses  
3 through Guadalupe and Comal counties, up through  
4 Hays, along Caldwell, and then all the way up into  
5 Travis, and then takes unique turns and bends in  
6 Travis.

7 In the proposed map, as before, you  
8 can see that CD 35 is now very compact, very clearly  
9 structured, and pulls together communities of  
10 similar interest with Karnes, Wilson, Bexar, and  
11 Guadalupe counties. So it is much, much more  
12 compact, and I will tell you that the existing  
13 district is, I would suggest, one of the most oddly  
14 drawn districts in the country today. So I believe  
15 the map is much more compact than what we have in  
16 the current map.

17 Now -- and again, as I mentioned, my  
18 understanding is that these five districts, 9, 28,  
19 32, 34, and 35, should perform on a partisan basis  
20 now for the Republican Party. Again, I want to say  
21 I did not look at racial data, but for the committee  
22 members, in your bill packets, there is census data  
23 in the bill packets produced by legislative counsel,  
24 to which you can refer if you wish to. Again, that  
25 is public census data. It is not racial data.

1 Now, in conclusion, I would say that  
2 SB 4, which is before us today, is more compact than  
3 the enacted plan, the current plan, and it complies  
4 with all applicable law. We've had plenty of  
5 opportunity for testimony with regard to  
6 redistricting and census data all the way back,  
7 literally, to 2021. And we've had a lot of  
8 discussion and five hearings thus far, with almost  
9 4,000 people participating and 205 witnesses just  
10 before the Senate. We've had ample opportunity, and  
11 no one has presented data or a compelling case that  
12 this map violates any applicable laws.

13 So it accomplishes what were my two  
14 objectives: First, that it perform better on a  
15 partisan basis for Republicans, but then second that  
16 it be more compact as requested by so many of the  
17 witnesses. And with that, I'll do my best to answer  
18 any questions, Mr. Chairman.

19 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you,  
20 Chairman.

21 Senator Miles, questions?

22 SENATOR MILES: Thank you, Mr.  
23 Chairman, and thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the  
24 explanation you just gave. I'd like to start off by  
25 going back to July 21st when we had a joint caucus

1 of the whole, meaning we had the Democratic Caucus  
2 and the Republican Caucus. And we -- our -- this  
3 was our initial conversation about this  
4 redistricting. Our initial conversation in private,  
5 just us.

6 SENATOR KING: Yes, sir.

7 SENATOR MILES: I want to make it very  
8 clear that, Mr. Chairman, when you made it clear  
9 that I would be on this committee, and I accepted  
10 it, and as long as -- as well as you and lieutenant  
11 governor, that my exact words to you were, I  
12 couldn't see the fight going any other way. If  
13 there was going to be a fight, I wanted to be in the  
14 room. So I appreciate you for allowing me to be  
15 here on this committee.

16 But what I also said to all of my  
17 colleagues -- to you and all my colleagues is, I've  
18 looked at this process, and if we're going to do  
19 this, is what I said to you -- if we're going to do  
20 this, Senator Hughes, I'm going to expose it for  
21 what it really is. Do you recall me saying that? I  
22 said I would expose it for what it really is, and in  
23 turn, each one of you would be exposed for carrying  
24 out this racist process. That's what I said to you  
25 on the 21st in the Betty King room when we first got

1 together and talked about this process. Does any of  
2 my colleagues remember that?

3 SENATOR HUGHES: I remember your  
4 comments, Senator, yes.

5 SENATOR MILES: Okay. Thank you, sir.

6 Going past the 21st, Mr. Chairman, you  
7 said we had 205 individual witnesses testify. You  
8 also said that we had 38 that clicked on and  
9 watched, and don't know how long they clicked on,  
10 how long they watched. We don't have their record.  
11 They just clicked on and checked it out and checked  
12 it off, right? We had 205. 205 is the number that  
13 you used, people who had testified.

14 Now, citizens, I want you to know, and  
15 colleagues, I want you to know, for something as  
16 important as redistricting the entire state of  
17 Texas, I would believe that there are more than 205  
18 people that would like to have some input. So if  
19 you -- if that is a point of success that you're  
20 speaking of there, sir, I would beg to differ  
21 respectfully.

22 Second, I'm glad, and I appreciate,  
23 and I'm sure all the citizens of Texas appreciate  
24 you telling the truth, being honest. When you  
25 looked at that map, you said it was your intention

1 to pick up five more Republican seats. Thank you  
2 for being honest on that, sir. We appreciate that.

3 But that was a -- correct me if I'm  
4 wrong, that was the direct instructions from the DOJ  
5 letter from Washington, D.C. that was ordered by  
6 Trump. That's what -- exactly what it said, they  
7 wanted to pick up five more. Isn't that correct?  
8 The same thing said in the letter. The same thing  
9 you're admitting to is the same instructions they  
10 had in the letter from the DOJ. Is that correct?  
11 DOJ. Would you agree?

12 SENATOR KING: Can I answer?

13 SENATOR MILES: Yes, sir.

14 SENATOR KING: I would -- no. I would  
15 disagree. First off, I had nothing to do with the  
16 DOJ letter. I've had no communications with the  
17 DOJ.

18 SENATOR MILES: I'm sorry, sir.  
19 Before you -- you're correct. The president said it  
20 and not the DOJ.

21 SENATOR KING: Okay. I've had no  
22 communications with the president or the White  
23 House. But yes, you're correct. My objective was I  
24 -- when I look at the policies and the harm done to  
25 the nation through those policies in the four



1 previous years, everything from a 30 trillion-plus  
2 deficit, to what we saw at the border, to the  
3 Venezuelan gangs, to the fentanyl crisis, problems  
4 with Russia and China, on and on and on, that it  
5 compels me to try to help make sure that we have a  
6 Republican Congress going forward.

7               SENATOR MILES: So those were the  
8 direct orders -- you would agree with me, then, that  
9 those were the direct orders from Donald J. Trump to  
10 the DOJ that came to our governor, that came to our  
11 lieutenant governor, that came to our Attorney  
12 General, that came to you, as the Chairman of this  
13 committee, correct?

14               SENATOR KING: I've had no  
15 instruction --

16               SENATOR MILES: And you followed it --

17               SENATOR KING: I've had no  
18 instructions from anybody --

19               SENATOR MILES: You've had no  
20 instructions, but that's what was -- that -- we do -  
21 - we've gone through this once before, Senator King  
22 -- Chairman King. We agree that that was the order  
23 from the president.

24               SENATOR KING: Well -- so I carried  
25 the Congressional Redistricting Bill in 2003, and my

1 objective then was to create more Republican seats,  
2 which we did, and that was my objective when I was  
3 asked if I would chair this committee this time.

4 But I've received no directions from --

5 SENATOR MILES: Okay.

6 SENATOR KING: -- anybody in the --

7 SENATOR MILES: Well, the letter's out  
8 there, and we'll leave it at that, and you didn't  
9 receive any direct from the president.

10 SENATOR KING: I --

11 SENATOR MILES: But you are admitting  
12 that one of your objectives was to increase the  
13 congressional district by five Republicans.

14 SENATOR KING: That was and is my  
15 chief objective.

16 SENATOR MILES: That's right. Was and  
17 is.

18 Okay. I just -- you probably don't  
19 know this because I just heard it on the radio this  
20 morning on the way in that AG Dillon (ph) would not  
21 come to speak to us. She didn't respond to the  
22 letter that you wrote her, and we respectfully wrote  
23 that. I wasn't able to subpoena her per the vote  
24 for the committee. But she's out on radio talk  
25 shows. And this morning, she said that the reason

1 the governor -- that the reason that the governor  
2 gave the ability to call a special session and to  
3 put redistricting on call was to get five more  
4 additional Republican seats.

5 Now, she won't come to tell us that.  
6 She won't even respond to us in the letter, but  
7 rather -- but yet she's on a national network,  
8 telling -- radio station all over the country saying  
9 exactly what she intended to do. And that was heard  
10 just this morning, sir. And it also said that King  
11 -- but you said, Senator King, that you could do it  
12 at any time, which we understand that. I don't  
13 think we're questioning the redistricting being done  
14 now. I think the big question for the citizens of  
15 Texas is why is it being done? And all -- we want  
16 somebody -- we know why it's being done. We just  
17 wanted somebody of leadership of this state to say  
18 why it's being done.

19 Senator King, you know, you also  
20 stated that you were trying to give these  
21 congressional members a chance to testify. You also  
22 qualified the amount of communication this committee  
23 had with each of these offices in the way to make it  
24 seem, though, they were too scared or too damn good  
25 to testify before this committee. I heard that --

1 heard you say that on -- yesterday when I was in  
2 Boston. But I also know at what time of day  
3 yesterday did you decide -- because you and I  
4 communicated. At what time of day yesterday did you  
5 decide to let the congressional members come and  
6 testify?

7 SENATOR KING: So we had -- as I  
8 mentioned --

9 SENATOR MILES: Because I've got it  
10 right here on my -- when you communicated with me.

11 SENATOR KING: Okay.

12 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator King.

13 SENATOR KING: So -- thank you,  
14 Chairman. I'm sorry.

15 So at the regional hearings, as I  
16 mentioned, we had four of them testify, and then you  
17 and I spoke on the phone Monday night. You called  
18 to ask some questions about redistricting. And I  
19 told you that we were having the invited testimony  
20 hearing Wednesday. And I -- and then you said,  
21 "Well, have you invited the congressional members?"

22 And I said, "No, I haven't." And  
23 based on that suggestion, the next morning, we  
24 invited all the congressional members.

25 SENATOR MILES: The next morning?

1                   SENATOR KING: Uh-huh. Tuesday  
2 morning.

3                   SENATOR MILES: About what time?

4                   SENATOR KING: Before 10:00 a.m.

5                   SENATOR MILES: Before 10:00. Okay.

6 And you expected them to be here -- congressional  
7 members you invited like right at 10:00, 11:00 --  
8 closer to 11:00, you invited them, and you expected  
9 them to be here at what time?

10                  SENATOR KING: By 2:00 the next day.

11                  SENATOR MILES: That's what I thought.  
12 Okay.

13                  SENATOR KING: And if I can finish  
14 answering that?

15                  SENATOR MILES: Yes, sir.

16                  SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator King.

17                  SENATOR KING: That was similar to the  
18 notice that brought four congressional members to  
19 testify the day before -- or the week before. It is  
20 also -- they all know we're in the middle of this  
21 redistricting. They all know the process. One of  
22 them is even a former senator, Sylvia Garcia.

23                  SENATOR MILES: Right.

24                  SENATOR KING: They know that there's  
25 going to be opportunities for testimony when the

1 bill is laid out, and they know how this works. And  
2 so --

3 SENATOR MILES: Okay.

4 SENATOR KING: -- I don't know how to  
5 give them longer notice --

6 SENATOR MILES: Okay.

7 SENATOR KING: -- but based on your  
8 suggestion, early the next morning, we started the  
9 process by 10:00 and notified all 12 of them. And  
10 we did follow-up reach-outs to see if we could  
11 accommodate that.

12 SENATOR MILES: And I thank you for  
13 that, Senator King.

14 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator Miles.

15 SENATOR MILES: You know, although  
16 they may not have been here on -- yesterday, Senator  
17 King, you know that they did testify on House maps -  
18 - on the House map, which is the same map that you  
19 filed.

20 SENATOR KING: Yes.

21 SENATOR MILES: You understand that,  
22 right?

23 SENATOR KING: Yes.

24 SENATOR MILES: Last Friday at the  
25 House Redistricting -- rigged-districting Committee

1 hearing, a large number of Texas congressional  
2 democrats took their time to be here in person and  
3 testify against this map. I can specifically point  
4 to the following congresspeople: Greg Casar,  
5 Jasmine Crockett, Lloyd Doggett, Sylvia Garcia,  
6 Al Green, and Mark Veasey were all here to testify  
7 on that same map. They testified to the  
8 constitutional issues or the BRA issues on this map.  
9 They told the committee that this was going to hurt  
10 the American people at large and their communities  
11 specifically.

12 They embodied the most American of  
13 virtues, defiance in the face of oppression. They  
14 spoke up and they spoke out on that same map that  
15 you filed SB 4. This is the same map that was filed  
16 in the House. There are no differences except for  
17 one has an S and one has an H. If they choose not  
18 to accept the invitation to appear yesterday, that  
19 does not take away from their outcry they have made  
20 regarding this map. They still feel the same way,  
21 Mr. Chairman.

22 We, as a committee, need to be honest  
23 with ourselves. No matter what is done today or  
24 tomorrow regarding this map, this is all just a  
25 political theater at its finest. And we've been

1 playing it very good in this redistricting political  
2 theater. Yes, Mr. Chairman. I'm a little angered  
3 by the actions of this committee and its pretext.  
4 Let us stop pretending that this is about the will  
5 of the people. It clearly has been a demonstration  
6 of action of this committee and its leadership in  
7 the state that we really don't care. Not we. You  
8 all really don't care.

9               Hundreds and hundreds of people have  
10 testified before the map came out and after the map  
11 came out, and it's done nothing to change the minds  
12 and directions of the leadership of this state,  
13 Mr. Chairman, Members. Nothing. Hundreds of people  
14 have testified. When we began this hearing,  
15 Mr. Chairman, it was stated that your intention was  
16 to wait for a map to come over from the House,  
17 correct? But when it made clear that this map would  
18 not pass the House representatives because of lack  
19 of quorum of members, Senate Bill 4 was referred.  
20 Now, go think about that.

21               It's exactly the same map,  
22 Mr. Chairman. The same copy of the congressional  
23 map put forth by the House Redistricting Committee.  
24 It is the exact map that breaks apart our minority  
25 communities and dilutes black and brown voting



1 power, Mr. Chairman. As if the chambers were told,  
2 This is the map and this is what it's going to be,  
3 point blank period. I have to ask, were we told  
4 that -- were you told that?

5 SENATOR KING: And I'm sorry. Could  
6 you restate that question?

7 SENATOR MILES: I would have to ask,  
8 that somebody must have told you all that this is  
9 going to be the map, point blank, period. The same  
10 map that's going to break up black and brown voting  
11 powers because it's the same map as the House.

12 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator King.

13 SENATOR KING: Thank you,  
14 Mr. Chairman.

15 And I want to correct one thing. My  
16 staff just corrected me that when we posted for  
17 Wednesday's hearing, we posted that on Monday. And  
18 as soon as we did, my staff emailed the staff of  
19 every senator on this committee and asked them to be  
20 sure and invite anyone they wanted to come to the  
21 invited testimony hearing, and to just let us know.  
22 So actually, we had asked the Senate members to let  
23 us know of anyone they wanted to attend,  
24 congressional or otherwise, on Monday. So --

25 SENATOR MILES: Anyone they wanted,

1 huh? That's what you stated, Anyone they wanted?

2 SENATOR KING: Yes. Anyone that they  
3 wanted --

4 SENATOR MILES: Gotcha.

5 SENATOR KING: -- anyone that you  
6 wanted, or any other member wanted to testify --

7 SENATOR MILES: Understood.

8 SENATOR KING: -- let us know and to  
9 go ahead and invite them.

10 SENATOR MILES: But the question at  
11 hand --

12 SENATOR KING: But the question at  
13 hand. So I think I'm correct in saying that anytime  
14 I've been asked about this up until the time I  
15 decided to go ahead and file the bill, I had said  
16 that I was not sure if I would be drafting a bill or  
17 if I would wait on the House. As I watched along,  
18 as you did, the House hearings, as I learned about  
19 this map, no one ever handed me a stick drive with a  
20 map on it. No one emailed me anything and said file  
21 this. Nobody did anything like that at all from  
22 inside this building or outside this building.

23 But I made the decision to adopt as it  
24 were HB 4 because I saw that it complied with the  
25 law and that it, from a partisan perspective,

1 performed well, and that it was more compact than  
2 the -- in some regards than the existing map. And  
3 so I decided to file the companion bill. I did talk  
4 with the House author about that. And so yes. I --  
5 but this bill was adopted from the House. I didn't  
6 adopt it because it's the House's bill. I adopted  
7 it because it achieved those objectives that I  
8 mentioned of improving compactness and, most  
9 importantly, performing better from a partisan  
10 perspective.

11 SENATOR MILES: So a simple yes --  
12 answer to the question, yes or no, is you were not  
13 told that this was going to be the map that we gave  
14 Texas?

15 SENATOR KING: No. I've never been  
16 told that.

17 SENATOR MILES: All right. Okay.  
18 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

19 SENATOR KING: No. I had --

20 SENATOR MILES: I just wanted to  
21 clarify the question.

22 SENATOR KING: I believe I -- excuse  
23 me, Mr. Chairman. I'm sorry. I'm jumping in. But  
24 I believe I had --

25 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator King.

1                   SENATOR KING: -- full freedom to file  
2 any bill --

3                   SENATOR MILES: Yeah.

4                   SENATOR KING: -- any map.

5                   SENATOR MILES: Yeah. So as I asked  
6 you on the floor many times, along with our other  
7 colleagues. So it's just coincidental that they  
8 just happened to be the same map?

9                   SENATOR KING: Mr. Chairman?

10                  SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator King.

11                  SENATOR KING: No. It's not  
12 coincidental at all. I studied the House map,  
13 watched some of the hearings, had asked our legal  
14 counsel to review the House map to determine if they  
15 agreed that it was legal in all respects, and  
16 decided it was a good map, better for Texas, better  
17 for the nation. And that's why I decided to go  
18 ahead and file it.

19                  SENATOR MILES: Well, thank God.

20                  SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator Miles.

21                  SENATOR MILES: Thank you,  
22 Mr. Chairman.

23                         Thank God that, in this particular  
24 special session for rigged-districting, you know,  
25 it's not going to pass the House. It's going to be

1 dead on arrival. We'll be here again for the next  
2 special session for rigged-districting.

3 But, Mr. Chairman, just a little bit  
4 more. Why are you further wasting taxpayers' time  
5 going through this motion? Are you just  
6 fast-tracking Trump's racist agenda to get his  
7 approval so that we can -- you know, so that we can  
8 put it back on, and so he can say to you, Good job,  
9 Senator King, good job, Senator King? Because we  
10 all know that now that the House is gone, this  
11 Senate floor map, as we see it right now in this  
12 particular session, was going to die.

13 SENATOR KING: Mr. Chairman?

14 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator King.

15 SENATOR KING: So I think your  
16 question is: knowing that the House has broken  
17 quorum and that the House democrats have left the  
18 state, knowing that, why did I bother to go ahead  
19 and have this hearing now? I'll say that I thought  
20 about that a lot, but we don't know for sure. I  
21 think the last count I saw, they had 94 members  
22 present. They only needed 6 more to have a quorum.

23 SENATOR MILES: Right.

24 SENATOR KING: And so I thought if we  
25 went ahead and moved this bill forward, the House

1 already has a bill on the floor. It's already  
2 through calendars for HB 4, and if they come back  
3 that it -- that they could expedite -- and we have  
4 sent this bill to them -- that the House could then  
5 simply, in the last days of the special session,  
6 pick up SB 4 and substitute it for HB 4 and pass it  
7 out. So I just used the same strategy for --  
8 procedural strategy that you've used a hundred times  
9 on a hundred bills, is looking for any possibility  
10 to get your bill passed.

11 SENATOR MILES: Yeah.

12 SENATOR KING: And that best  
13 possibility said move this one forward so that if  
14 the House does reach a quorum, and that they can --  
15 that the Senate bill would be over there for them to  
16 pick up and pass out.

17 SENATOR MILES: Okay. You know --

18 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator Miles.

19 SENATOR MILES: Thank you,  
20 Mr. Chairman.

21 You know, we, as the Texas Senate, I  
22 remember back when we used to take pride -- a lot of  
23 pride, colleagues. And I want you all to hear this.  
24 I remember when we used to take a lot of pride in  
25 standing against the federal government telling us

1 what to do here in Texas. Those were some good old  
2 days. But here we stand today doing exactly what  
3 the president orders the governor put up -- put us  
4 up through. You know, it's kind of like the  
5 president told Governor Abbott to jump, and he asked  
6 how high.

7                   It's ridiculous because we had some  
8 rich days in being able to tell the federal  
9 government what we weren't going to do that they  
10 told us to do, Senator Hughes, Senator Paxson. And  
11 that's when we stood for something. We stood as  
12 Texans, independent, strong, free-minded, doing  
13 what's best for Texans instead of doing what's best  
14 for the President of the United States.

15                   You know, for those of you who are  
16 here waiting to testify, be not dismayed. Speak the  
17 truth. Please speak the truth. Tell this committee  
18 what rigged-districting is going to do to your  
19 communities.

20                   To the Democratic House members that  
21 broke quorum, keep the faith and keep your fight.  
22 This state needs your bravery, and this country  
23 needs your bravery. I'm in full support of the  
24 House members and their quorum break. Yes, Mr.  
25 Chairman. I went to Boston to support them. I

1 would have gone to Chicago, New York, wherever, but  
2 this hearing was called. If the citizens were going  
3 to come and testify, then dammit, I was going to be  
4 here to testify with them.

5               Supporting their voices and making  
6 sure that they're heard, I'm here on this diocese  
7 for them and not for the President of the United  
8 States. The men and women of the House District  
9 Caucus decided to put the people of Texas first and  
10 lead the state by spreading the word of the  
11 injustices being done here and deny the legislation  
12 the ability to proceed with this racist map and  
13 these racist maps.

14               And let me say this: Packing black  
15 folks into one district and reducing their ability  
16 to have representation from two to one, and then  
17 hiding behind the premises we are keeping Barbara  
18 Jordan's seat intact. And if you're doing this --  
19 doing us a favor, this is disrespectful, it's very  
20 much disingenuous, and point-blank low-down. Think  
21 that minority communities can take -- if you think  
22 that minority communities must take and what we can  
23 get is discriminatory, you do not have to call  
24 someone a racist slur to be a racist, Mr. Chairman  
25 and members.



1                   Sitting back participating in an  
2 August process, in an inherently discriminatory  
3 process, disenfranchising black and brown people is  
4 racist in all parts. For those of us watching this  
5 from out of state, just know, as Texas goes, the  
6 country is going to go. Texas may be the first to  
7 be redistricted -- or rigged-districted, but your  
8 state is next.

9                   Finally, for those of you watching,  
10 yes, the Republicans have stacked the deck, and the  
11 passage of this map may happen, but I want all of  
12 you to know who are watching, they want you to be  
13 discouraged. They want you to be dismayed. They  
14 want to give you a reason to stay at home on  
15 election, but don't let them do it. This is my call  
16 to arms for you. Your vote is your weapon. I  
17 repeat, your vote is your weapon.

18                   Show them how you get down, and you  
19 know how you get down. Make sure that these maps  
20 don't give them what they want. Take yourself, take  
21 your neighbor, take your friend, take your parents,  
22 take their family, take them all to the voting box.  
23 Show them who we are and let them understand that  
24 you are Texans, and Texans we stand for something.  
25 Together, we keep the faith. We keep the fight, and

1 together, we'll win.

2 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Okay. At this  
3 time, the Chair would like to remind those watching  
4 and participating today that registration will close  
5 in a little less than ten minutes. So if you have  
6 not registered yet and you plan to testify today,  
7 please get your registration accomplished at the  
8 kiosk just outside the hearing room.

9 This room is getting full. We have  
10 overflow rooms as well for those participating.  
11 Audio and video should be playing live from that  
12 room. You'll hear if the Chair calls you to  
13 testify. Our overflow rooms are E1016 and E1028,  
14 and if needed, E1036 for anyone that needs  
15 additional space or to take a seat.

16 I also want to remind those  
17 participating and watching that any reactions from  
18 the audience is not allowed in our hearings. We  
19 have to make sure that everyone with us is  
20 respected, everyone can see and participate and  
21 hear. And so there won't be any jeers or clapping  
22 or reactions or snapping from the audience. You'll  
23 hear some things today that you like. You'll hear  
24 some things today that are frustrating, but help us  
25 all and everyone that's here be respected and

1 participate in the process without interruption.

2 At this time, the Chair will open up  
3 public testimony.

4 SENATOR HINOJOSA: Chairman?

5 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator Hinojosa.

6 SENATOR HINOJOSA: Thank you,  
7 Mr. Chairman.

8 I -- you know, I couldn't say it  
9 better than our colleague Senator Miles, but just a  
10 couple of points and questions for our Chairman.

11 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Yes, you're  
12 recognized.

13 SENATOR HINOJOSA: Yeah. One of the  
14 things that I -- as I saw the map, and I understand  
15 the goal of electing more Republicans, the reality  
16 is that the map, especially in South Texas, as you  
17 want to make it more compact, you're really dividing  
18 communities that have a common interest. For  
19 example, Hidalgo County is divided into -- in half,  
20 maybe in three parts. The Valley is certainly  
21 divided into three parts. So those are divisions  
22 that are taking place in terms of our communities  
23 who have a common interest. In Nueces County, the  
24 county has been split also in half. So that's  
25 dividing our communities of interest.

1                   And I also know that you didn't look  
2 at any racial data, but I don't think that really  
3 matters. What matters is the result of that, and  
4 the result of that is discrimination against  
5 minorities, people of color.

6                   And the other comment I will make is,  
7 I know you went and pointed out about  
8 President Biden's administration, inflation, and  
9 what have you. I don't think that's useful for  
10 discussion here. I think we ought to just stay  
11 focused on the map that's before us, Senate Bill 4,  
12 and not get into all these other side issues that  
13 maybe we disagree or disagree -- agree or disagree  
14 what President Biden did or didn't do, or what  
15 President Trump is doing or not doing. You know,  
16 just stay focused on the map. Thank you, Mr.  
17 Chairman.

18                   SENATOR CREIGHTON: The Chair would  
19 ask the clerk to show Senator Parker as being  
20 present.

21                   And, Senator Hughes, you're  
22 recognized.

23                   SENATOR HUGHES: Thank you,  
24 Mr. Chairman, and I thank each member. I thank each  
25 witness. We look forward to hearing from everyone,

1 regardless of your position.

2 And so, Chairman King, you talked  
3 about the motivation behind the bill and  
4 redistricting is. I don't think -- surely, no one  
5 would dispute that redistricting is a partisan  
6 process. It always has been, always will be.

7 SENATOR MILES: Right.

8 SENATOR HUGHES: We are a republic --  
9 a Democratic-Republican, and there are votes and  
10 there are majorities and those decisions are made.  
11 But let me ask you: Mr. King -- Chairman King, you  
12 mentioned that there's a national discussion going  
13 on about this. Let me just ask you a couple of  
14 questions. Have you heard remarks by the governor  
15 of California and the governor of Illinois and the  
16 governor of New York criticizing this process and  
17 accusing us of being partisan and improper in what  
18 we're doing? Have you heard those comments?

19 SENATOR KING: Yes, a number of times.

20 SENATOR HUGHES: I have, too. Did you  
21 know that the state of Illinois currently sends 17  
22 members of the U.S. House? So of those U.S. House  
23 members, 17 of those are in Illinois. Now, you  
24 probably know that current numbers show us that  
25 56 percent of the vote in Illinois is going to

1 Democrats, 56 percent. Did you know that of those  
2 17 congressional districts in Illinois, 14 are  
3 electing Democrats? So that means, though the vote  
4 is 56 percent, 82 percent of the seats are going to  
5 Democrats. Are you familiar with that?

6 SENATOR KING: I wasn't until a couple  
7 of weeks ago when all this started popping up, and  
8 I've seen a number of reports on different states,  
9 and it's -- that are -- that their districts are  
10 drawn in an exceptionally or severe partisan manner.

11 SENATOR HUGHES: Senator, to your  
12 point, did you know that in the state of New York,  
13 where they have 26 members of the U.S. House, 26 in  
14 their delegation, Democrats get about 58 percent of  
15 the vote, but they have 19 of those 26 districts, 73  
16 percent?

17 SENATOR KING: Yeah.

18 SENATOR HUGHES: And then perhaps the  
19 loudest critic and the one who's threatened to do  
20 more redistricting might be out in California. I  
21 can't recall the governor's name, but the governor  
22 of California. They have -- California, for now,  
23 has a larger congressional delegation than we do.  
24 Of course, their population is shrinking, ours is  
25 going up, but we're going to catch up to them.

1 We're going to catch up to them if there's a fair  
2 census, unlike the 2020 census, that undercounted  
3 Texas and undercounted red states, but that's  
4 another topic.

5 But in the state of California, where  
6 about 62 percent of the voters are voting for  
7 Democratic candidates, they have 52 members of  
8 Congress, and 43 of those -- 43 out of 52, 82  
9 percent are drawn to elect and are electing  
10 Democrats. I would note that they claim to have a  
11 non-partisan redistricting commission there. It  
12 doesn't sound very non-partisan to me. So a little  
13 context, Mr. Chairman, as we think about the  
14 partisan approach to these maps.

15 SENATOR KING: And --

16 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator King.

17 SENATOR KING: And I understand. I  
18 was speaking with someone from Massachusetts this  
19 morning, and they have nine congressional members.  
20 And although they have a pretty substantial  
21 Republican voting bloc there, all nine are drawn to  
22 be Democratic districts.

23 SENATOR HUGHES: So in Massachusetts,  
24 where President Trump got in the mid-30s -- almost  
25 in the mid-30s of the vote, there are zero

1 Republican congressmen from Massachusetts?

2 SENATOR KING: Zero.

3 SENATOR HUGHES: Zero. Thank you.

4 SENATOR MILES: So, Mr. Chairman --

5 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator Miles.

6 SENATOR MILES: So, Senator Hughes,  
7 what's your point?

8 SENATOR HUGHES: Senator, my point is  
9 that those national --

10 SENATOR MILES: Is your point that  
11 you're angry?

12 SENATOR HUGHES: Let -- may I answer  
13 your question?

14 SENATOR MILES: Yeah, go ahead.

15 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator Miles,  
16 we're going to have to keep --

17 SENATOR HUGHES: I'm sorry.

18 SENATOR MILES: Okay. Okay. Okay.

19 SENATOR CREIGHTON: We're going to  
20 have to keep --

21 SENATOR MILES: Okay. Okay.

22 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Well, it's not  
23 okay if I'm still talking.

24 SENATOR MILES: Okay.

25 SENATOR CREIGHTON: We're going to



1 have to keep order in the hearing so that our  
2 audience and those watching can follow succinctly  
3 our discussions and our exchanges. We're going to  
4 have to be patient. We don't have a shot clock on  
5 this hearing. So everybody's going to have their  
6 say. Most importantly, you all that are here to  
7 testify.

8 Senator Hughes.

9 SENATOR HUGHES: No. Thank you,  
10 Mr. Chairman.

11 And, Senator Miles, thank you for your  
12 question. A lot of our discussion has been about  
13 the partisan nature of redistricting and how those  
14 lines are reflected. And there's been a lot of  
15 national criticism amplified by people in Texas from  
16 other states and other state leaders criticizing  
17 this process for being partisan and suggesting that  
18 they do it in a non-partisan way.

19 Yet, Senator Miles, the results of  
20 their non-partisan process yield hyper-partisan  
21 results, much more than Texas has today, much more  
22 than Texas would have even if -- even at the end of  
23 this process. I think that context from a partisan  
24 standpoint is important. That's my point. And I  
25 hope I don't seem mad. I'm not mad.

1 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator Miles.

2 SENATOR MILES: So are you saying it's  
3 okay for Texas to do because other states are doing  
4 it, but they're doing it in reverse?

5 SENATOR HUGHES: I'm saying --

6 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator Hughes.

7 SENATOR HUGHES: Thank you. Thank  
8 you, Mr. Chairman.

9 I'm saying that the national voices  
10 that are criticizing this process and are being  
11 repeated around the state here need a little  
12 context. Need a little context is something that's  
13 important.

14 SENATOR MILES: You know, I find --

15 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator Miles.

16 SENATOR MILES: I find it very  
17 interesting -- very interesting that you're now  
18 saying it's okay for Texas to do it because other  
19 states are doing it, but they're doing it in  
20 reverse. And I've been in this building for 20  
21 years now, and we've always stood tall as Texans.  
22 We've never compared ourselves to any other state in  
23 this country. We've never risen because the federal  
24 government told us to rise. Dammit, this is Texas,  
25 okay? We're Texans. I really don't give a shit

1 what goes on in any other community, in any other  
2 state. I just care about Texas. And the last time  
3 I checked, you represented community in Texas, like  
4 I have.

5 SENATOR HUGHES: Mr. Chairman?

6 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator Miles.

7 SENATOR HUGHES: Senator Miles, thank  
8 you. If national voices, if leaders in other states  
9 whose voices are dutifully magnified by many in the  
10 national media, if they're going to criticize Texas  
11 and hypocritically, in the height of hypocrisy,  
12 criticize us for what we're doing, a little context  
13 this morning. Now, Senator, that's not directed at  
14 you. As you know, I didn't have anything to say  
15 about your remarks.

16 SENATOR MILES: Right.

17 SENATOR HUGHES: That's about the  
18 national debate that we all find ourselves in.

19 SENATOR MILES: But when did we, as  
20 Texans --

21 SENATOR HUGHES: Senator, we  
22 respond --

23 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator Miles.

24 SENATOR HUGHES: We respond --

25 SENATOR MILES: Wait, when did --

1 whose -- who did you --

2 SENATOR HUGHES: Go ahead.

3 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator Miles.

4 SENATOR MILES: When did we start  
5 responding and succumbing to criticism and peer  
6 pressure? Texas, we always applied to criticism and  
7 to peer pressure. That's who we are. I never knew  
8 that now we're so weak in Texas that we're  
9 succumbing to criticism. I'm done, Mr. Chairman.

10 SENATOR CREIGHTON: At this time,  
11 we'll open up public testimony. The Chair will call  
12 Sarah West, Deddrick Wilmer, Amanda McLaughlin, and  
13 Janell Zuberbier.

14 Is Janell Zuberbier here with us  
15 today? Janell, please come forward.

16 JANELL ZUBERBIER: I'm sorry.

17 SENATOR CREIGHTON: We were giving you  
18 time. No problem. No hurry.

19 Ms. West, you may begin.

20 SARAH WEST: There we go.

21 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Should be live  
22 now.

23 SARAH WEST: It's good now.

24 SENATOR CREIGHTON: And if you can,  
25 please state your name, and if you represent any

1 outside organizations or just yourself today, and  
2 your position on the legislation.

3 SARAH WEST: Thank you, sir.

4 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you.

5 SARAH WEST: My name is Sarah West,  
6 and I'm representing myself. I live in Northwest  
7 Austin in the current incredibly compact  
8 Congressional District 37. But under this new map,  
9 someone in the White House in Washington, not Texas,  
10 wants to move me into CD 10, which would be a  
11 district that stretches almost to Louisiana. That  
12 makes no sense. Austinites don't have the same  
13 concerns as people in East Texas. We deserve  
14 representation that represents and reflects our  
15 community.

16 Meanwhile, my neighbor just down the  
17 road would get to remain in CD 37. So I called  
18 Representative Doggett's office to share my  
19 concerns. The woman who answered listened to me,  
20 and she even laughed when I told her to add  
21 exclamation points to my comments. The next day, I  
22 got a call from Madison. Yes. I'm still naming her  
23 because she is doing the real work for Doggett's  
24 constituents. She made sure I knew about the House  
25 hearing last week because she wanted me to be able

1 to use my voice while I still have it.

2 But if this map goes through, I'll  
3 have to call Representative McCaul's office, and  
4 they don't know me from anyone else. My voice will  
5 be lost in a district stretched far and wide by  
6 design. Last week, I submitted my testimony online.  
7 I watched hearings, and I testified here at the  
8 Capitol. Over and over again, you were told no by  
9 Texans from across the state. On HB 4 and SB 4, we  
10 are united. We don't want this.

11 I stand with the House Democrats.  
12 They are doing the will of Texans because they  
13 understand changing the rules in the middle of the  
14 decade is cheating. If you care about the Texans you  
15 are elected to represent, you'll vote no. Divorce  
16 yourself from the demands of the White House. They  
17 want five additional friendly seats in the House of  
18 Representatives to escape oversight.

19 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Ms. West, we'll  
20 have to stop there.

21 SARAH WEST: Okay.

22 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you very  
23 much for your testimony.

24 SARAH WEST: Thank you.

25 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Please.

1 Go ahead. You may begin.

2 AMANDA MCLAUGHLIN: I'm Amanda  
3 McLaughlin. I'm speaking for myself. I've  
4 addressed many legislative hearings, and I've always  
5 tried to show respect even when I didn't agree. I  
6 will continue to show respect, and in fairness, I  
7 have gotten respect from like Senator Hughes and a  
8 lot of people, but I have also lost respect from  
9 many legislators.

10 When did a legislator become about  
11 serving a destructive president and serving your own  
12 needs above that of your constituents? Everyone  
13 knows that this is to get the president five more  
14 seats. The cost for this is high. This cost is a  
15 cold heart that tries to silence many black and  
16 brown people, and anyone that doesn't agree with the  
17 policy of fear, hate, and division. You will try to  
18 silence us, but you don't understand the depth of  
19 our resolve.

20 I consider the representatives that  
21 broke quorum heroes, and I support them. They are  
22 trying to defend a democracy you are so determined  
23 to destroy. Even if you win this redistricting, you  
24 will lose eventually. You can only suppress people  
25 so long. People like myself are tired of being

1 bullied and have decided to confront the bullies, no  
2 matter how much you try to scare us and beat us  
3 down.

4 I'm a transgender woman, and I'm tired  
5 of hearing about my friends moving out of Texas  
6 because they are afraid. For many of you, that is a  
7 statement that will bring you joy. The joy you feel  
8 speaks to how sick this government has become. Fear  
9 and hatred now control the actions of many here.  
10 What happened to loving your neighbor? What  
11 happened to legislators serving their constituents?

12 It is now acceptable to disappear  
13 immigrants without due process. Are you so  
14 heartless that you don't feel the pain to people and  
15 families? You deny children lunches while passing  
16 laws that the Ten Commandments have to be displayed  
17 in classrooms. I'm a Christian, and that is not  
18 Christian behavior. How can you justify hurting so  
19 many people because they don't look or think like  
20 you? Diversity is beautiful. Please replace the  
21 fear and hate with love for Texas, the people of  
22 Texas, and yourself. Please do not advance SB 4.  
23 Thank you.

24 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Appreciate your  
25 testimony.



1                   You may begin.

2                   JANELL ZUBERBIER: Thank you,  
3 Chairperson and Members, for allowing testimony  
4 today. I am a proud union member of the  
5 Communication Workers of America, a single mother of  
6 biracial daughters, and a U.S. Army veteran. I'm  
7 also a Gen X woman who remembers walking in protests  
8 and rallies as a youth, fighting for the rights of  
9 all and continuing the fight for my daughters and  
10 future generations to not be marginalized.

11                  To see that you are more worried about  
12 rigged-districting only because Trump told you to --

13                  SENATOR CREIGHTON: If I could  
14 interrupt you. If you could state your name for the  
15 record.

16                  JANELL ZUBERBIER: Oh, I apologize.  
17 Janell Zuberbier.

18                  To see that you are more worried about  
19 rigged-districting only because Trump told you to  
20 than you are about the things we have been through  
21 recently, but no, you want to spend more time to  
22 create this crooked, gerrymandered rigged-  
23 districting map that is even worse than the current  
24 one we have, and that still has current litigation  
25 ongoing. Instead of care -- taking care of the

1 issues that matter to Texans. This brazen move  
2 increases Republican representation by taking it  
3 away from communities of color is shameful and  
4 racist.

5 Texas has a long history of rigged-  
6 districting against voters of color in the district  
7 maps. The racial gerrymandering in Texas has the  
8 aura of apartheid era white minority rule, but in  
9 Texas, whites like me are approximately 40 percent  
10 of the population, but control approximately 70  
11 percent of the congressional districts. And in  
12 Dallas-Fort Worth area, where whites are only  
13 approximately 20 percent of the population, but have  
14 approximately 80 percent of the seats.

15 Why would you do this to the people of  
16 Texas? Government works best solving the problems  
17 of ordinary people like me, a living wage, good  
18 public schools, and accessible, affordable, quality  
19 health care. We need to get politicians out of the  
20 map-building process. Thank you.

21 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you for your  
22 testimony.

23 The Chair would like to remind the  
24 committee that public registration is now closed.

25 Mr. Wilmer, we'll begin with you at

1 this time.

2 DEDDRICK WILMER: Thank you. I  
3 appreciate it.

4 Chairman King and Vice Chair Creighton  
5 and the Members of the committee, my name is  
6 Deddrick T. Wilmer. I'm a proud Texan, a father,  
7 community leader, serving currently Harris County  
8 Municipal Utility District 248, and candidate for  
9 the Congress in the 9th district. I come before you  
10 today not just as a candidate but as a citizen  
11 deeply concerned about the direction of our state in  
12 this country.

13 Senate Bill 4 and the redistricting  
14 process as a whole is not just about maps. It's  
15 about power, accountability, and the sacred right of  
16 voters to choose who represents them. Let me be  
17 clear, I support fair and constitutional  
18 redistricting, but I also believe the process has  
19 too often been hijacked not by policy, but by  
20 politics.

21 When your colleagues fled the state to  
22 avoid voting on the issues critical to Texans, they  
23 did not protect democracy. They protected deceipts.  
24 They protected feelings. In doing so, they turned  
25 their backs on the very people who elected them,

1 people who expect their leaders to show up when it's  
2 hard.

3           Redistricting should never be driven  
4 by racial fear tactics, unfounded accusations of  
5 discrimination meant to shut down an honest debate,  
6 but that only delays our real progress. Texas is  
7 changing, yes, but that change should be embraced,  
8 not manipulated. Our voters are smart. They're  
9 engaged. They deserve the opportunity to decide  
10 what's best for themselves, not to those decisions  
11 shaped behind closed doors or void through walkouts  
12 or staged media moments with our out-of-state  
13 governors.

14           To Senator Borris Miles and as well as  
15 Senator Carol Alvarado, who's not here today, I say  
16 this with respect and conviction. This process  
17 isn't about you. Isn't about me. It's about the  
18 voters. Let's stop preserving political careers and  
19 preserving the people's voice. But let me speak  
20 from the heart, Brother Miles. I understand the  
21 fear. I understand the concern in real time.

22           In 1992, my sophomore year in high  
23 school in Baton Rouge, you all hear of Ann Richards.  
24 We had to side on David Duke. There's a talk that  
25 someone, maybe even a white nationalist or a Duke

1 exegete, might try to exploit this new district as a  
2 knight to try to run it right now.

3 I understand where you're coming from,  
4 but I trust these voters here in Texas, and I trust  
5 them.

6 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Mr. Wilmer,  
7 we'll --

8 DEDDRICK WILMER: Thank you.

9 SENATOR CREIGHTON: -- we'll have to  
10 stop there to make sure everybody has the same  
11 amount of time.

12 DEDDRICK WILMER: Yes, sir.

13 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you.

14 Members, any questions for this panel  
15 of witnesses?

16 (No audible response)

17 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you.

18 Appreciate each of you.

19 At this time, the Chair will call  
20 Monica Gonzalez, Daniel Segura-Kelly, Chloe  
21 Wilkinson, and Meochea Money. And I probably did  
22 not pronounce that first name correctly. If you  
23 could help the committee when you approach with the  
24 pronunciation.

25 How do we properly pronounce your

1 first name?

2 MEOCHEA MONEY: Meochea Money.

3 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Meochea.

4 Beautiful name.

5 MEOCHEA MONEY: Thank you.

6 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Sorry I

7 mispronounced.

8 MEOCHEA MONEY: It's okay. Thank you.

9 SENATOR CREIGHTON: We'll begin with  
10 you.

11 MONICA GONZALEZ: Good morning. My  
12 name is Monica Gonzalez. I am a nurse and a proud  
13 member of National Nurses Organizing Committee and  
14 National Nurses United Texas. I live in Burnett  
15 County, and I currently work at Ascension Seton  
16 Medical Center in Austin. I've been there for 21  
17 years on the Neuro Med/Surg Unit.

18 I'm here today to speak out against  
19 this racially discriminatory redrawing of our  
20 congressional maps. As a nurse, we value caring,  
21 compassion, and our community. We care for anyone  
22 and everyone who walks into our hospital, no matter  
23 their political affiliation, gender, immigration  
24 status, race, or class. What we are now witnessing  
25 in our state with redistricting is a stark contrast

1 to these values.

2 The governor should focus this special  
3 session on issues everyday Texans are experiencing.  
4 This time could be much better spent. For example,  
5 in July, Congress passed a budget reconciliation  
6 bill that will have devastating impacts on  
7 healthcare access for millions of our patients.  
8 Many states have been scrambling to figure out what  
9 to do with the same level of federal funding for  
10 programs like Medicaid.

11 Governor Abbott, instead of showing  
12 concern for our patients who may soon lose their  
13 healthcare coverage, has called a special session to  
14 further Trump's agenda. I am furious at our state-  
15 elected officials who are using this time to further  
16 consolidate power instead of putting forward  
17 solutions to our impending healthcare crisis.

18 Additionally, Texans are still  
19 wondering when the legislator will address flood  
20 relief and disaster recovery. As nurses, we see the  
21 devastating impacts natural disasters can have on  
22 individuals' health and entire communities. Texans  
23 deserve to know that they can rebuild and recover.  
24 This is about taking power away from everyday Texans  
25 and preserving power for the wealthy. This is a

1 direct attack on democracy and the political power  
2 of working people.

3 Nurses are sick and tired of watching  
4 elected leaders prioritize their donors and their  
5 agendas over the needs of Texans. Greg Abbott is  
6 letting Trump take over Texas with this  
7 redistricting scheme, and they're trying to suppress  
8 the votes of black and brown folks across our state  
9 to further diminish --

10 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you for your  
11 testimony.

12 MONICA GONZALEZ: -- our voice and  
13 power.

14 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you so much.  
15 Go ahead.

16 CHLOE WILKINSON: Hello. My name is  
17 Chloe Wilkinson. I am the secretary of Texas Young  
18 Democrats. I'm going to repeat some points from my  
19 House committee hearing speech, but first, let me  
20 just say to the Senate Democrats, thank you for your  
21 support. I am with House Democrats breaking quorum.  
22 We need them to know that they are supported up and  
23 down from across the state by everyone.

24 But let me just talk about why this  
25 redistricting is especially bad for Austin. I have



1 lived in Austin for four and a half years now, and I  
2 have seven years of campaign experience. So I do  
3 sort of know how this is going to affect us from a  
4 field and constituent service perspective.

5 First off, there was mentioned that  
6 these maps are compact, but when you look at the  
7 districts that represent parts of the Greater Austin  
8 area, like CD 10, CD 11, and CD 27, those are not  
9 compact districts. If you put them in a circle,  
10 they would not even constitute 25 percent  
11 compactness.

12 Secondly, I really want to point out  
13 that we talk a lot about different racial groups are  
14 not monolithic. Why is it that the only  
15 congressional district that was majority white that  
16 voted Democrat is suddenly gone now? Also, CD 37,  
17 if you look at it, it is 50 percent Hispanic, but in  
18 reality, because West Austin is completely  
19 segregated and is rich white people with a 17  
20 percent higher voter turnout rate, it is, in  
21 reality, a white district that looks like a Hispanic  
22 district.

23 So I really want us to realize here  
24 that it -- this map may have been drawn race blind,  
25 but it is, in fact, going to hurt communities of

1 color. Thank you, and I'm happy to take questions.

2 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Appreciate your  
3 testimony.

4 DANIEL SEGURA-KELLY: Hi. Good  
5 morning, Committee. My name is Daniel Segura-Kelly.  
6 I'm speaking for myself. Today, I'm conflicted  
7 because Texans experienced an enormous loss of life  
8 on July 4th due to a natural disaster that we could  
9 have been -- that could have been -- we could have  
10 been better prepared for. Now could be an excellent  
11 opportunity to bring Texans together and solve big  
12 problems.

13 One of those problems is that Texans  
14 believe that the congressional maps have been  
15 designed to break communities apart, and they're not  
16 wrong to think so. This proposed congressional map  
17 violates the principle of preserving communities of  
18 interest, and it tears through the southern --  
19 southeastern Travis County community of Del Valle,  
20 my community.

21 Texans don't believe that our  
22 congressional maps fairly represent our communities,  
23 and Texas Republicans are now acknowledging that  
24 there is a problem with our maps. So we agree.  
25 Texans agree. We can be using this time to pass

1 legislation that many Texans want. Legislation that  
2 would establish an independent redistricting  
3 committee. Instead, we're here fighting MAGA  
4 Republicans from establishing a one-party state.

5           Many who have spoken have tried to  
6 appeal to the rationality of their Republican  
7 colleagues. I need to direct my words to how -- to  
8 Senate Democrats. My uncle was the general  
9 superintendent of the Church of Nazarene. In the  
10 Church of Nazarene, the general superintendent is  
11 essentially one of the six popes. Another uncle was  
12 president of the Nazarene Bible College. I share  
13 this to establish my credibility as a former  
14 Christian Nationalist. I've been in the room with  
15 leaders in the Christian Nationalist movement.

16           Democrats, please look at your  
17 Republican colleagues. The eyes that are either  
18 looking back at you or avoiding your contact see you  
19 as soulless enemies. These are people capable of  
20 looking you in the eyes and telling you they love  
21 you, and in the same breath will sentence you to  
22 hell. Get out. You must get out.

23           You are not working with people who  
24 are here in good faith. I need you to know that  
25 these are people who have a depraved indifference to

1 democracy. They intend to annihilate democracy and  
2 establish a theocracy. You are attempting to work  
3 with people who are fundamentally different from us.

4 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you for your  
5 testimony.

6 DANIEL SEGURA-KELLY: When you and I  
7 watch The Handmaid's Tale --

8 SENATOR CREIGHTON: We appreciate your  
9 time here today.

10 DANEIL SEGURA-KELLY: -- and recoil at  
11 the scenes, they salivate.

12 SENATOR CREIGHTON: We appreciate you  
13 sticking with your time frame.

14 DANIEL SEGURA-KELLY: This is the  
15 world they want to create.

16 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Sir.

17 DANIEL SEGURA-KELLY: Get out.

18 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Sir, we have to  
19 stick with our allocated time frame, or it's  
20 disrespectful to the other witnesses. Thank you.

21 Yes, please. Go ahead. Appreciate  
22 you being here.

23 MEOCHEA MONEY: Thank you. Good  
24 morning. My name is Meochea Money. I'm a deputized  
25 voter register, community advocate, and public --

1 and proud public servant for the people in Houston,  
2 Texas, Harris County, especially in Congressional  
3 District 9 and 18.

4 I stand for the people, the real ones.  
5 We want maps. We want real maps. We want access to  
6 the ballots. We want leadership, and we want to  
7 fight for what's righteous and not for against us --  
8 nothing for against us.

9 HB 4 has another -- is just another  
10 chapter in the same tired playbook. We saw this  
11 similar back in 2021, where they rolled out the  
12 Senate Bill 1 -- SB 1 that made it harder for the  
13 people to vote, especially the seniors with  
14 disabilities, the folks with language barriers, the  
15 black and brown communities, just -- and the ones  
16 just trying to survive.

17 As I spent so much time educating and  
18 informing individuals about the questioning, I see  
19 the concerns in their faces and their voices, and  
20 somehow, they have some sort of confusion and  
21 intimidation with regards to this bill. But you  
22 guys want our votes all the time. You all are  
23 steady asking for our votes. We're tired of  
24 knocking and asking to be let in. We're tired of  
25 begging. We're tired of this.

1 Now, at this time, we're not asking.  
2 We're just going to go ahead and go -- go ahead and  
3 kick it down. Our neighborhoods, our kids, and  
4 everything are being affected. So let me make this  
5 clear and let me make this loud. I stand against  
6 HB 4. I stand against gerrymandering, and I stand  
7 against voter suppression and intimidation. And  
8 let's make this clear, we're not backing down, and  
9 we're just getting started. Thank you.

10 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Appreciate your  
11 testimony, each of you.

12 Members, any questions?

13 (No audible response)

14 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you.

15 The Chair will now call  
16 Nicholas Little, Veronikah Warms, Emily French, and  
17 Anthony Gutierrez.

18 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Anthony's on his  
19 way in.

20 SENATOR CREIGHTON: We'll give  
21 Mr. Gutierrez time, and we'll begin with you. Go  
22 ahead.

23 VERONIKAH WARMS: My name is Veronica  
24 Warms, and I'm a policy attorney representing the  
25 Texas Civil Rights Project against SB 4. This map

1 is a blatant attempt to rob Texans of color of their  
2 political power. Despite the fact that 95 percent  
3 of Texas' population growth was in communities of  
4 color, the 2021 maps did not produce additional  
5 opportunity districts for Texans of color.

6 This proposal makes an already  
7 discriminatory map that is still being litigated  
8 even worse. If it were implemented, white Texans  
9 who comprise only 40 percent of the population would  
10 control 79 percent of the congressional delegation.  
11 Texans know an unfair system when they see one.

12 The district lines here cannot be  
13 explained away on partisanship. As the Supreme  
14 Court noted in Bartlett v. Strickland, a state  
15 intentionally destroying effective crossover  
16 districts raises serious constitutional concerns.  
17 The DOJ's letter, while completely misstating the  
18 law, cited impermissible racial considerations in  
19 four majority minority districts, not a quest for  
20 partisan advantage.

21 What the legislature delivered with  
22 SB 4 is a map that brazenly and intentionally cracks  
23 historic majority minority districts, including  
24 court-ordered VRA districts, and then packs other  
25 minority groups into tight urban areas to dilute

1 their political power. That is targeted racial  
2 discrimination, plain and simple.

3 The lengths the state has gone to deny  
4 Texans fair representation in this redistricting  
5 farce are staggering. The Supreme Court has said  
6 that redistricting mid-decade to replace a  
7 court-ordered map is allowed, but that's not what's  
8 happening here. The House had only three regional  
9 hearings to encompass the 30-plus million Texans  
10 spread over more than 268,000 square miles. Only  
11 five hours of public testimony were allowed per  
12 hearing, so only a max of 150 Texans could speak.

13 Less than 48 hours after the last  
14 regional hearing, this map appeared. The Senate had  
15 four virtual hearings, where again, the vast  
16 majority of witnesses opposed this out-of-order  
17 redistricting, and the exact same map was filed.  
18 Its drafters clearly disregarded the public's  
19 testimony on the impact of redistricting on their  
20 communities and their overwhelming opposition to  
21 this rushed redraw.

22 We urge the committee to focus on  
23 disaster relief rather than creating a new disaster  
24 in this destructive --

25 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you for --



1 VERONIKAH WARMS: -- and  
2 discriminatory map.

3 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you for your  
4 testimony.

5 VERONIKAH WARMS: Thank you.

6 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you very  
7 much.

8 You may begin.

9 EMILY FRENCH: Hi. I'm Emily Eby  
10 French. I represent Common Cause Texas. I'm far  
11 from the first to share my disappointment that this  
12 legislature is putting gerrymandering over disaster  
13 relief, but I also believe this legislature is  
14 making future disaster relief harder with  
15 gerrymandering.

16 Right now, we're sitting in CD 37.  
17 Under a new map, we'd be sitting in CD 10. This  
18 Capitol complex would share a U.S. House rep with  
19 students at Texas A&M, 87 miles away, the people of  
20 Centerville, 124 miles away, and the people of  
21 Segno, 183 miles away. But under this proposed map,  
22 if I walked 1,000 feet to Texas Chili Parlor, I  
23 would be in CD 37 again.

24 Imagine that you live at the Capitol,  
25 which I'm sure is not hard for many members of this

1 committee, and a natural disaster strikes. Let's  
2 say that the power goes out. My phone has like 15  
3 percent. I only have enough juice to call my  
4 congressional rep. I want to use this --  
5 constituent services to find resources, locate  
6 warming or cooling centers, and connect with other  
7 folks who are helping out near me. If my friends at  
8 Texas Chili Parlor have to walk over, these maps  
9 would force them to get help from a different  
10 representative.

11 By drawing our communities apart,  
12 you're making it harder for neighbors to help each  
13 other. If my cousins in Pflugerville need help,  
14 these maps would force them to call a different  
15 third representative in CD 11, who would also  
16 represent our uncle 65 miles away in Llano, the  
17 people of San Angelo 180 miles away, and Midland 283  
18 miles away.

19 Pflugerville is 14 miles away from the  
20 Capitol. This map has Pflugerville in with Midland,  
21 and the Capitol in with Segno, and Midland is 430  
22 miles away from Segno. That is 11 and a half  
23 Rhode Islands laid end-to-end. I believe the Chair  
24 and I have different definitions of the word  
25 compact.

1 I'm a lifelong Texan. I was born in  
2 Houston, where hurricanes constantly happen. I was  
3 raised in Tornado Alley. I now live amongst freezes  
4 and floods in Central Texas. When natural disaster  
5 strikes, I lean on my neighbors, and they lean on  
6 me. This map makes it harder for Texans to help  
7 each other. Please do not pass it. Thank you.

8 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Mr. Little?

9 NICHOLAS LITTLE: Good morning.  
10 First, giving my regards to the Chair, Vice Chair,  
11 my state senator, Senator Boris Miles over here.  
12 It's a privilege and a pleasure to be here. I'm  
13 here -- I represent the Houston branch NAACP. I am  
14 also a Navy combat veteran, a graduate of the United  
15 States Naval Academy, class of 2008, and I'm a  
16 Texan.

17 And I'm here because -- I'm here  
18 advocating and speaking on behalf of the  
19 constituents and the people of Houston who feel like  
20 they are voiceless or feel as if -- you know, if  
21 they're not at their table, then they're on the  
22 menu. And I think it's imperative that we take  
23 notice to realize that the constituents, the people,  
24 are the people that we're supposed to be listening  
25 to, not the federal government. That's -- that --

1 otherwise, we have no state sovereignty.

2                   And it concerns me, and it concerns  
3 many of our constituents in the room, that we are  
4 currently at a point right now where we are willing  
5 to listen to what's going on from somewhere else  
6 versus doing what's good for Texas, as stated by  
7 members of the committee. So I'm just hoping that  
8 today and going forward that everyone here and  
9 everyone that's not in the chamber that are able to  
10 vote on this will make the right decision and do it  
11 based on the conscience of Texas and not on the  
12 conscience of anyone that considers themselves  
13 practically a king or anyone who is seemingly  
14 undermining our democracy.

15                   That is not why I served my country  
16 for ten years. That is not why many people in our  
17 community fight to be elected to office, to just bow  
18 down to any type of tyrannical force at any person's  
19 will. We are here all as Texans, but more  
20 importantly, we are Americans, and that's what makes  
21 our country great, that's what makes our state  
22 great, is being able to realize and understand that  
23 this is who we are.

24                   So I just want to ask that everyone  
25 here just really take into consideration all the

1 testimonies being given, all the testimony that will  
2 be given, and just please keep in mind that, as  
3 Texas, we've always stood strong, and it is  
4 imperative that we maintain that stability, and we  
5 maintain that to represent that across the country  
6 as well.

7 SENATOR CREIGHTON: All right.

8 NICHOLAS LITTLE: Thank you.

9 SENATOR CREIGHTON: We appreciate each  
10 of you and your testimony. Thank you for your  
11 service to our nation, Mr. Little.

12 Senator West, we welcome you to the  
13 committee today and appreciate you joining us, and  
14 you're recognized. If you have a question for  
15 Mr. Little.

16 SENATOR WEST: I don't know that it's  
17 for Mr. Little. It may very well be for the author  
18 of the bill, based on the testimony of this panel.

19 In terms of deliberating on exactly  
20 what's taken into consideration in recommending this  
21 bill or amendments thereto, how will the testimony  
22 received by the committee, by people that have taken  
23 their time out to express their opinion on the bill,  
24 be utilized?

25 SENATOR KING: Is that a question for

1 me?

2 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Is that -- are  
3 you --

4 SENATOR WEST: Yeah.

5 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Is that directed  
6 at me as Chair, or Senator King?

7 SENATOR WEST: No. No. The author of  
8 the bill, Senator King.

9 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator King.

10 SENATOR KING: Okay. Thank you.

11 SENATOR CREIGHTON: We recognize you.

12 SENATOR WEST: Did you understand the  
13 question?

14 SENATOR KING: I think so.

15 SENATOR WEST: Let me make sure you  
16 understand it.

17 SENATOR KING: Okay, please.

18 SENATOR WEST: We've had -- and I've  
19 been listening to the testimony, and we've had  
20 hundreds of people testify on this particular bill -  
21 -

22 SENATOR MILES: 205.

23 SENATOR WEST: 205?

24 SENATOR MILES: 205.

25 SENATOR WEST: And it would seem,

1 based on what I've gleaned, most of them have  
2 testified against this process, and now also on this  
3 particular bill. And my question is, in terms of  
4 what your recommendation is going to be on this  
5 particular bill or amendments requested, how will  
6 the testimony of citizens that have taken their time  
7 to testify be taken into consideration?

8 SENATOR KING: Certainly.

9 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator King.

10 SENATOR KING: Thank you.

11 And as to amendments, we'll just look  
12 at each amendment independently, and those decisions  
13 will ultimately be made by the -- I guess it would  
14 be floor amendments, and they'll be made by the 31 -  
15 - or 30 now senators on the floor. They'll make  
16 that decision in a vote on each amendment.

17 I would say as to how this  
18 testimony -- taken into account, I think each  
19 senator represents their roughly million people in  
20 their district, but they also represent the state as  
21 a whole. And I think each senator will --

22 SENATOR WEST: And all due respect,  
23 that's not the question I asked about the other  
24 senators.

25 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Well,

1 Senator West, let him complete his thought because  
2 it might -- he may end up at that destination.

3 SENATOR KING: I think I --

4 SENATOR WEST: It may end up? Okay.  
5 All right.

6 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Yes, sir. Yeah.

7 SENATOR KING: I think I'm getting  
8 there. But I was just going to say, each of us will  
9 take into account all the information put before us,  
10 our personal analysis of the bill, what we believe  
11 that our district wants, I think, and the testimony  
12 that was provided, both in the Senate and probably  
13 in the House, too, I watched some of the House  
14 hearings, and contacts that we're getting from  
15 constituent calls and emails and letters. And I  
16 think we'll all take -- I would expect we would all  
17 take all of that into account in making our decision  
18 on how to vote on any amendment or on the bill  
19 itself.

20 SENATOR WEST: Okay. May --

21 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator West.

22 SENATOR WEST: Thank you very much,  
23 Mr. Chairman.

24 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Yes, sir.

25 SENATOR WEST: I was referring to you,



1 not everybody else. I mean, as the author of the  
2 bill, you are going to have to make a determination  
3 as to what bill actually comes to the floor for  
4 consideration. And normally, what we do in this  
5 process, and I've been involved in it for a long  
6 time now, is that we listen to the testimony, and  
7 based on the testimony, we take the bill, end up  
8 having to substitute, and things of that nature,  
9 based on the testimony that we hear.

10 And so I guess the question I'm asking  
11 is not as it relates to other senators, but more  
12 specifically, as to you, as the author of the bill,  
13 are you going to take into consideration that  
14 hundreds of people that have testified, showed up at  
15 these particular hearings in deciding what bill  
16 and/or substitute that you will bring to the floor?  
17 And if so, how will you do that?

18 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator King.

19 SENATOR KING: Well, my intent is, as  
20 Chair, to bring the bill up at the conclusion of  
21 testimony today for a vote before the committee, and  
22 to recommend that the committee favorably report the  
23 bill to the Senate. And then I -- if it passes out  
24 of the committee, then -- and if it's brought to the  
25 floor, then it would be my intent to recommend to

1 the floor that we support the bill.

2 SENATOR WEST: Okay. So the testimony  
3 that you've heard over these few weeks has been loud  
4 and clear that this process is not favored by  
5 Texans, correct? And the testimony that I've heard  
6 so far today is that this map is not favored by  
7 Texans. You will not take that into consideration  
8 in terms of making a recommendation to the committee  
9 and/or to the Senate; is that correct?

10 SENATOR KING: Chairman?

11 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator King.

12 SENATOR KING: So I -- much of the  
13 testimony that I've heard, and I've taken it all  
14 into consideration, one of the things that pushed me  
15 toward this particular map, a great deal of the  
16 testimony has been that the existing map is not as  
17 compact as it could be, and I believe this map takes  
18 strong steps in that direction. We discussed  
19 earlier, before you got here, specifically with  
20 regard to Districts 32 and 35 are very good examples  
21 of that. So I believe it reflects the testimony  
22 that we've seen in that regard.

23 I also believe that most of the  
24 testimony that I've heard had been -- has been with  
25 regard to racial considerations, and I think it's

1 totally inappropriate to take racial considerations  
2 into account when drawing a map. I think that  
3 that's not preferred by the law, to say the least,  
4 and I think it would be inappropriate, so might --  
5 and so I think much of it -- all the testimony  
6 that's been accusing -- suggesting that this map was  
7 drawn on a racial basis is inaccurate and incorrect.  
8 And so I'm disregarding that part of the testimony  
9 because I didn't take race into account, and I don't  
10 see race in this map.

11 SENATOR WEST: Okay. And I understand  
12 that the --

13 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator West.

14 SENATOR WEST: Thank you very much,  
15 Mr. Chairman.

16 Out of all due respect, when you begin  
17 to look at the map itself and take into  
18 consideration not just the map, but the whole  
19 process, 2021, we had a map that the Attorney  
20 General in the state of Texas is defending in  
21 federal court right now. And then we get a letter.  
22 We -- Trump says that he needs five seats from  
23 Texas, and then we get a letter from the Department  
24 of Justice. I think that's chronological order.

25 SENATOR KING: Uh-huh.

1                   SENATOR WEST: Then all of a sudden,  
2 there's no map because I've asked you about maps,  
3 and then a map shows up in the House. Then we have  
4 the quorum -- the parliamentary use of quorum breaks  
5 in order to stymie the efforts. And then another  
6 map is followed here. I think that's the order of  
7 events.

8                   People have testified against these  
9 maps -- against the maps and the entire process, and  
10 the only districts that end up, frankly, for the  
11 most part, being cracked and packed are minority  
12 districts. More specifically, I'll give you an  
13 example: The district in Dallas. And I hadn't  
14 looked at maps in a while. All the economic engines  
15 are being taken out of the district in Dallas for  
16 some strange reason. Can you help me understand  
17 that?

18                  SENATOR KING: Well, I'd have to ask  
19 you --

20                  SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator King.

21                  SENATOR KING: I'm sorry. Excuse me,  
22 Mr. Chairman.

23                  I'd have to ask you to be more  
24 specific.

25                  SENATOR WEST: As it relates to what

1 district or what?

2 SENATOR KING: Well, what economic  
3 engines? What district? What congressional member?

4 SENATOR WEST: Sure. Jasmine  
5 Crockett, her district.

6 SENATOR KING: Okay.

7 SENATOR WEST: As I understand it, and  
8 I stand to be corrected if necessary, the airport,  
9 downtown area, the medical center, law schools, and  
10 all have been taken out for some reason. And if  
11 race is not a consideration, why would that happen?

12 SENATOR KING: Well, I know I  
13 represent Tarrant County, and even though Lockheed  
14 is across the street from my district, I still  
15 aggressively represent Lockheed. And I don't think  
16 because you've moved a hospital district -- or  
17 you've moved a district outside a hospital district,  
18 if it's still in her primary county, I assume she's  
19 going to continue to represent that as aggressively  
20 as she would otherwise.

21 Downtown Fort Worth is not in my  
22 district, but I'm actively involved in representing  
23 and being supported by businesses and folks in the  
24 downtown area. So I don't think you can draw a line  
25 like that and say, because the hospital district is

1 no longer in her district, that she's not going to  
2 be working for and representing that hospital  
3 district.

4 SENATOR WEST: So you agree with me  
5 that that should not be a partisan consideration,  
6 right, in terms of whether or not you move or don't  
7 move a hospital district or a downtown area? So in  
8 drawing maps, you shouldn't take into consideration  
9 moving economic engines of a particular district to  
10 accomplish a partisan result. You would agree with  
11 that based on what you just said?

12 SENATOR KING: I don't --

13 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator King.

14 SENATOR KING: I don't think that's  
15 what I just said. I think what I said -- you asked  
16 me specifically about her district. I think that --  
17 as I said earlier, that you should not take -- that  
18 I did not take racial factors into consideration. I  
19 think that the map is more compact than the existing  
20 map. I think it -- that it achieves the objective  
21 that, at least, I had of performing better from a  
22 partisan perspective for Republicans. And I think  
23 that it is drawn in a manner that's going to  
24 continue to allow members of Congress to represent  
25 their districts and the areas surrounding their

1 district, like we all do.

2 As I said, I'm Tarrant County, and I  
3 try to -- I only have about a third of Tarrant  
4 County, but I try to represent all of Tarrant County  
5 and help. And the other Senators in the -- in  
6 Tarrant County do the same thing. And I believe  
7 this map takes into consideration what is  
8 traditional redistricting criteria, and I think it's  
9 a very supportable map.

10 SENATOR WEST: Okay. And I  
11 understand --

12 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator West.

13 SENATOR WEST: -- Mr. Chairman. And I  
14 know this committee is laboring because I've been on  
15 this committee several times before myself. And  
16 I'll have extensive questions for you on the floor  
17 because you weren't really responsive to the  
18 question that I asked, to be honest with you. But -  
19 - because, again, I asked about the partisan piece  
20 in terms of taking economic engines out, and if it's  
21 not a partisan issue, then why were they taken out,  
22 okay?

23 I mean, just because you have economic  
24 engines like Downtown Dallas, the medical district,  
25 law schools, and things like that, you don't need to

1 take those out of a minority district in order to  
2 establish -- to accomplish your goal of increasing  
3 partisanship in the state of Texas, but yet still  
4 that's what was done by the map drawers.

5 Speaking of the map drawers, did you  
6 draw this map? Who drew the map?

7 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator King.

8 SENATOR KING: Okay. I've adopted  
9 HB 4. My understanding was it was driven -- it  
10 was -- traditionally, the way it's worked is the  
11 congressional delegation usually has someone draw a  
12 map. I believe -- I think I'm correct in saying in  
13 2021, the Redistricting Trust, which is an  
14 organization that's involved in redistricting across  
15 the country, they helped draw the map for the  
16 congressional -- Republican congressional delegation  
17 in 2021.

18 My understanding is that the  
19 redistricting trust drew this map, as well as  
20 others, and this was the map that was adopted by the  
21 House.

22 SENATOR WEST: Okay. So the  
23 Redistricting Trust drew this map?

24 SENATOR KING: I think they  
25 participated in drawing the map is my understanding.



1                   SENATOR WEST: Did you have any input  
2 in drawing the map?

3                   SENATOR KING: None at all.

4                   SENATOR WEST: I guess it was given to  
5 you --

6                   SENATOR KING: No.

7                   SENATOR WEST: Well, let me finish.  
8 It was given to you, and you were asked to carry  
9 this particular map without you having any input  
10 into what the impact of this map was?

11                  SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator King.

12                  SENATOR KING: No, not at all. As  
13 I've said repeatedly in the hearings and in caucus,  
14 that I considered drawing a map. I had been  
15 considering waiting for the House map to come over.  
16 No one ever handed me a map. I was not given  
17 directions on whether or not -- on any map to take.  
18 But as I watched the House hearings -- and I stated  
19 this earlier before you got here today.

20                  As I watched the House hearings, and  
21 as I looked at this map, and I thought it was more  
22 compact than the existing map, I asked our legal  
23 counsel to review it to see if they came to the same  
24 conclusion that the House counsel had that the map  
25 was legal in all -- under all applicable law. They

1 reported back to me that it was, and then I filed  
2 the bill on Monday. I -- rather than wait for the  
3 House bill to come over because things were stalling  
4 in the House, which is procedural and a way of  
5 pursuing passing legislation, the same way you've  
6 done it a thousand times over your decades in the  
7 House and the Senate.

8 SENATOR WEST: Decades. Decades.

9 SENATOR KING: Decades.

10 SENATOR WEST: Okay.

11 SENATOR KING: If you're working on a  
12 companion bill and the bill on the other side of the  
13 body begins to stall, then you will file it over  
14 here and try to get it moving as a companion. And  
15 that's exactly what I did. I decided I -- that the  
16 House bill was a very good bill, that it  
17 accomplished the purposes that I had in looking for  
18 a bill, looking for a map. And I went ahead and  
19 decided to file it when it stalled in the House  
20 because the Democrats left the state.

21 And I -- you know, my opinion is when  
22 things stall, then you try to find a way to move  
23 forward, and that's what I did and why I filed this  
24 map.

25 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator West.

1                   SENATOR WEST: In closing, all due  
2 respect, I think that listening to public testimony  
3 here is just checking a box. That's all that's  
4 happened.

5                   SENATOR MILES: That's it.

6                   SENATOR WEST: The reality is, is that  
7 this testimony that is being given by citizens of  
8 the state of Texas is not really going to be taken  
9 into consideration, given the fact that you've  
10 already said that whatever happens in terms of  
11 testimony of citizens, you're going to make a motion  
12 today to approve this particular map and send it to  
13 the floor. That's what I heard you say; is that  
14 correct?

15                  SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator King.

16                  SENATOR KING: Well, I would take the  
17 testimony of one person who's on this panel before  
18 us. The way I understood her testimony was that a  
19 map should be drawn from a percentage basis that  
20 directly reflects the racial makeup of Texas, and I  
21 do not agree with drawing a map on that basis. So  
22 in that regard, that particular testimony I would  
23 disregard because I think that's the wrong way to  
24 draw a map.

25                  SEANTOR WEST: What about --

1 Mr. Chairman?

2 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator West.

3 SENATOR WEST: What about communities  
4 of interest?

5 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator King.

6 SENATOR KING: I believe this map,  
7 being more compact than the existing map, improves  
8 communities of interest.

9 SENATOR WEST: How so?

10 SENATOR KING: Well, I'll use  
11 District 32 and District 35 as examples. And  
12 District 35, for example, now begins way south in  
13 Bexar County, takes extremely difficult jigs and  
14 jags as it progresses all the way up into northern  
15 Travis. District 35 under this map becomes very  
16 well aligned communities of interest in the counties  
17 of Guadalupe, Wilson, Karnes, and what's a more  
18 rural area of Bexar. And this is a much more  
19 compact district than the existing 35. And there's  
20 other examples throughout the map.

21 SENATOR WEST: Mr. Chairman?

22 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator West.

23 SENATOR WEST: And so let's stay with  
24 Bexar because I don't know that much about that  
25 particular area, other than I know San Antonio was

1 there. And so you've taken urban communities -- the  
2 urban communities of Bexar County and aligned them  
3 with rural communities in Wilson and also Karnes  
4 County; is that correct?

5 SENATOR KING: Well, it's much like my  
6 Senate District that takes parts of Fort Worth and  
7 then aligns it with the suburban areas of Parker  
8 County, which would be that area of Bexar County, I  
9 guess, it would be more of a suburban area, and then  
10 connects it with -- in my area, connects it with the  
11 rural counties of -- that are to the west and south  
12 of that.

13 And so that's just what you have to do  
14 in Texas because of the difference in population in  
15 our urban and rural counties. So you're always  
16 having to reach in and pick up some population. But  
17 I -- what I'll tell you is, just looking at the map,  
18 common sense tells you that a map that is compact --  
19 a district that is compact as opposed to one that is  
20 long and thin and jiggled and jaggled, it -- that  
21 that compact one is more compact. I don't know how  
22 else to put that.

23 SENATOR WEST: Well, again, I --  
24 again, I'm talking about communities of interest.  
25 So when you did your analysis for that particular

1 area to make a determination as to whether those  
2 were communities of interest, what did you take into  
3 consideration, if anything?

4 SENATOR KING: Well, I mean, generally  
5 speaking, an inner city area is going to have a  
6 little bit different primary issues before it than a  
7 suburban issue -- than a suburban district might  
8 have, which will have a little bit different ones  
9 than what a rural area might have. Although they  
10 all have overlapping issues.

11 And so I think when you're trying to  
12 draw a map and you're trying to get 766,000 people  
13 into 38 districts, you obviously have to -- you're  
14 going to have to draw districts that are outside --  
15 that reach into urban areas, but also extend into  
16 rural areas. And I think when you compare, in this  
17 case, District 35, as an example -- the existing 35  
18 to the proposed 35, the proposed 35, in any common  
19 sense, is more compact.

20 SENATOR WEST: Is that --

21 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator West.

22 SENATOR WEST: Oh, okay. And,  
23 Members, I apologize. I'll save a lot of these  
24 questions for the floor.

25 But again, out of all due respect, I

1 asked about communities of interest, you talked  
2 about compactness. I understand what you're talking  
3 about with compactness, but the question is what  
4 factors did you take into consideration to make a  
5 determination as to whether or not they were  
6 communities of interest?

7 SENATOR KING: Well, can you --

8 SENATOR WEST: May I finish, sir?

9 Thank you.

10 SENATOR KING: I'm sorry.

11 SENATOR WEST: And so the question is,  
12 is that communities of interest, I mean, the people  
13 have the same types of -- I guess you'd say, they go  
14 to the same churches, they -- what elements of  
15 communities of interest that's been recognized by  
16 law did you take into consideration?

17 SENATOR KING: Well, it can be a lot  
18 of things. As you said, it can be the fact that  
19 this is -- that there's a River Oaks neighborhood.

20 SENATOR WEST: In the 35?

21 SENATOR KING: I'm just throwing out a  
22 name of a neighborhood.

23 SENATOR WEST: Well, I was talking  
24 about 35.

25 SENATOR KING: We'll call it

1 Meadowbrook.

2 SENATOR WEST: I'm talking about 35.

3 SENATOR KING: Okay. I --

4 SENATOR WEST: All due respect --

5 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Wait. Senator --

6 SENATOR WEST: -- I'll -- let's --

7 SENATOR KING: No. No. You're not

8 being -- no. It's not being with due respect.

9 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Let Senator

10 King --

11 SENATOR KING: I'm trying to answer

12 the question.

13 SENATOR CREIGHTON: -- answer the

14 question.

15 SENATOR KING: I'm trying to answer

16 what I -- what you ask, what I mean by what I take

17 into consideration in a community of interest --

18 SENATOR WEST: Okay. Fair enough.

19 SENATOR KING: -- which is one of the

20 traditional redistricting criteria.

21 SENATOR WEST: Exactly.

22 SENATOR KING: All right? It can be

23 many things. It can be a historic neighborhood,

24 okay, or it can be the regional water areas. It can

25 be the regional transportation areas, the TxDOT



1 zones. It can be the economic development areas.

2 And I'll use as another example my  
3 home county of Parker, a large percentage of the  
4 folks in Parker County drive to Tarrant County for  
5 work. So they have -- so in that regard, there's a  
6 community of interest in the commuting, in the jobs  
7 that are provided in Tarrant County, and the  
8 families that live in Parker. Now, as Tarrant moves  
9 into Parker and more of that business moves into  
10 Parker, we share that economic base. So communities  
11 of interest can be anything, and particularly in a  
12 county the size of Tarrant.

13 Now, when you look at 35, you see  
14 those large rural counties, and you also see a  
15 larger population base in the more suburban area of  
16 -- and less developed areas of Bexar County. And  
17 they're going to be more aligned, from a community  
18 of interest standpoint than they would if you had  
19 picked inner city San Antonio. And I think it's a  
20 very good district.

21 SENATOR WEST: Okay. I'll --

22 SENATOR KING: And I'll also suggest  
23 that --

24 SENATOR MILES: He answered  
25 question --

1                   SENATOR KING: -- no one on this  
2     committee has offered amendments to change that  
3     district, and anybody is certainly available to --  
4     or has the option of offering amendment to change  
5     that district on the floor. But my point is, when I  
6     look at it, it is a much more compact district, and  
7     compactness takes into account geography and all the  
8     traditional redistricting criteria. And any common  
9     sense look at it says it's a more compact, better  
10    designed, easier to represent from a driving  
11    distance for the congressional member, and it's just  
12    a better district all around in its geography.

13                  SENATOR WEST: Okay. It sounds like  
14    you've used the word compactness about ten times.  
15    So it's --

16                  SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator West.

17                  SENATOR WEST: Mr. Chairman.

18                         It sounds like you've used the word  
19    compactness several times in your response to me. I  
20    appreciate your response, but it seems like  
21    compactness was the number one element that you took  
22    into consideration in drafting or presenting this  
23    particular map. Thank you, sir.

24                  SENATOR CREIGHTON: Members, any  
25    questions for this panel? If not, thank you each

1 for your testimony.

2 Senator Miles, you're recognized.

3 SENATOR MILES: Thank you,  
4 Mr. Chairman.

5 Senator West, let me just answer your  
6 questions that you were trying to get answered as  
7 you exit. The gentleman's name is Adam Kincaid,  
8 who's out of Virginia, who wrote this map, and it's  
9 just coincidental that he runs the National  
10 Republican Redistricting Committee. Oh, yeah. He's  
11 done so for a while now, and he lives out of  
12 Virginia. That's who actually drew this map.

13 And for the numbers, Senator, we had  
14 205 today -- as of today. And I'd be generous in  
15 saying that 5 of those were for the map and the 200  
16 were against. Now, today, we've got 117 signed up  
17 against the map and 3 for the map. So now, what the  
18 Chairman's going to do with those numbers, that's up  
19 to him. You asked him that question. He's going to  
20 have to give you that answer. Thank you.

21 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you, Senator  
22 Miles.

23 We'll proceed with our public  
24 testimony. The next panel we will call -- the Chair  
25 will call again Anthony Gutierrez, Andre Wagner,

1 Nicolette Ardiente, Dillon Fleharty.

2 You may begin, sir.

3 DILLON FLEHARTY: Thank you, Chair,  
4 Members of the Committee.

5 I appreciate your time in allowing us  
6 to be here. My name is Dillon Fleharty. I'm here  
7 to represent myself. I'm also a candidate for  
8 Congress in Texas' 37th District here in Austin.

9 I find myself incredibly frustrated  
10 with the purpose of this. There are far more  
11 pressing needs in Texas flood relief, public school  
12 funding, making lives for Texans better. And yet,  
13 we're bickering over partisan politics coming from  
14 the President. It's incredibly frustrating.

15 I also want to find -- I also want to  
16 call out something that I find incredibly  
17 disingenuous. The Chair mentions that these maps  
18 are more compact, and he cites District 35  
19 continuously. Yet, District 11 in the new map spans  
20 from Pflugerville to west of Midland. As I'm sure  
21 that Senator Sparks would understand, the needs of  
22 Midland and the needs of Pflugerville are far  
23 different. And so saying that they're more compact,  
24 allowing for easier drivability, is a joke because  
25 it's a six-hour drive from Pflugerville to Midland.

1                   Again, this is all coming from the  
2 President of the United States. And I don't  
3 understand, as Texans, why we're all of a sudden  
4 bending the knee to the federal government. As a  
5 Texan, I believe that we're Texans, that we stand  
6 above that. And as we sit here right now, the FBI  
7 has accepted to hunt down House members of our -- of  
8 Texas, and no one seems to be crying afoul to that.

9                   Now, if the roles were reversed, if  
10 this was the Biden administration or the Obama  
11 administration, I know all of you would be screaming  
12 from the rooftops. So I look at all of you today  
13 and I ask you to reject this measure, to imagine if  
14 the roles were reversed, what would you say?  
15 Because this isn't democracy. You're not allowing  
16 us to choose our representatives. You're choosing  
17 your voters.

18                   NICOLETTE ARDIENTE: Hello. Okay.

19                   SENATOR CREIGHTON: Go ahead. Yes,  
20 you may begin.

21                   NICOLETTE ARDIENTE: Thank you, Chair  
22 and Committee Members. Good morning. My name is  
23 Nicolette Ardiente. I am here representing myself  
24 and the State Democratic Executive Committee of  
25 Congressional District 23.

1 I'm on the outskirts of San Antonio,  
2 that goes all the way to El Paso right now. And  
3 like many of you all, I do also have constituents  
4 that I report to that come to me regularly and ask  
5 me about, like, Hey, what are the issues that are  
6 happening, not only with the Democratic Party, or  
7 how can I get in contact with my representative?

8 Their issues, again, from San Antonio  
9 to El Paso, range so differently from Del Rio to  
10 Maverick County, Eagle Pass, to Crystal City,  
11 Zavala. Like, these are all rural towns, and I've  
12 heard so many folks on this diocese talk about CD 35  
13 in Bexar County. Respectfully, you do not live in  
14 Bexar County. You don't know the issues that impact  
15 us in Bexar County.

16 Yet you want to refuse to hear the  
17 public testimony of Texans who -- like working-class  
18 Texans, wish they could be here in front of you all  
19 to talk about why redistricting, rigged-districting  
20 is so impactful to them, but they're not given that  
21 opportunity. They have to work. They have to make  
22 sure their kids are getting ready for school next  
23 week, but you all are not giving every single Texan  
24 that opportunity.

25 And as the gentleman mentioned, being

1 frustrated is almost like -- that's almost like we  
2 carry it with a pride as Texas now, because we don't  
3 have the representation that we truly deserve.  
4 Again, from San Antonio to Del Rio to Eagle Pass,  
5 all over Southwest Texas, we have -- I have  
6 constituents who are constantly asking for help.

7           If you want, you could split up  
8 Congressional District 23, but nobody wants to talk  
9 about that because that's a solidly Republican  
10 district. I really want to see leadership that  
11 shows up for Texas. And I do commend all of the  
12 Texas Democrats that have fled the House, fled the  
13 Senate to do so. So thank you again for your time.

14           SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you.

15           You may begin.

16           ANDRE WAGNER: Thank you. My name is  
17 Andre Wagner. I'm also representing the Houston  
18 Black American Democrats. I come here as a resident  
19 of Congressional District 18. I've lived in  
20 Congressional District 18 for over 20 years. My  
21 mother lives in Congressional District 18. My  
22 sister lives in Congressional District 18.

23           Please do not split up our district.  
24 Do not pack and crack us like we did in Beaumont.  
25 Beaumont, for over 30 years, was a solid Democratic

1 seat that was represented by a wonderful member,  
2 built on communities of interest, of Latinos and  
3 African Americans, who voted together. But now  
4 Beaumont is split in half.

5 But in Houston, there's too many  
6 African Americans there, so instead you pack us in  
7 one district. Now, have you -- the only real thing  
8 I would ask is, instead of voting on making new  
9 lines, perhaps put a law in place, requiring our  
10 governor to call an election after our congressional  
11 representative has died.

12 I currently reside in Congressional  
13 District 18, and I have no congressional  
14 representative, and I had no -- have not had so for  
15 over five months. In Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana,  
16 and Mississippi, all Republican states, require  
17 their governor to have and hold a special election  
18 within either 60 or 100 days of a vacancy. All of  
19 them Republican states.

20 Please, if you want to do something  
21 about elections, how about requiring our governor,  
22 like four other Republican states do, to have a  
23 special election when there's a vacancy that occurs?  
24 I am now without representation. You all are  
25 talking about effective representation, and my



1 community does not have so because the governor has  
2 chosen not to call an election until November. That  
3 makes no sense to me.

4 And so please, while we are talking  
5 about having effective representation, I think right  
6 now, my family, my community, is disturbed by what's  
7 going on in Texas, by what's going on in  
8 Congressional District 18. So please implore for my  
9 family and yours for better representation. Thank  
10 you.

11 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Appreciate your  
12 testimony.

13 Members, any questions?  
14 Senator Miles?

15 SENATOR MILES: Andre, let me say  
16 thank you for being here today and thank you for the  
17 support your family has always given our community,  
18 not just me, but our community. And I think your  
19 math is a little wrong because Brother Turner has  
20 passed for five months, but we've actually gone  
21 without representation in 18, almost a year now,  
22 okay? It's been almost a year that we've gone  
23 without proper representation consistently in the  
24 18th Congressional District.

25 You should also know that, based on

1 this map that is being presented to us today, we are  
2 overpacked. They have taken Senate District 9 --  
3 Congressional District 9, which was an African  
4 American district belonging to Senator --  
5 Congressman Al Green, put 70 percent of his district  
6 into 18th Congressional District, which was already  
7 an African American district, which now makes Senate  
8 District 13 the largest African American -- the only  
9 African American and the largest African American  
10 senatorial district in the country damn near.

11 Do you all understand that? So that's  
12 packing. That's heavy packing, but they've taken  
13 away one of our voices. We had -- where we had two,  
14 we now only have one. That's some serious packing.  
15 Thank you for your testimony today.

16 And to the gentleman who first spoke,  
17 it's absolutely correct. They're not allowing  
18 constituents to choose their electeds. This is  
19 allowing electeds to choose their constituents,  
20 okay?

21 DILLON FLEHERTY: Uh-huh.

22 SEANTOR MILES: And that's where we're  
23 wrong. And as far as our -- my colleagues in the  
24 House who are being chased like runaway slaves and  
25 the only pursuit they're trying to do is protect

1 democracy, we have to stand with them. Because  
2 that's all they're doing is trying to protect  
3 democracy, and they're being chased away and they're  
4 being tracked like runaway slaves. Thank you.

5 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator King.

6 SENATOR KING: Oh, thank you,  
7 Chairman.

8 Mr. -- is it Fleharty?

9 DILLON FLEHARTY: Mr. Fleharty, yes.

10 SENATOR KING: Fleharty, thank you. I  
11 just wanted to respond to what you said about  
12 District 11 and going from West Texas from Midland.  
13 It actually goes from Ector County, which is one  
14 county to the west, into Travis County.

15 In the current map, it goes from Ector  
16 County into Bell County. And so it's almost really  
17 the same footprint. It just, instead of picking up  
18 some additional population in Bell, it dips in and  
19 picks some out of Travis. So the distance from east  
20 to west in the current map is really the same as the  
21 distance from east to west in the proposed map. And  
22 I just wanted to make -- point that out.

23 DILLON FLEHARTY: Do I have a chance  
24 to respond?

25 SENATOR KING: Certainly.

1 DILLON FLEHERTY: I just find it  
2 hypocritical --

3 SENATOR KING: Well, at the Chair's  
4 discretion, but I'm sure --

5 DILLON FLEHERTY: So you talk about  
6 this thin line that goes down I-35, but in District  
7 11, that thin line follows along the Williamson  
8 County and Travis County border. So it's the same  
9 thing, and then it balloons out into West Texas.  
10 It's a five-and-a-half, six-hour drive. And by  
11 saying that it already exists to some extent doesn't  
12 make it any better, especially when you're claiming  
13 that the 35th District.

14 SENATOR KING: But you understand in  
15 West Texas, for you to be able to get 766,000 people  
16 together, you've got -- so these numbers will be a  
17 little bit off, but I think they're still pretty  
18 close. So if you look at the I-35 corridor, even  
19 though you've got large cities, like Amarillo,  
20 Lubbock, Wichita Falls, Midland, Odessa, San Antonio  
21 west of I-35, even though -- Abilene, even though  
22 you've got all those cities, still only about  
23 14.5 percent of Texans live west of the I-35  
24 corridor.

25 And if you look at the East Texas, the

1 I-45 corridor, only about 8.5 percent of Texans live  
2 east of that. Most of the population is in the  
3 triangle. So if to comport with one-person, one-  
4 vote, which is very important because if you live in  
5 a district that's got 100,000 people and I live in  
6 one that's got 50,000 people, my vote's worth twice  
7 as much as yours. And that's why the most  
8 fundamental thing in redistricting in congressional  
9 districts is equal population.

10 So if you're going to put together a  
11 district into West Texas that's got 766,000 people  
12 in it, you've got to come east. And you're going to  
13 have to pick up the population out of Williamson or  
14 Bell or wherever it is. And so my only point was  
15 that you had said it was wrong to come all the way  
16 from Ector County to Travis County in a new map.  
17 And I was just simply saying that the footprint  
18 really hasn't changed. It's just going from Ector  
19 County into Bell County, which is just one county  
20 north of -- or two counties north of Travis County.

21 So it's still that same spread, but  
22 you just don't have any other way to draw those West  
23 Texas districts and comply with the most fundamental  
24 purpose of redistricting for one-person, one-vote.

25 DILLON FLEHARTY: That is so

1 intellectually lazy. Like --

2 SENATOR KING: No, it's not, sir.

3 DILLON FLEHARTY: Honestly, that is  
4 the most intellectually --

5 SENATOR KING: Now --

6 DILLON FLEHARTY: -- lazy amendment --

7 SENATOR KING: No. It's just --

8 DILLON FLEHARTY: -- I've heard thus  
9 far.

10 SENATOR KING: -- simpler.

11 DILLON FLEHARTY: You can drive --

12 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Sir, we're not  
13 here to debate. We certainly had Senator King, as  
14 the author, choose to make some comments based on  
15 testimony and offered you the opportunity to  
16 respond, but we have to continue along, or we're  
17 going to lose witnesses that are on time frames to  
18 have to get back home.

19 SENATOR KING: Thank you. Thank you,  
20 Mr. Chairman.

21 SENATOR CREIGHTON: So thank you for  
22 that, Mr. Chairman.

23 SENATOR KING: It's simple math.

24 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you for your  
25 testimony as well. Very much appreciated. We're

1 all listening very closely. Thank you both as well.

2 We'll call the next panel, Dr. Craig  
3 Nazor, Robert Norris, Susan McNeil, Emily Amps.  
4 Please come forward, and we'll begin with Dr. Nazor.

5 CRAIG NAZOR: Hello. My name is Dr.  
6 Nazor. I'm the Conservation Chair of the State  
7 Chapter of the Sierra Club. Cyrus Reed, our  
8 Conservation Director, has submitted some really  
9 good points here about how this redistricting  
10 negatively affects people's power to control the  
11 kind of environmental issues we have.

12 One point I'd like to say is about  
13 this compactness. District 10 has not been  
14 compacted since it was first drawn. It looks like a  
15 python that swallowed an elephant, and it continues  
16 to look that way, as highly unrepresentative.

17 Another district that I'd like to talk  
18 about. It's in the Valley, actually. It's a couple  
19 of them. It's about Corpus Christi. Corpus Christi  
20 Harbor is facing huge challenges with pollution and  
21 desalination plants and LNG plants, and there's an  
22 ethane cracker plant there now. And what's  
23 happened, even though some of the districts may look  
24 more compact, they divide Corpus Christi up now into  
25 three different areas. And one, 27, it reaches

1 around like a little snake to bite off a little  
2 Republican area -- a really Democrat area right  
3 there.

4 And what happens in Texas is, for  
5 instance, the TCEQ is not allowed to -- is -- to  
6 control accumulative impacts of pollution, just  
7 individual places. So when they built that ethane  
8 cracker plant, the TCEQ told Exxon that, No, you --  
9 that's too much air pollution. Build two plants  
10 right next to each other and okay them each for half  
11 that amount, and we can do it.

12 That was just dumb, and everybody saw  
13 through it, but now their impact, there's all this  
14 pollution, and they're communities of color, of  
15 minorities. When you -- and then you split them off  
16 into pieces, they can't even go to the EPA through  
17 their representative. This is wrong. This is  
18 wrong.

19 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you for your  
20 testimony. Thanks for being here.

21 SENATOR HINOJOSA: I have a question.

22 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Oh. Senator  
23 Hinojosa, you're recognized.

24 SENATOR HINOJOSA: Thank you,  
25 Mr. Chairman.



1                   And one of the comments I made  
2 initially when we started this hearing, I was very  
3 concerned about Nueces County, the way it's being  
4 split, I think, in three ways. And quite frankly,  
5 that's not being compact.

6                   In Nueces County, as you well know,  
7 besides we have the port, refineries, new interests  
8 coming in. We have a desal plant being constructed  
9 that will be used as a template for the rest of the  
10 Gulf Coast. So all of that is starting to  
11 completely change around, which I don't think is  
12 very good for the communities in Corpus Christi and  
13 in the Coastal Bend area when you have that type of  
14 division within the county itself and the  
15 neighborhoods. But thank you for your testimony.

16                   CRAIG NAZOR: And Sierra Club agrees  
17 with you there.

18                   SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you. Thank  
19 you, Senator.

20                   Welcome. Pull that microphone close,  
21 introduce yourself, and give us your testimony.

22                   EMILY AMPS: Thank you.

23                   Mr. Chairman, Members of the  
24 Committee, my name is Emily Amps, and I'm the  
25 Director of Politics and Policy -- excuse me -- at

1 the Texas AFL-CIO, the state's labor federation with  
2 over 250,000 affiliated members across the state,  
3 including in your districts. And I'm here to  
4 testify on their behalf and for myself.

5 When this week ends, there will have  
6 been 4 legislative hearings to discuss disaster  
7 response and how we can prevent more innocent lives  
8 from being swept away in the floods. And when this  
9 week ends, there will have been 13 legislative  
10 hearings to discuss congressional redistricting,  
11 something no Texan asked for and will further divide  
12 already fragile communities.

13 That's time that should have been  
14 spent addressing what Texans do need: Protection  
15 for damaging storms; Wages that are enough to put  
16 food on tables and roofs overheads; Access to  
17 healthcare and health insurance so our neighbors  
18 don't have to choose between their well-being and  
19 bankruptcy; Shielding workers from wage theft and  
20 writing laws that protect workers from heat death.

21 But instead we're here because state  
22 leaders would rather bow to the pressure of our  
23 President that cares more about his political future  
24 than the future of our state. Pressures that will  
25 result in silencing even more Texans, including many

1 workers, adding to the many voices already muted by  
2 the current district lines. Communities that have  
3 already been severed and neighborhoods already  
4 divided by this current map, which could be used  
5 already as a study in gerrymandering.

6 This map, though, SB 4, this bill  
7 doubles down on gerrymandering and says, Hold my  
8 beer. For example, fast-growing suburban  
9 communities, like mine in Buda, Texas, just south of  
10 Austin, currently in Congressional District 21,  
11 already sliced and diced and put into districts with  
12 rural communities that we have little in common  
13 with. I thought it couldn't get worse. I was  
14 proven wrong.

15 If this passes and is signed into law,  
16 my house will now be on the edge of Congressional  
17 District 27, a district that will go from Hays and  
18 Travis counties to the Gulf of Mexico and Matagorda  
19 County. On a good day with no traffic, and those of  
20 us in Austin know there is no good days with no  
21 traffic, that's about a three-hour and ten-minute  
22 drive. Doesn't sound very compact to me. And  
23 please, someone explain to me why a fast-growing  
24 suburb of the 11th largest city in the United States  
25 has in common with Palacios, Texas. And of course,

1 it's a rhetorical question because we all know the  
2 answer is very little.

3 So I urge you, as you move forward,  
4 please remember that your actions during this  
5 special session will have a real impact on real  
6 people. And there are real issues that need to be  
7 addressed. And also remember that you do not have  
8 to pass a map. Please don't forget that.

9 SENATOR CREIGHTON: And thanks for  
10 your testimony.

11 Ms. McNeil, welcome. Get close to  
12 that microphone and introduce yourself. And go  
13 ahead.

14 SUSAN MCNEIL: Okay. My name is  
15 Susan McNeil, and I live in Pflugerville, District  
16 17. I'm here representing myself. And you all have  
17 heard about the racial disparities and the  
18 legalities of this map. So I'm going to focus on  
19 what is actually transpiring with this map. It is  
20 an authoritarian attack on our democracy.

21 Our democracy is already fractured,  
22 with Congress shirking their responsibilities and  
23 not representing the American people and ceding  
24 their power to the Oval Office. If you approve this  
25 map, it will be one more nail in the coffin of

1 democracy. The felon in the White House states that  
2 he deserves five more seats because he won Texas,  
3 the largest majority percentage ever in the history  
4 of the United States. That is a lie. So he does  
5 not deserve the five seats.

6 I, for one, will never ever bow to  
7 tyranny. Like the old adage says, "Give me liberty  
8 or give me death." And you all can take that to the  
9 bank. I implore you do not destroy our freedoms and  
10 democracy. And if you're scared of the felon, quit.  
11 Leave. Vamoose. We do not want or need scared  
12 politicians.

13 And lastly, do not force the American  
14 people into an armed revolution because I fear, if  
15 you continue on the same path, this is where we are  
16 headed.

17 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you for your  
18 testimony.

19 SUSAN MCNEIL: Thank you.

20 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you.

21 Mr. Norris, welcome. Pull that  
22 microphone closer. Mr. Norris, introduce yourself  
23 and go ahead.

24 ROBERT NORRIS: Thank you, Mr.  
25 Chairman.

1 I'm Robert Norris, representing myself  
2 and opposed to Senate Bill 4. I want my grandkids  
3 and all others to benefit from a responsive  
4 government that promotes the best interests of our  
5 citizens. I want them to benefit from public  
6 schools that help develop intelligent and kind  
7 students. President Trump wants this legislature to  
8 adopt a new congressional map that will allow him to  
9 continue favoring wealthy and powerful Republicans.  
10 These are the same people who want to privatize and  
11 undermine our public schools.

12 My grandkids, like me, have lived most  
13 of their lives in Travis County. The map you're  
14 considering will redraw our local districts with the  
15 result that our excellent Congressmen Lloyd Doggett  
16 and Greg Casar are less likely to be elected in the  
17 future. These congressmen are working to promote  
18 democracy and fairness and oppose cuts to our legacy  
19 safety net programs, like Medicaid and food stamps.

20 Also, communities of color in other  
21 parts of Texas will lose vital representation if  
22 this map is adopted. As you've heard, Texas has a  
23 shameful history of disenfranchising blacks and  
24 Hispanics, which Senate Bill 4 will continue. The  
25 map before you will have an adverse impact on many

1 of the state's grandkids and everyday citizens, so I  
2 definitely oppose it.

3 And I applaud the House Democrats who  
4 are doing the heavy lifting to thwart the Trump and  
5 Abbott power grab by going to other states. I'm  
6 finished.

7 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thanks for your  
8 testimony.

9 Senators, any questions for any of our  
10 witnesses on this panel?

11 (No audible response)

12 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Well, thank you.  
13 You're excused. Thanks for your testimony.

14 I call Anthony Gutierrez, Dr. Susana  
15 Carranza, David Wheeler, Nick Mollberg. Looking for  
16 Anthony Gutierrez, Dr. Susana Carranza, David  
17 Wheeler, Nick Mollberg.

18 (No audible response)

19 SENATOR CREIGHTON: I call  
20 Carrie King. Is Carrie here wishing to testify?  
21 Carrie King? Just give me -- Francesca Fraga Leahy.  
22 Is Francesca here, wishing to testify? Wow. Come  
23 on down. Welcome.

24 Welcome to each of you. When you get  
25 situated, we'll start over here.

1 Francesca, pull the microphone close,  
2 introduce yourself, and give us your testimony.  
3 Welcome.

4 FRANCESCA LEAHY: Good morning,  
5 Chairman King and Vice Chair Creighton and Committee  
6 Members. My name is Francesca Fraga Leahy, and I'm  
7 representing myself in opposition to SB 4.

8 Alongside the vast majority of Texans  
9 whom you all have heard from and from those whom you  
10 have not, I'm vehemently opposed to SB 4 because the  
11 proposed map and this process are wrong from a  
12 moral, logical, and a Texan perspective. I'm proud  
13 to be here today as a lifelong Texan because three  
14 generations ago, my Mexican and Italian great-  
15 grandparents immigrated to America. Two generations  
16 ago, my grandparents raised their families on the  
17 west side of San Antonio and in South Waco. And my  
18 parents, small business owners, Chicano activists,  
19 and lifelong community advocates, raised me and my  
20 siblings in Waco, Texas.

21 I went to college in Austin, taught  
22 middle school in Rio Grande Valley, and now own a  
23 home with my husband and three kids in South Central  
24 Austin and current Congressional District 37. I  
25 know Texas values. And as a former social studies



1 teacher, I know that the Texas Constitution states,  
2 "All political power is inherent in the people and  
3 all free governments are founded on their authority  
4 and instituted for their benefit."

5               This outrageous mid-district --  
6 mid-decade redistricting move by the governor and  
7 the current DOJ, enforced by the unpopular  
8 authoritarian in the White House, to increase  
9 Republican representation in the U.S. House by  
10 taking existing districts away from communities of  
11 color, including my friends and neighbors in the  
12 current District 35 in East Austin, just a few miles  
13 away from where I live, is shameful.

14               Sin vergüenza (Spanish), as my  
15 abuelita used to say. This process has laid bare  
16 the pitiful reality that today's statewide electeds,  
17 politicians part of a Republican party that has held  
18 power in this state for most of my life, are  
19 behaving as if our community's voices and votes are  
20 for sale to out-of-state donors and corrupt  
21 interests. That my family's tax dollars are being  
22 wastefully mismanaged by incompetent state  
23 leadership that has chosen to kneel to a wannabe  
24 king.

25               It's not a game, is it? I urge you to

1 stop this undemocratic, ridiculous political  
2 maneuver. Do not pass SB 4.

3 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you for your  
4 testimony.

5 Pull the microphone close. Welcome.  
6 Introduce yourself and go ahead.

7 CARRIE KING: Thank you.

8 Hello, my name is Carrie King, and I  
9 am testifying on behalf of myself and against this  
10 proposed redistricting.

11 Fair and equal representation, the  
12 crown jewel of our democracy. That is what we are  
13 here to protect. However, as long as the ability to  
14 get away with racial gerrymandering remains, we will  
15 stay stuck in a loop repeating a sad and shameful  
16 cycle of domination and oppression.

17 Our country's racist legacy started  
18 with the colonization and near obliteration of  
19 native peoples. Then came the saga of slavery,  
20 answered by the Civil War and Jim Crow. The Civil  
21 Rights Movement exposed the pervasive racism that  
22 continues to plague our society to this day, but  
23 people of color finally secured the Voting Rights  
24 Act.

25 Unfortunately, over the past 60 years

1 to the day yesterday, the Voting Rights Act has been  
2 whittled down slowly but surely, and now today we  
3 see how brazen and out in the open white supremacy  
4 has become with this, Let's go, Brandon, stickers on  
5 trucks and neo-Nazis marching in New Hampshire. Not  
6 to mention ICE out there, racially profiling and  
7 spreading doom and fear across our nation.

8                   We have to show up with the moral  
9 fiber it takes to meet this moment. We have to  
10 choose love and kindness. Members, it's up to you  
11 to steer our great experiment in representative  
12 democracy back towards equity and justice. Reject  
13 this DC-ordered redistricting plan and right our  
14 sinking ship. Turn away from fear of losing  
15 personal power. Look deeply into and open your  
16 hearts to the space where courage defeats  
17 intimidation. Our democracy is counting on all of  
18 you to choose integrity over corruption.

19                   Texas House Democrat representatives  
20 who've broken quorum, thank you so much from the  
21 bottom of our hearts. Thank you for honoring the  
22 non-violent legacy of civil rights warriors who've  
23 come before you. The likes of Jordan, King, and  
24 Lewis, who are smiling down upon you. Thank you for  
25 the good trouble.

1 I'm here to add my voice to the  
2 powerful message we heard from Senator Miles here  
3 today. And to demonstrate to my two sons, who are  
4 present in this room, that when we see injustice, we  
5 must stand up and fight back. When we do, love  
6 wins. Thank you.

7 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you for your  
8 testimony.

9 Welcome. Pull that microphone over if  
10 you will, and introduce yourself and give us your  
11 testimony.

12 DAVID WHEELER: Thank you.

13 My name is David Wheeler. I'm  
14 representing myself. I'm speaking today in  
15 opposition of SB 4. This is a bill that only serves  
16 to undercut our democracy and ratchet up the  
17 tensions between parties. It is a power grab, as  
18 has been acknowledged.

19 Last week, more than 93 percent of the  
20 more than 500 people who testified or dropped cards  
21 concerning HB 4 stated that they oppose this action.  
22 From Senator Miles' note today, the percentage is  
23 98 percent against today in testimony. This is a  
24 call to try to manipulate the congressional map for  
25 party gain, not for the good of the people or for

1 the state. The brave House members who broke quorum  
2 have offered you an opportunity to take a step back  
3 and reconsider this rash action.

4 Have the courage, integrity, and will  
5 to vote no and keep this awful bill with respect  
6 from leaving your committee. Voting yes will only  
7 serve to undermine faith in our government and faith  
8 in you. If you will not hear my words, I can only  
9 ask that you heed this warning from George  
10 Washington in his farewell address: "However  
11 political parties may now and then answer popular  
12 ends, they are likely in the course of time and  
13 things to become potent engines by which cunning,  
14 ambitious, and unprincipled men will be enabled to  
15 subvert the power of the people and to usurp for  
16 themselves the reins of the government destroying  
17 afterwards the very engines which is -- have lifted  
18 them to unjust dominion."

19 The time that Washington warned us  
20 against is now. You have the power to step back  
21 from this precipice. Senators, please heed this  
22 warning from our first president. Serve democracy  
23 over party. Serve state over party. Our state.  
24 This bill undercuts our great experiment. Vote  
25 against SB 4. Thank you.

1                   SENATOR CREIGHTON: And thank you,  
2 Mr. Wheeler, for your testimony.

3                   Dr. Carranza, welcome. You know how  
4 to do this. Get that microphone close, introduce  
5 yourself, and go ahead.

6                   SUSANA CARRANZA: I am Dr. Susana  
7 Carranza, representing myself, and I oppose this  
8 horrible bill and this entire rushed process. The  
9 Chair, Mr. King, has claimed this was a wonderful  
10 process, citing the early mapless hearings. Well,  
11 being forced to mark neutral when so many of us said  
12 hell no does not sound like a fair process to me.  
13 Texas do not want this rushed process or this map.

14                   Yet, you filed the same exact map that  
15 will illegally break communities of color, of  
16 interest, and gerrymander cities, and receive  
17 overwhelming rejection last Friday at the House  
18 hearings. The Chair also mentioned the horrors of  
19 the previous administration as a motivation for the  
20 new districts. You mean like ICE pulling people out  
21 of cars because they look brown? Well, that was not  
22 the previous administration. This is happening  
23 right now.

24                   I'm a naturalized citizen who has  
25 called the U.S. home for more than half my life. I

1 was born in Brazil during peak dictatorship when  
2 people were being disappeared. Kind of sounds  
3 similar. There's a movie, "I'm Still Here," and you  
4 might learn something from it. As a little kid, I  
5 went to pro-democracy rallies with my older  
6 siblings. I was lucky to see the transition out of  
7 dictatorship.

8 Right now, you all with this map are  
9 handing down on a silver platter our democracy to  
10 Trump. It's not too late. I support House members  
11 who are breaking quorum to defend Texans. And if  
12 you really want to learn from history, you're going  
13 to withdraw this map right now and switch the focus  
14 to flood because if you say, well, maybe if they  
15 come back, we'll work on things. Well, work on  
16 floods, all right? Do the right thing. You have  
17 time.

18 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thanks for your  
19 testimony. Thanks, Dr. Carranza, for your  
20 testimony.

21 Senator King -- Chairman King, you're  
22 recognized.

23 SENATOR KING: Oh, thank you, Doctor,  
24 and thanks for being here today. Just wanted to  
25 make sure of something. You said you were required

1 to vote or to mark neutral when you registered?

2 SUSANA CARRANZA: On the mapless  
3 hearings, like last week.

4 SENATOR KING: Okay. But today, you  
5 were able to register your position.

6 SUSANA CARRANZA: Oh, yes.

7 SENATOR KING: Okay. Just wanted to  
8 make sure the registration process was working  
9 right.

10 SUSANA CARRANZA: Yes, it is. Can I  
11 continue -- I'm saying that you're using the  
12 previous hearings to say this was open and fair, but  
13 people could not officially say they opposed before,  
14 while they clearly opposed during the Senate  
15 hearings. Their words clearly opposed.

16 So -- and today, I understand I marked  
17 against. I have been here a time or many --

18 SENATOR KING: I know you have.

19 SUSANA CARRANZA: -- as some of you  
20 have known. But having to mark neutral last week  
21 felt really, really horrible because I was not  
22 neutral at all.

23 SENATOR KING: And just so everybody  
24 understands how that works, anytime there's not --  
25 someone mentioned the flood hearings. In the flood



1 hearings, if you registered to testify, you had to  
2 test -- you had to register neutral because there's  
3 no bill before the committee under consideration, so  
4 that's why you would mark neutral.

5           The same thing was true in the  
6 redistricting hearings before there was a map.  
7 That's exactly why we're having public testimony  
8 today is because we have a map and we wanted people  
9 to be able to register they're -- that they're for  
10 it, neutral on it, or against it. So that's why  
11 that occurred earlier.

12           But now that there is a map, a bill,  
13 that anyone who registers to testify can register  
14 their opposition to it. So just -- that's kind of  
15 how that works for the general public's knowledge.  
16 And I know you know that, Doctor.

17           SUSANA CARRANZA: I understand the  
18 process, yes.

19           SENATOR KING: Thank you.

20           SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you,  
21 Mr. Chairman.

22           Senators, any other questions for our  
23 witnesses on this panel?

24           (No audible response)

25           SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you for

1 being here. You're excused.

2 And for the benefit of those listening  
3 who may not be familiar with the process, anyone  
4 who's watched knows that every witness was allowed  
5 and encouraged to fully express their opinion for or  
6 against anything, and no one -- not even -- no one  
7 has even suggested that a registration of neutral on  
8 the topic was a support or anything like that for  
9 the redistricting process.

10 And again, folks familiar with the  
11 process know, but we would -- we sure wouldn't want  
12 someone listening in who doesn't know how that  
13 system works to be misled.

14 So with that, thank you. Chair again  
15 calls Nick Mollberg. I called Nick on the last  
16 panel. I want to make sure everybody has a chance.  
17 Also, I'll call again Anthony Gutierrez, Lauren  
18 Pena, Melody Tremallo. I know there are over --  
19 come on down. Have a seat. I know there are  
20 overflow rooms. We'll give folks time to get here.

21 Also looking for Becky Bullard. I'll  
22 call Jo M. Good. I'll call Emily Yemington.  
23 Kourtney Benton. I'll call Kourtney Benton.  
24 Sarah Beck. Sarah Beck. John McKiernan-Gonzalez.  
25 And if I -- oh, please come on down. And if I

1 called your name and you entered the room, come on  
2 down. We'll have a seat for you. And we'll  
3 continue to call witnesses. I want everyone to have  
4 a chance.

5 I'll call David Chincanchan. David  
6 Chincanchan. I'll call Sarah Cinco. Sarah Cinco.

7 Yes, Mr. Chairman?

8 SENATOR KING: Oh, and excuse me for  
9 interrupting.

10 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Please.

11 SENATOR KING: But I just want to make  
12 sure everybody is comfortable out there. It's kind  
13 of freezing up here. Is everybody -- anybody  
14 freezing out there or too hot? Yeah, that's what I  
15 was afraid of. We'll see if we can't get them to  
16 crank it up a couple of degrees. I apologize for  
17 that.

18 SENATOR CREIGHTON: And if I called  
19 your name, we have a seat for you. Please come on  
20 down. And I'm going to call a couple more names so  
21 that folks can be making their way into this room  
22 because we're going to have you on the next panel.

23 So for the next panel, we'll be  
24 looking for Dr. Nancy Semin, Denisce Palacios. And  
25 of course, anyone who I called before, we'll get you

1 on the next one. So thank you for working with us.

2 I want to make sure everyone gets to testify.

3 And we'll start over here. So when  
4 you're ready, pull that microphone close, introduce  
5 yourself, and give us your testimony.

6 EMILY YEMINGTON: Hi, all. My name is  
7 Emily Yemington, and I'm representing myself against  
8 redistricting. I was born and raised here in  
9 Austin, Texas. I'm a biomedical engineer, newly  
10 graduated from UT Austin, Hook'em, and I'm just  
11 about to start my PhD.

12 This bill is obviously a result of the  
13 DOJ asking for five more seats. This isn't an  
14 accidental, oops, I redistricted Texas and  
15 accidentally found exactly the number of seats  
16 Epstein's bestie asked for. And this is not just  
17 scrounging through the couch cushions for some loose  
18 votes. You're being obtuse if you think one vote  
19 before the redistricting is equal to one after.

20 You're literally redrawing the map to  
21 dilute communities you disagree with. If this were  
22 truly a body of representatives, an independent  
23 third party would be redrawing these districts by  
24 community interest and need. Anything else is a  
25 blatant admission that your ideas and policies are

1 not good enough to faithfully convert Texans, even  
2 with the currently gerrymandered map.

3 But Epstein's best friend is clearly  
4 scared of what non-gerrymandered voters might think.  
5 Are you? Let's not pretend that you're not aware of  
6 the context of this redistricting or that there's  
7 any good faith redrawing on behalf of the people who  
8 testified at previous hearings. Saying that the map  
9 is race-blind does not change the fact that it will  
10 disproportionately suppress brown and black  
11 communities.

12 The intent may not be racist, but it  
13 doesn't really matter because the effect is racist.  
14 Either way, it's clear that most Texans don't want  
15 this. I was taught growing up that the Texas  
16 Capitol, this building, stands taller than the one  
17 in D.C. We fly our state flag at the same height as  
18 our country. We are the Lone Star State. For  
19 better or worse, I was taught that I'm a Texan first  
20 and an American second.

21 I ask you all to be Texans first, like  
22 the brave House representatives who are breaking  
23 quorum right now. Thank you for your time.

24 SENATOR CREIGHTON: And thank you for  
25 your testimony.

1 Welcome. Introduce yourself and give  
2 us your testimony. Go ahead.

3 KOURTNEY BENTON: Okay. Good morning.  
4 My name is Kourtney Benton, lawyer and community  
5 advocate. I'm a resident of Austin, Texas, and I  
6 stay in Congressional District 37. I stand here in  
7 opposition of the redistricting and the proposed  
8 Texas Congressional Map SB 4.

9 So my question today is, what is  
10 democracy? And where did our democracy go?  
11 According to Cornell Law School's Legal Information  
12 Institute, democracy is a system of government in  
13 which the right to govern lies with the people.  
14 Democracy is valued for promoting political  
15 stability, individual freedoms, and accountability  
16 in governance, allowing for peaceful transfers of  
17 power and providing mechanisms to address grievances  
18 and injustices.

19 As a black resident of Austin, I don't  
20 feel safe. I don't feel safe because of the results  
21 of what this map will do to suppress votes and  
22 voices of people whose vote and voice matters. With  
23 the proposed Texas Congressional Map, this race-  
24 based racial gerrymandering is in play and  
25 negatively impacts many people in many communities,

1 especially our black and brown communities,  
2 something that has gone on for years.

3           It was mentioned that two objectives  
4 were used in making this map: Compactness and five  
5 Republican seats. Although there may have not been  
6 a racial intention, that is not the case what will  
7 result from this map. So now that you know and have  
8 heard the testimonies and see that there will be  
9 less representation for people of color,  
10 specifically black and brown communities, what will  
11 you do next? Will you care? Will you do anything?  
12 When is enough enough? I always hated the word  
13 gerrymandering, but today I understand what it means  
14 more than ever.

15           I am sick and tired of being sick and  
16 tired. One day, I know the struggle will change.  
17 There's got to be a change, not only for Texas, not  
18 only for people in the United States, but people all  
19 over the world. However, the very right here that  
20 I'm sitting here fighting for a fundamental right as  
21 boundaries around me get manipulated at the cost of  
22 our citizens, the very right that had people --

23           SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you for your  
24 testimony.

25           KOURTNEY BENTON: -- who look like me

1 sacrifice their lives through literal blood --

2 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Ma'am --

3 KOURTNEY BENTON: -- sweat and tears.

4 SENATOR CREIGHTON: -- thank you for  
5 your testimony. There are many folks waiting in  
6 line, so we're trying to stay close to those time  
7 limits. Thank you for your testimony.

8 Welcome. Get close to the mic,  
9 introduce yourself, and go ahead.

10 MELODY TREMALLO: Howdy. My name is  
11 Melody Tremallo, and here we are again talking about  
12 shit that doesn't matter, like SB 7 or  
13 redistricting. And yet again --

14 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Melody.

15 MELODY TREMALLO: -- I'm asking why we  
16 aren't talking --

17 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Melody, if you use  
18 profanity, you'll be excused. You may continue.

19 MELODY TREMALLO: Understood. I am  
20 yet again asking why we aren't talking about the  
21 flood or flood relief. I am currently without a car  
22 and have been since June. I am here because I am  
23 borrowing a car from a friend. On the 5th of July,  
24 I woke up to news that the floods were worse than  
25 anybody anticipated.



1                   On the 6th of July, I joined up with  
2 individuals and non-profits to provide assistance to  
3 search and recovery and cleanup teams remotely. I  
4 acted as a central hub of information and  
5 coordination. Without any funding, training, or  
6 experience, I found a way to help my fellow Texans.  
7 All of you sitting here before me have far more  
8 money, influence, and power than myself. So I ask,  
9 which of you have spent 15 hours a day directing  
10 food and supplies?

11                   And are -- and I understand that you  
12 all are lawmakers, so I don't understand what kind  
13 of time commitment your job requires or entails.  
14 But you all can certainly prioritize what gets  
15 heard. So why are you spending so much time on  
16 redistricting instead of flood relief and  
17 prevention?

18                   Senator Miles was very right. He --  
19 Washington asked for five more seats, and you all  
20 are more than happy to give it to them. I've never  
21 known Texas to bow down to the federal government,  
22 but the majority of you all on this committee not  
23 only entertain that request, you all are actively  
24 rolling out the red carpet for it. So what changed?

25                   You all decided to fall in line with

1 fascism. Call it what it is. This benefits the  
2 bottom line of the Republican Party. This move  
3 keeps you in power because you know that if you wait  
4 for the proper time to redistrict the next census,  
5 it is too long for you all to retain control of  
6 Texas.

7 I worked myself ragged for an entire  
8 month. I've watched hearings from victims of the  
9 flood from Kerrville to Sandy Creek. They still  
10 need help. They need debris cleanup. They need  
11 trash hauled away. They need long-term housing.  
12 They need funerary services. They need grief  
13 counseling and trauma therapy. Quite frankly, they  
14 need help, and you insist on redistricting.

15 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you for your  
16 testimony.

17 MELODY TREMALLO: Our neighbors don't  
18 need a new map.

19 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you for your  
20 testimony. Yeah. You're -- thanks for being here.  
21 We want to make sure everybody gets to testify.

22 Ms. Good, pull that microphone close,  
23 introduce yourself, and go ahead.

24 JO GOOD: I'm here to say this again  
25 because somehow the urgency still isn't being heard.

1 Our communities are in crisis after flooding.  
2 Families are grieving and desperate for help. You  
3 know, the reason we had a special session. What are  
4 we doing, redistricting again in the middle of  
5 disaster recovery? And let's be honest, this isn't  
6 just bad timing.

7 Don't whisper with your neighbor. It  
8 is morally wrong and fundamentally unjust because  
9 this redistricting process is not just bureaucratic,  
10 it's racist. These maps erase representation on  
11 purpose. They silence the voices of the communities  
12 who are hurting the most right now. Communities  
13 that are overrepresented in need, underrepresented  
14 in this building, and clearly not the priority of  
15 the moment.

16 It's not leadership, it's abandonment.  
17 And it is rooted not only in political greed, but in  
18 racial injustice. This state should be mobilizing  
19 every resource to rebuild, not redraw. So I'll say  
20 it again louder, clearer: Redistricting can wait.  
21 Racist redistricting should be stopped permanently.

22 What cannot wait is flood relief and  
23 the people that need it. Do your job. Help the  
24 people, all of them.

25 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Ms. Good, thanks

1 for your testimony. And I recognize you. I used  
2 your name, but I didn't ask you to give us your  
3 name, just so it's on the record.

4 JO GOOD: Jo Good.

5 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you very  
6 much.

7 Senator King, you have the panel.

8 SENATOR KING: Oh, thank you. And  
9 just several people have mentioned the flood or  
10 other things that are issues -- prominent issues  
11 before Texas. We always have prominent issues  
12 because we're a big, fast-growing state.

13 As you know, the legislature always is  
14 working on multiple issues at a time whenever we're  
15 in session. And right now, I think there's 16 items  
16 that the governor has put on the call for  
17 consideration in this special session.

18 JO GOOD: What's the most important?

19 SENATOR KING: And -- ma'am, let --  
20 please let me finish. I --

21 JO GOOD: I'm sorry.

22 SENATOR KING: That's all right. So  
23 the point I was trying to make is that I want to  
24 make sure everybody understood, and the public as  
25 well is that, without any question, the flood

1 response is the most important issue before this  
2 legislative session. That said, we have a committee  
3 working feverishly on that. And, in fact, you will  
4 see bills on the floor of the Senate and, if the  
5 Democrats return, on the floor of the House very  
6 soon that try to address that.

7 We even had an on-site Senate hearing  
8 in Kerrville. I guess that was last week.

9 JO GOOD: (Indiscernible)

10 SENATOR KING: Ma'am --

11 JO GOOD: -- go and sign an executive  
12 order.

13 SENATOR KING: Ma'am, we've already  
14 had a hearing on-site in Kerrville to gather  
15 information directly. So that committee is moving  
16 forward aggressively. That legislation is prepared  
17 and being passed out on the -- in the Senate  
18 committee. It'll be on the floor before long at  
19 all. Hopefully, the House Democrats will have  
20 returned and we can pass legislation on the flood as  
21 well out of the House and get it to where it needs  
22 to be.

23 But we're also working on other issues  
24 while we're here, on reducing property taxes and a  
25 number of other matters. And so this committee is

1 assigned specifically the responsibility of  
2 redistricting. It is the only issue that we can  
3 work on. But the other Senators are working on  
4 flood and the other matters that have been brought  
5 up before. We're very good at multitasking, and  
6 that is the way we always operate, multiple issues  
7 at a time through our committees.

8                   So we're doing our job. The other  
9 committees are doing their job. And we'll have  
10 flood response bills on the floor of the Senate  
11 quite likely next week for consideration. So that  
12 is all moving forward. Just wanted to make sure  
13 everyone understood the process. So thank you.

14                   SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator King,  
15 thank you.

16                   Senator Miles, you have the panel.

17                   SENATOR MILES: Thank you, sir.

18                   Ma'am, I want to thank all of you  
19 ladies for testifying. I'm sorry I didn't hear them  
20 all.

21                   But, Ms. Good, did I hear you say  
22 racist rigged-districting?

23                   JO GOOD: Oh, hell yeah.

24                   SENATOR MILES: Oh, okay. Thank you,  
25 ma'am.

1 JO GOOD: Oh, I'm sorry.

2 SENATOR MILES: Thank you.

3 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senators, any  
4 other questions for our witnesses on this panel?

5 (No audible response)

6 SENATOR CREIGHTON: We thank you each  
7 for being here. You're excused.

8 We'll continue to call names, and  
9 we're calling names multiple times, so that folks  
10 have an opportunity, as they maybe have stepped out  
11 for personal matters or maybe in an overflow room.  
12 So for the next panel, we're looking for  
13 Anthony Gutierrez, Nick Mollberg, Lauren Pena,  
14 Becky Bullard, Sarah Beck, David Chincanchan,  
15 John McKiernan-Gonzalez, Sarah Cinco, Dr. Nancy  
16 Semin.

17 NANCY SEMIN: It's Semin.

18 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Semin. Thank you.  
19 S-e-m-i-n. And Denisce Palacios. Is Denisce here?  
20 Rocio Fierro-Perez, Rocio Fierro-Perez, Daniela  
21 Silva, Daniela Silva, Amy Kamp. Is Amy Kamp with  
22 us, wishing to testify?

23 Welcome. I hope I'm not the first one  
24 to mispronounce your name, but I'll try to get it  
25 right next time.

1 NANCY SEMIN: It's Dr. Nancy Semin  
2 Lingo. Thank you. I'm here to testify. I  
3 represent myself, and I came down as a citizen of  
4 the state to look you -- mostly you gentlemen. I  
5 know Paxton conveniently cut out. I'm here to look  
6 you in the eyes and tell you, and you all can look  
7 back at me. Hello, Senator Hughes.

8 This is a power grab. We see it for  
9 what it is. It's a power grab, pure and simple.  
10 You're not fooling anybody. And, Mr. Hughes, I had  
11 to listen to you earlier make arguments that a high  
12 school debate student could quash. What about-ism?  
13 What about-ism? What about Indiana? What about  
14 California? I don't care about that.

15 And, Mr. King, I say the same thing to  
16 you. You had the audacity to bring up Baker v.  
17 Carr, although you didn't say it. One-person, one-  
18 vote. And yet you are stripping that away from me.

19 And I'd like to say one final thing to  
20 you, gentlemen. I know that you guys sit back there  
21 and you're smug and you're self-confident and you  
22 don't really care what Democratic voters in this  
23 state have to say. You don't fear us. But I want  
24 to tell you something. I'm a student of history.  
25 I'm a professor of history. And what will swallow



1 you whole is MAGA. This revolution will eat you,  
2 and it will put your neck under the guillotine.

3 And I strongly advise you to stop now  
4 in the interest of democracy. You're not safe. You  
5 can't hide. You think you're doing Trump's bidding.  
6 You're not. I'm done. Thank you.

7 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Okay. Please,  
8 proceed.

9 DAVID CHINCANCHAN: Thank you. Good  
10 morning. My name is David Chincanchan, and I serve  
11 as the policy director for Workers Defense Action  
12 Fund. I'm here today to speak in opposition to the  
13 blatantly racist congressional map that you're  
14 proposing.

15 Committee members, there's a national  
16 historic landmark in Selma, Alabama. You may have  
17 heard of it. It's called the Edmund Pettus Bridge.  
18 It's named after a pro-slavery white supremacist.  
19 Sixty years ago, it was the site of Bloody Sunday,  
20 an astonishing event where civil rights advocates,  
21 including the late Representative John Lewis,  
22 peacefully marched in support of voting rights.  
23 They were met with brutality and violence,  
24 perpetrated by Alabama State Troopers under the  
25 orders of Governor George Wallace.

1 As bystanders disturbingly cheered on,  
2 the state troopers attacked the protesters with tear  
3 gas. And as children, men, and women ran gasping  
4 for air, state troopers on horseback chased them  
5 down, dragged them to the ground, beat them with  
6 billy clubs, nightsticks, and plastic tubes wrapped  
7 with barbed wire. That was the heavy cost Americans  
8 paid for our voting rights. People gave sweat,  
9 tears, blood, even their freedom or their lives to  
10 ensure that we were meeting the promise of  
11 democracy.

12 Their courage galvanized Americans,  
13 forced our country to reckon with the soul-rotting  
14 disease of Jim Crow, segregation, poll taxes,  
15 literacy tests, and the other injustices aimed at  
16 suppressing the vote and voices of black Americans.  
17 This contributed significantly to the passage of the  
18 Voting Rights Act of 1965.

19 Now, by allowing Trump to take over  
20 Texas, by refusing to prioritize flood relief and  
21 disaster recovery, by dismissing the needs of  
22 working Texans and their families, and instead using  
23 this special session to advance maps that pack and  
24 crack communities of color to silence their voices,  
25 you are diminishing the history, struggle, and

1 achievements of the Civil Rights Movement and  
2 undermining our democracy. You are pulling and  
3 dragging us back into a shameful era of  
4 discrimination that we can no longer tolerate or  
5 abide by.

6 Members, we need our leaders to put  
7 Texas first, not to play political games with our  
8 rights and our futures.

9 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you.  
10 Appreciate your testimony.

11 You can begin.

12 AMY KAMP: Good afternoon. My name is  
13 Amy Kamp. I'm the communications director for  
14 Ground Game Texas, and I'm here representing my  
15 organization and myself in opposition to SB 4 and  
16 the proposed redistricting overall.

17 Ground Game Texas works to engage and  
18 empower voters across Texas by putting popular  
19 policies up to a vote using the tool of municipal  
20 ballot initiatives. We've seen over and over in our  
21 work that when people feel like their vote counts,  
22 they turn out. Our ballot initiatives engage  
23 first-time and infrequent voters, including young  
24 voters and voters of color, because they know when  
25 they vote, their vote will be counted.

1                   This redistricting farce aims to do  
2 the opposite. It continues the dirty work Texas  
3 leadership has done for decades, innovating ways to  
4 suppress and erase our voting rights, especially the  
5 rights of black and Latino voters. As Texas goes,  
6 so goes the nation, indeed.

7                   I've heard loud and clear from  
8 Senator King that he fully intends to ignore the  
9 testimony offered here today if it contradicts his  
10 goal of passing this shameful map with all due  
11 speed. I don't understand why someone would choose  
12 to devote their one wild and precious life to ruling  
13 over an unwilling people by rigging the game.

14                  As many witnesses have testified  
15 today, we could be devoting the full force of our  
16 efforts this special session to preventing another  
17 unnecessary tragedy like the recent flood deaths and  
18 devastation, much of it due to government negligence  
19 and incompetence. Instead, you choose to waste our  
20 time with this pathetic demonstration of servility  
21 to Donald Trump.

22                  If you pass this map, it will  
23 certainly make it harder for each Texan's vote to  
24 count. But to echo Senator Miles, we will not be  
25 cowed by this attempt to silence us. We will

1 continue to organize, educate, and empower voters  
2 until we have a Texas that works for all Texans.  
3 Thank you.

4 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Appreciate your  
5 testimony.

6 Ms. Pena?

7 LAUREN PENA: Hi. My name is Lauren  
8 Pena. I live in one of the first housing projects  
9 ever implemented in the United States. It just went  
10 through gentrification. I'm actually walking  
11 distance across from the Capitol here.

12 My community's civil rights are being  
13 severely violated, so much so that I am the pro se  
14 litigant for a class action lawsuit against the City  
15 of Austin and the Housing Authority of the City of  
16 Austin. I want to read five quotes that I took  
17 today from people speaking up here.

18 "Your vote is your weapon."

19 "We don't have the representation we  
20 deserve to have."

21 "Our taxpayer funds are being  
22 wastefully mismanaged."

23 "People of color finally have the  
24 right to vote."

25 "The effects have gone on for years."

1 Erase representation on purpose. Silence their  
2 voices when we need them the most."

3           These were all said by Democrats being  
4 represented by Democrats. So that's why I am a  
5 conservative running for United States Congress,  
6 living inside federal housing projects, because the  
7 gentrification of public housing is detrimental for  
8 society, and I am sick and tired of hearing paid  
9 lobbyists sit up here and tell you how they need to  
10 vote when they don't know what it's like to live in  
11 the brown and black communities. I live there right  
12 now.

13           Right now, I urge all of you to accept  
14 my request to let's go on a field trip. Let's go  
15 around to the projects here in Austin, Texas. I can  
16 probably guarantee your safety, no problem. We can  
17 do it in groups, however you want to do it. I'd  
18 like to do it with the Senators and the House  
19 representatives. Why don't you guys come see how  
20 these policies that you have made, implemented, and  
21 severely mismanaged on the Democrat side, because  
22 again, these are all Democrat policies that are  
23 harming my community?

24           Now, as far as this bill, I am  
25 completely all in for it. You know why? Because

1 either way, it doesn't matter if I'm running in 37  
2 or 35. I have so many eligible non-voters that  
3 haven't voted in 40 years that are going to vote for  
4 me. So you guys are screwed, okay? I'm going to  
5 take this seat. There's nothing you can do about  
6 it.

7 Now, I would like to say that this new  
8 map is going to encompass all the housing projects  
9 all around the city of Austin. So that means I get  
10 to go into every brown and black community that is  
11 disproportionately affected, and they're going to  
12 start voting for the first time in 40 years. Thank  
13 you.

14 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Members, any  
15 questions?

16 Senator King?

17 SENATOR KING: Oh, thank you. And  
18 it's not specifically for the panel, so if --

19 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Yeah.

20 SENATOR KING: -- more just to help  
21 me. I really appreciate all the testimony we've had  
22 this morning. And I know we've got quite a few  
23 people left to testify, but it would help all of us,  
24 I think. Most of the testimony, in fact, all of the  
25 testimony this morning has been very much in

1 generalities.

2           If you have a specific concern about a  
3 specific district that you live in or you're aware  
4 of, you believe it does something wrong either in  
5 terms of splitting a community of interest or  
6 dividing a population or something else, it would  
7 help a lot more if I had specifics and you said,  
8 Hey, I live in District 23 and when you moved this  
9 in to this neighborhood or this county it had the  
10 following impact. And we can look and respond to  
11 those type of things.

12           But although I appreciate your  
13 testimony, and I understand the generalities, where  
14 you can give specific testimony about districts,  
15 that's something we can work with a lot more. So  
16 thank you.

17           SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you, Senator  
18 King.

19           Members --

20           SENATOR MILES: Mr. Chairman?

21           SENATOR CREIGHTON: -- any other  
22 questions?

23           Senator Miles?

24           SENATOR MILES: Mr. Chairman,  
25 Senator King, does that apply to people on the panel



1 as well? Can I give you my information on how it's  
2 affecting my district, and you'll look into changing  
3 it? The same offer you just made to the witnesses.

4 SENATOR KING: So I --

5 LAUREN PENA: It doesn't matter what  
6 district I'm in, this is a power grab.

7 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Ma'am, you're not  
8 recognized at this time, but thank you very much for  
9 this panel, and we appreciate each and every one of  
10 you.

11 Senator Miles, continue --

12 SENATOR MILES: Thank you, ma'am.

13 SENATOR CREIGHTON: -- your point.

14 SENATOR MILES: My question is, the  
15 same offer you just made to the witnesses,  
16 Senator King, does that apply to us as well?

17 SENATOR KING: So I -- yes, of course,  
18 but I assume in your case that you would be  
19 preparing floor amendments or committee amendments  
20 with specific recommended changes for the committee  
21 to consider or for the Senate as a whole to  
22 consider, and --

23 SENATOR MILES: I would love to --

24 SENATOR KING: And so, yes. I think  
25 that's the right way --

1                   SENATOR MILES: I would love to  
2 provide something --

3                   SENATOR KING: -- to do that.

4                   SENATOR MILES: -- for the committee  
5 to consider.

6                   SENATOR KING: And I'd also say that  
7 I -- you're an exceptionally good person to work  
8 with, and I think we've always had a good working  
9 relationship. And -- but my point was that if the  
10 witnesses want to testify, saying, Hey, here's what  
11 I need -- would like changed in this bill, then the  
12 specifics help, and we can say, Okay, I agree that  
13 that created a problem, or I don't agree.

14                   And -- but for the members, I think  
15 for us, it's probably more so preparing committee or  
16 floor amendments with recommended changes and all  
17 the stuff that goes with that. So I'm happy to  
18 consider anything, but at the end of the day, it's -  
19 - the committee members all will have to vote on  
20 this map coming out of this committee, whether it  
21 does or not. When it gets to the floor, any  
22 amendments that are proposed, all the members of the  
23 Senate will vote on that, on whether or not those  
24 amendments are adopted or not, and whether or not  
25 ultimately the map passes out. And so yes. I'm

1 happy to work with anybody.

2 SENATOR MILES: I thought -- if my  
3 recollection is correct, I thought we were told as  
4 committee members not to provide any amendments.

5 SENATOR KING: No. And I'm sorry if  
6 there's any confusion, but I mentioned that again at  
7 yesterday's hearing. I walked through the amendment  
8 process for the floor. And then, of course, the  
9 amendment process for the committee had been  
10 communicated earlier. And then, of course, it  
11 always follows the rules that were in the SR5 that  
12 we all passed to guide this committee.

13 So there -- obviously, even as Chair,  
14 I don't have the authority to tell somebody they  
15 can't bring an amendment.

16 SENATOR MILES: Okay.

17 SENATOR KING: And I'm sorry if there  
18 was confusion on that.

19 SENATOR MILES: Okay. Thank you.

20 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you,  
21 Members. Any other questions or comments?

22 (No audible response)

23 SENATOR CREIGHTON: We'll excuse this  
24 panel. Appreciate your testimony. And at this  
25 time, the Chair will call Nick Mollberg, Anthony

1 Gutierrez, Becky Bullard, and Sarah Beck.

2 We'll call John McKiernan-Gonzalez.

3 Is John still here with us? We'll give him a minute

4 to come over if he is in an overflow room.

5 Sarah Cinco, Denisce Palacios, Rocio Fierro-Perez,

6 Daniela Silva.

7 DENISCE PALACIOS: Anthony Gutierrez

8 will not be testifying today, sir.

9 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you for

10 letting me know. We'll ask the clerk to please make

11 adjustments to the witness list that Mr. Gutierrez

12 has exited. We'll begin with you.

13 DENISCE PALACIOS: Oh, okay.

14 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Go ahead.

15 DENISCE PALACIOS: Hi. My name is

16 Denisce Palacios.

17 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Don't --

18 DENISCE PALACIOS: Oh, no.

19 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Don't be nervous

20 at all. You all as witnesses are doing outstanding

21 jobs, and we really appreciate your time here today,

22 and we're eager to hear from you.

23 DENISCE PALACIOS: Okay.

24 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you.

25 DENISCE PALACIOS: Thank you. Hi. My

1 name is Denisce Palacios, and I'm the Texas State  
2 Lead for Climate Cabinet, testifying against the  
3 revised redistricting map.

4 Chairman, having the authority to do  
5 something does not make it morally correct or fair.  
6 In 2021, the Texas House controlled by Republicans,  
7 the Texas Senate controlled by Republicans, and the  
8 Texas governor controlled by Republicans -- a  
9 Republican, approved maps that diluted the political  
10 power of communities of color. And now we're in a  
11 politically motivated mid-decade redistricting  
12 effort after 30 years of Republican control in Texas  
13 because the President, a Republican, wants the U.S.  
14 House currently controlled by Republicans to retain  
15 and consolidate their power because Americans are  
16 suffering as a result of bad policy at the federal  
17 and state level.

18 And I fear that the actions led by  
19 this governing body, this special session, will lead  
20 us into an era of tyranny where politicians select  
21 their voters instead of allowing voters to elect  
22 politicians. All because Republicans are afraid of  
23 losing power.

24 Republican legislators have passed  
25 legislation at all levels to defund social programs,

1 helping hard-working Americans to sell public lands  
2 and to end programs that would curb emissions to  
3 protect public health. And now you are shamelessly  
4 stretching our districts and further diluting the  
5 voices of every Texan who lives in the  
6 Mexican-American border community.

7 I was born and raised in the Rio  
8 Grande Valley, and I am a Texan just like you, but  
9 the climate disasters and pollution that we endure  
10 and the culture and experiences of our communities  
11 are vastly different than those of Texans who live  
12 250 miles inland outside of the checkpoints, and yet  
13 we're in the same district.

14 Six-generation families in Central  
15 Texas face different issues and have different  
16 politics than bi-national first and second-  
17 generation families in the valley along the U.S.-  
18 Mexico border. If the RGV is too far for Austin  
19 legislators to comfortably travel there for  
20 hearings, just imagine how much more difficult it is  
21 for my people to come here or for a member in D.C.  
22 to travel back to Texas and then 300 miles across  
23 their district.

24 Congressional districts typically hold  
25 about 700,000 people, and instead of dividing the

1 valley into two because we're one and a half million  
2 people, our political power is thinned out into  
3 three districts, Texas 28, 15, and 34, because the  
4 reality is that this is a racist political power  
5 grab.

6 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you for your  
7 testimony --

8 DENISCE PALACIOS: Thank you.

9 SENATOR CREIGHTON: -- and thank you  
10 for wrapping up as you heard the timer.

11 DENISCE PALACIOS: From the first  
12 beep.

13 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you so much  
14 for that.

15 Yes, go ahead. Please provide your  
16 testimony. Welcome.

17 ROCIO FIERRO-PEREZ: Before I start,  
18 I'm going to be giving my testimony in Spanish, just  
19 so you know.

20 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Yo entiendo  
21 (Spanish).

22 (Spanish - not transcribed)

23 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you for your  
24 testimony. And for the record, please state your  
25 name again and --

1                   ROCIO FIERRO-PEREZ:   Rocio Fierro-  
2   Perez.

3                   SENATOR CREIGHTON:   Very good.   Here  
4   in opposition to the bill.

5                   ROCIO FIERRO-PEREZ:   Yes.

6                   SENATOR CREIGHTON:   Thank you.   Please  
7   proceed.

8                   DANIELA SILVA:   My name is Daniela  
9   Silva.   I'm the Austin Policy Coordinator at Workers  
10   Defense Action Fund, and I'm strongly against this  
11   bill drawn up by unpopular Trump and his billionaire  
12   cronies.

13                   If a special session must be called,  
14   Texans want you to focus solely on helping us  
15   recover from a devastating flood and preparing for  
16   future natural disasters that are a matter of when,  
17   not if they happen next.   Instead, Abbott is using  
18   the special session to sell the people of Texas over  
19   to unpopular Trump's big business friends that use  
20   their money to pull the strings in D.C.

21                   Want to multitask?   Why don't you  
22   focus on the real problems Texans face?   Big banks  
23   and corporations are buying up homes so that regular  
24   families can no longer afford to become homeowners.  
25   Schools and hospitals are closing across rural



1 communities. Roads and bridges are crumbling.  
2 Workers are having their wages stolen at  
3 unprecedented rates. Parents can't afford  
4 childcare.

5                   These are the problems our  
6 state-elected officials should be addressing. If  
7 you're a Texan who faces any of these challenges, I  
8 know I am, Abbott and unpopular Trump do not care  
9 about us. If they did, they would make the lives of  
10 working-class Americans better, just a little bit  
11 easier to live a decent life.

12                   But instead, they're wasting your  
13 taxpayer dollars to call a special session to draw  
14 new maps that make sure the most power-hungry  
15 politicians never have to give up their seats to  
16 continue their plan to completely destroy democracy.  
17 They're shaping a country where the only voices  
18 heard across all levels of government are the voices  
19 of the uber-wealthy.

20                   For those who fear big government, I  
21 hate to break it to you. This is as big as it's  
22 ever been, and it's at its very worst. Abbott and  
23 unpopular Trump are using this special legislative  
24 session to grab power by taking away our freedoms  
25 and avoiding accountability. This is part of a

1 bigger plan. Their goal is to tell us how we live  
2 and who gets to participate in shaping their own  
3 state and country. It's not about freedom, it's  
4 about control.

5 Texas Democrats and any Republicans  
6 with any sliver of a spine left, you have to break  
7 quorum and eventually vote no. This is a time for  
8 courage. This is a time to honor your duty to the  
9 Constitution and the people of Texas. This is a  
10 time to change the course of history and give us a  
11 fighting chance to save democracy.

12 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Members, any  
13 questions?

14 (No audible response)

15 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you. We'll  
16 excuse this panel. Appreciate your time and  
17 testimony today.

18 At this time, the committee will stand  
19 at ease for five minutes for a brief break and for  
20 the members to be able to respond to personal emails  
21 or calls or family, and we'll come back in in five  
22 minutes to resume the hearing.

23 (Recess taken)

24 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Okay, Members. At  
25 this time, we'll continue our hearing on

1 congressional redistricting. The Chair will call  
2 Steven Lawrence, Dan Chandler, Alan Primrose, and  
3 Tao Huang. Stephen Lawrence, Dan Chandler,  
4 Alan Primrose, and please help me pronounce your  
5 name.

6 TAO HUANG: Tao Huang.

7 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Tao Huang.

8 TAO HUANG: Yes.

9 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Forgive me for my  
10 mispronunciation.

11 Sir, we'll begin with you.

12 ALAN PRIMROSE: Well, shucks. Good  
13 afternoon. Hi, you all.

14 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Good afternoon.  
15 Please state your name and your position on the  
16 bill, and if you represent any interest other than  
17 yourself, please help us get that in the record.

18 ALAN PRIMROSE: My name is  
19 Alan Primrose. I represent myself. I'm here to  
20 speak against SB 4. I'm here as a lifelong Texan  
21 and a working class -- of the working class.

22 Yeah. To refrain from the profanity,  
23 what the frack? Just to heck with the map, to heck  
24 with the priorities for adding to that, to heck with  
25 giving any ounce of cooperation to the fascist Trump

1 administration, calling it what it is, as Melody had  
2 referred to previously.

3 I'm really in disagreement with just  
4 the districting methods as a whole in general. To  
5 have things, as Mr. King said, are very jig-jagged,  
6 as well as just kind of hard to see things locally  
7 represented as well. I don't have an answer for how  
8 districts should be drawn, but no, this really looks  
9 good.

10 I won't be taking any questions, and  
11 I'll close with a haiku: Land is eternal, state is  
12 not, neither am I, and so I give thanks.

13 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Ms. Huang?

14 TAO HUANG: Committee Chair, committee  
15 Members, thank you very much for giving us this  
16 hearing opportunity. My name is Tao Wong. I live  
17 in District 37, represented by Congressman Lloyd  
18 Dodgett. I'm here today to defend the AAPI  
19 community that I'm part of, Asian American and  
20 Pacific Islander. We represent eight percent of  
21 Austin's population, and many of us live along the  
22 border of Travis County and Williamson County. But  
23 if you look at that area, our community has been  
24 divided in the proposed map into five districts.  
25 That's District 10, 11, 17, 34, and 37.

1           If being compact is a consideration,  
2     according to Chairman King, please, you know,  
3     putting us in one community and splitting us into  
4     five districts is the least compact example I can  
5     find. So I'm requesting and calling attention to  
6     fix this issue.

7           I'm also here to defend the reason  
8     that I choose to be a Texan and an American,  
9     democracy. I spent almost 30 years in a country  
10    governed by a totalitarian regime. In that country,  
11    it didn't matter whether you vote or not. One party  
12    always won. The legislature existed only to  
13    rubber-stamp the decisions that already made by the  
14    top. And if a voting didn't go as expected, guess  
15    what happens? Sessions were dragged on until the  
16    result matched what was demanded at the top.

17           And for people, if they have a very  
18    different opinion as from the top, guess what? The  
19    government will use the police forces and the  
20    military forces to chase them down. Does this sound  
21    familiar? That's not democracy. That's theater.  
22    And it is chilling for me to see some of it is  
23    happening in a state that I choose to live because  
24    of its freedom and because of its value. So please,  
25    vote no to the Senate Bill 4.

1 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you for your  
2 testimony.

3 Please begin, sir.

4 STEVEN LAWRENCE: Hi. My name is  
5 Steven Lawrence. I speak on behalf of myself and my  
6 organization, Clear Rule of Law. I'm a lawyer. I'm  
7 a lifetime conservative. I moved here 24 years ago  
8 to attend the University of Texas School of Law.  
9 One of the first things I did was co-host one of  
10 Greg Abbott's first fundraisers when he was running  
11 for Attorney General. I have always agreed with the  
12 principles of the Republican Party, and I've never  
13 voted against a Republican -- sorry. I've never  
14 voted for a Democrat on a state or national basis.

15 I'm here against the bill. Yes. I'm  
16 opposed to what it does to Fort Worth and Tarrant  
17 County in ripping part of my group away from their  
18 representative, Craig Goldman. But I'm here because  
19 this is the chance to look you guys in the eyes and  
20 say you have a choice to make here. You do not have  
21 to keep going down this path. You can do something  
22 and reject this map.

23 We are here. I've never been a fan of  
24 the mid-decade process, but I never spoke out  
25 against it. It's just political theater. You're

1 here because the President wants five more seats,  
2 and instead of saying, Come and take it, you said,  
3 Here we go. That is not representative democracy,  
4 that's tyranny.

5 And in the middle of the most radical  
6 change we've had in our -- well, at least in my  
7 lifetime, you are ripping representatives away from  
8 their constituents and constituents against the  
9 representatives. And the Democrats are defending  
10 the Democratic Party, and you guys are defending the  
11 Republican Party, but there's the people, and that's  
12 what you're supposed to be representing.

13 And for the first time, I'm happy the  
14 Democrats left the state. I thought it was theater  
15 before. There's still a bit of theater to it now,  
16 but at least they're defending the rule of law, and  
17 you, sir, are not. You are the redistricting king.  
18 Your name is King.

19 And I'll just quote from Malachi 3:5  
20 about what God said to those that deprive the  
21 foreigners among you of justice: "I will be quick  
22 to testify against those who deprive them. I will  
23 put you on trial."

24 So you're voting against the Lord,  
25 you're voting against democracy, and you're voting

1 against the rule of law. And if you go to these  
2 rallies, these aren't radical bust-in people.  
3 They're people like me --

4 SENATOR CREIGHTON: That'll be our  
5 time, sir.

6 STEVEN LAWRENCE: -- and they're  
7 people working through the process.

8 SENATOR KING: Appreciate your time  
9 today.

10 STEVEN LAWRENCE: You are taking on  
11 the people of Texas and the United States.

12 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you very  
13 much, sir. Mr. Lawrence, appreciate your testimony.

14 All right, Members. Any questions?  
15 If not, we appreciate this panel very much.

16 Ms. Huang, you had mentioned an  
17 organization in your introduction. Do -- are you  
18 representing yourself or an organization as well?

19 TAO HUANG: I'm representing myself.

20 SENATOR CREIGHTON: And so no  
21 organization. Thank you very much. I just wanted  
22 to make it clear for the record --

23 TAO. HUANG: Just the --

24 SENATOR CREIGHTON: -- because we have  
25 to adjust the registration form if --



1 TAO HUANG: Oh, I'm representing  
2 myself. I'm just part of -- I'm a community member  
3 of the Asian America Pacific Islander. Just  
4 ethnically, that's the community.

5 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Understood. Thank  
6 you for the clarification.

7 Okay. At this time, the Chair will  
8 call Dan Chandler and Lori Jensen, also  
9 Krissy OBrien. Is Levi King still with us? Please  
10 come forward, Mr. King. Is Mr. Chandler still with  
11 us? Pastor Chandler.

12 PASTOR DAN CHANDLER: Did you say  
13 Dan Chandler?

14 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Yes, sir.

15 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Pastor Chandler.

16 PASTOR DAN CHANDLER: Sorry. I'm  
17 listening on this.

18 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Oh, that's okay.

19 PASTOR DAN CHANDLER: It appears  
20 there's a lag.

21 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Yeah. Come  
22 forward, please, sir.

23 LORI JENSEN: Oh, God.

24 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Lori Jensen.

25 LORI JENSEN: I'm present.

1 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Present. Here.

2 Krissy OBrien. Is Krissy OBrien still  
3 with us today?

4 (Off the record discussion)

5 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Can I ask a  
6 thing? Just procedural, that I know signs and  
7 things like that are not allowed, but there is a  
8 Confederate flag on --

9 PASTOR DAN CHANDLER: That's a sign.  
10 This is not a sign. This is a flag. You want to  
11 stop my right to speak, and you're not recognized?

12 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: (Indiscernible)

13 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Yes, sir.

14 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: I was  
15 (indiscernible).

16 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Mr. Chandler,  
17 please allow the committee to handle decorum --

18 PASTOR DAN CHANDLER: Tell her to be  
19 quiet.

20 SENATOR CREIGHTON: -- and --

21 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: They were  
22 traitors.

23 SENATOR CREIGHTON: -- we'll proceed  
24 forward.

25 LORI JENSEN: Oh, God.

1                   SENATOR CREIGHTON: We'll begin with  
2 you, sir.

3                   LEVI KING: Okay. Thank you.

4                   SENATOR CREIGHTON: Yeah, you bet.

5                   LEVI KING: Hello, Committee. My name  
6 is Levi King, and I'm a rising junior in AISD. I am  
7 testifying on behalf of myself against this proposed  
8 redistricting.

9                   In a time where our very democracy is  
10 showing more and more patterns of a tyrannous  
11 society, it is alarming to see that Texas is bending  
12 its knee as well. Redistricting, an act that is  
13 supposed to occur solely after the taking of a  
14 census, should not take place to sway the majority  
15 of votes in favor of our President. Though it will  
16 not be acknowledged and will be denied continuously,  
17 this racist redistricting will disadvantage the  
18 minority population.

19                  Even though the Latino Hispanic  
20 population has become our state's majority --  
21 sorry -- they, as well as other people of color are  
22 still being underserved throughout all of Texas.  
23 Honestly, this map should not even be our top  
24 priority. Women have been losing rights to their  
25 own bodies, and our transgender friends are being

1 discriminated against time and time again. Public  
2 schools are losing essential funding, families are  
3 being separated due to deportation, and even  
4 healthcare is in a state of jeopardy. If I listed  
5 all of the alarming issues Texas citizens were  
6 facing at this time, my testimony would far expend  
7 past two minutes.

8                   The leaders of Texas must stop serving  
9 the desires of our President and focus on uplifting  
10 and benefiting the people residing in their own  
11 state. In all honesty, I was not expecting to  
12 testify today until hearing the strong words spoken  
13 by those in this room, especially Senator Miles, who  
14 inspired me to speak up and begin writing this  
15 testimony. Though I'm not old enough to utilize the  
16 important weapon of the vote, I will not let my  
17 First Amendment right go to waste.

18                   SENATOR MILES: Right on.

19                   LORI KING: Thank you for your time.

20                   SENATOR CREIGHTON: Appreciate your  
21 testimony. Please, proceed.

22                   LORI JENSEN: Hello. My name is  
23 Lori Jensen, and I'm here representing myself in  
24 opposition. I'm 65 years old as of this past March,  
25 and I am mad as hell. And I got that as clean as I

1 could. And you know what? I'm far from alone, but  
2 you all know that. And what has brought this  
3 65-year-old, along with her husband, who has done  
4 for 40-plus years all the things you told us to do  
5 so we could enjoy our retirement, here we are. And  
6 we're here because you aren't listening to your  
7 constituents. None of you are.

8                   We women are pissed off. I'm sorry,  
9 French. We're tired of the old white men, mainly,  
10 telling us what to do and how to do it. That is not  
11 the land of the free, and we are the people, and we  
12 want the land of the free. We also want the people  
13 in charge to do their jobs. They all, every one of  
14 them, took an oath. We, the people, demand they  
15 honor their oaths. The gerrymandering, yeah, it's  
16 wrong. You all know it, but we, the people, we  
17 outnumber you bigly, and you know it. There's one  
18 of your words.

19                   So in conclusion, we, the people,  
20 baby, led by our choice with integrity, and most  
21 importantly, liberty and justice for all. Remember  
22 those words, people? I'm done.

23                   SENATOR CREIGHTON: Appreciate your  
24 testimony.

25                   SENATOR CREIGHTON: Mr. Chandler,

1 please proceed.

2 PASTOR DAN CHANDLER: Well, I'm the  
3 opposite. I think you guys bend over backwards  
4 listening to us. I've been listening to stuff --  
5 you get yelled at by us out here, and it's wrong. I  
6 think you're doing the very best job you can.  
7 You're cordial as I can even -- I'm spending my time  
8 bragging on you if you don't mind, because I think  
9 it's true. You're doing an excellent job.

10 As far as me, I'm an evangelist. I  
11 got -- I'm retired. I could be fishing. I don't  
12 have to be doing this, but I got called to this  
13 effort first about abortion, and now I realize  
14 there's lots of stuff that are lies the devil tells.

15 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Repeat your name  
16 for the record, sir. Just --

17 PASTOR DAN CHANDLER: Oh, I'm sorry.  
18 Dan Chandler.

19 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Yes.

20 PASTOR DAN CHANDLER: And I'm for the  
21 bill. The -- I have this. This means don't tear  
22 down the flags, the statues, the monuments, the Ten  
23 Commandments, babies, border, the Alamo, the  
24 Cenotaph. Don't tear down America piece-by-piece,  
25 plank-by-plank, or we're not going to survive.

1                   They talk about the flood. Why don't  
2 you do something about the flood? You're doing  
3 something about the flood right here. Boy, I'm  
4 going to run out of time. It says: "I will pour  
5 out my wrath on them like water, those that tear  
6 down the monuments." That's why I have that. Don't  
7 do it.

8                   But also just to disregard the word of  
9 God and turn away from him, you know what? The best  
10 thing you can do for us is turn every district red.  
11 Do something for the black people, the white people,  
12 the brown people, all of them, turn the districts  
13 red and take it away from these people. The only  
14 thing they do is scream race cards. Racist this,  
15 racist that. Hater this, hater that. You don't  
16 like me because I'm black. That's all they've got.  
17 Pay me. You owe me.

18                   Go out there in Port Arthur or Houston  
19 or some place and look and see what blue has done  
20 for black. The very best thing you could do is take  
21 it away from her. Take this away.

22                   LORI JENSEN: Excuse me.

23                   PASTOR DAN CHANDLER: And --

24                   LORI JENSEN: What color do I look  
25 like, people?

1 SENATOR CREIGHTON: And we're  
2 through --

3 PASTOR DAN CHANDLER: Am I -- is that  
4 me?

5 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Out of town.

6 PASTOR DAN CHANDLER: I'm done?

7 SENATOR CREIGHTON: That's your time.

8 PASTOR DAN CHANDLER: Thank you very  
9 much. I appreciate -- I -- thank you very much.

10 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Yeah, thank you.

11 LORI JENSEN: (Indiscernible) a chair.

12 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Appreciate your  
13 testimony to each of you. Members, any questions?  
14 Everyone has their time --

15 PASTOR DAN CHANDLER: This girl's  
16 kicking me.

17 LORI JENSEN: I did not.

18 PASTOR DAN CHANDLER: You see her?

19 SENATOR CREIGHTON: -- to make their  
20 statement.

21 SENATOR MILES: Ms. OBrien?  
22 Ms. OBrien, thank you for your testimony today --

23 LORI JENSEN: I'm Jensen.

24 SENATOR MILES: -- despite what you --

25 LORI JENSEN: (Indiscernible)



1 SENATOR MILES: Thank you, Ms. OBrien.

2 PASTOR DAN CHANDLER: I told her, I'm  
3 a senior citizen. What you doing kicking me?

4 LORI JENSEN: So am I.

5 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Her name is  
6 Jensen.

7 SENATOR MILES: Ms. Jensen --

8 LEVI KING: Excuse me.

9 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator Miles?

10 SENATOR MILES: Brother Levi?

11 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Hold --

12 LEVI KING: Her name is not

13 Ms. OBrien. It's Ms. Jensen.

14 SENATOR MILES: Ms. Jensen. I'm  
15 sorry.

16 LEVI KING: Her name is Ms. Jensen.

17 SENATOR CREIGHTON: We've cleared it  
18 up for the record.

19 SENATOR MILES: I'm sorry.  
20 Ms. Jensen.

21 LEVI JENSEN: Thank you.

22 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Hold a second.

23 This panel is excused. You're excused. Thank you  
24 for your testimony.

25 SENATOR MILES: I wanted to say

1 something --

2 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Members --

3 SENATOR MILES: -- to the kid.

4 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Members, are there  
5 any questions? Senator Miles has a question. I  
6 believe he wants to visit with Witness King outside  
7 the hearing room. Thank you both.

8 At this time, we'll call forward  
9 Nicolas Juan. Is Nicolas still with us? We're  
10 going to call additional witnesses, so please be  
11 prepared. If you're in an overflow room, please pay  
12 attention because we're moving quickly to make sure  
13 we can get to all of our witnesses, as they have  
14 travel plans and certain accommodations.

15 Gary Bledsoe. Please come forward,  
16 Mr. Bledsoe. Sarah Cinco.

17 (Off the record discussion)

18 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Is Ms. Sarah Beck  
19 with us today? Please come forward. John  
20 McKiernan-Gonzalez, please come forward.

21 Sir, can you tell us your name?

22 NICOLAS JUAN: Yes. My name is  
23 Nicolas Juan.

24 SENATOR CREIGHTON: And ma'am?

25 KRISSY OBRIEN: Krissy OBrien.

1 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Krissy OBrien.

2 Got it, great. We'll begin with you, Ms. OBrien.

3 KRISSY OBRIEN: Thank you. Good  
4 afternoon, Chair, Members of the Committee. Thank  
5 you for the opportunity to speak in opposition to  
6 SB 4 today. My name is Krissy OBrien. I'm  
7 representing myself and AFSCME. The American  
8 Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees  
9 represent public employees around the state who  
10 provide critical services our communities depend on.

11 I am speaking up for our members  
12 today, many of whom could not be here. They are at  
13 work. AFSCME represents working members and retired  
14 state employees who reside in the areas that are  
15 being targeted in these maps. SB 4 stands to weaken  
16 their voices and threatens their access to fair  
17 representation.

18 I ask you to please consider their  
19 rights, the impact this redistricting will have on  
20 their communities. I urge this committee to oppose  
21 SB 4 as these maps stand to weaken the voices of  
22 working people. Finally, I ask that you use this  
23 special session to prioritize more pressing needs  
24 facing Texans. Thank you.

25 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Appreciate that

1 testimony.

2 Sir, please begin.

3 NICOLAS JUAN: Hello. My name is  
4 Nicolas Juan. I want to thank you all for being  
5 here today. I am from Nassau Bay, part of the  
6 Houston area, in the 36th Congressional District.  
7 It is incredibly concerning that there is even talk  
8 of redrawing congressional district maps. No census  
9 was conducted, and 2021 maps are still being  
10 reviewed by federal courts, so why are we here  
11 today?

12 The proposed maps are an insult to  
13 Texans across the state. You can easily say that  
14 the maps before today and in 2021 are not racial  
15 discrimination and colorblind, but effectively, they  
16 are discriminatory, and lawmakers must look at  
17 racial data to ensure minority communities are not  
18 negatively impacted by the redrawn lines.

19 At some point, you can't deny reality  
20 any longer. What matters are the results of your  
21 actions collectively as a legislative body. If the  
22 maps are drawn to keep as many minority/majority  
23 communities without proper representation and give  
24 even more power to white majority communities, it is  
25 a major issue and the reason for the massive

1 contention you see today.

2 Which brings us to another issue: If  
3 the DOJ has directed the state of Texas to redraw  
4 the maps, under what purview is it done? Is so-  
5 called racial gerrymandering the actual reason, or  
6 is it giving carte blanche to cut up the major  
7 cities to further diminish the representation of our  
8 black and brown districts?

9 Why does my district span halfway  
10 across the state to the border of Louisiana?  
11 Citizens furthest east have very little in common  
12 with the residents of Nassau Bay. You have had the  
13 opportunity to fix this, to properly represent the  
14 citizens of Beaumont, Jasper, and Cleveland, and in  
15 turn, to properly represent me. It seems to me that  
16 the Republicans of the state of Texas are putting  
17 party before country.

18 I've seen over the years  
19 gerrymandering to consistently favor Republicans and  
20 white voters who tend to vote more for Republicans.  
21 As legislators, it is imperative that you represent  
22 all Texans regardless of what you, the governor, or  
23 the party think of them. But you all know that.  
24 The rhetoric and capitulation of the Republican  
25 Party of Texas to the federal government would make

1 the likes of Stalin and Kim Jong-un blush.

2 The maps are inherently authoritarian  
3 and the exact opposite of small government. If you  
4 cannot win these districts on merit or policy, the  
5 only solution to hold onto power is to cheat, lie,  
6 and push the boundaries of lawful and ethical  
7 behavior. I am embarrassed that this special  
8 session is putting so much time and effort into  
9 redistricting and other trivial matters over  
10 focusing on actual impactful, meaningful issues.

11 Ultimately, districts need to  
12 represent the people living there, not split a  
13 community in half and include them with hundreds of  
14 thousands of other Texans halfway across the state.  
15 Let the federal court rule on the 2021 maps and try  
16 to have some decency and humility with how you  
17 conduct legislative business as to not harm and  
18 lessen the representation of some Texans you don't  
19 like and increase the voting powers of others.  
20 Thank you.

21 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you, sir,  
22 for your testimony.

23 Members, any questions? We have Mr.  
24 Bledsoe. Mr. Bledsoe, please come forward, and we  
25 will proceed with your testimony, sir. Thank you

1 for being here and your patience.

2 GARY BLEDSOE: Thank you very much,  
3 Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee. I submitted  
4 written testimony. I don't know if you have  
5 questions, but I think the point I want to make is  
6 it's very clear to me that this is a process that  
7 doesn't really have integrity because I think that  
8 the people have not been heard. The map does not  
9 reflect what the field hearings revealed, and with  
10 the timing of the map, it's very clear that the map  
11 had already been drawn.

12 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Yes, sir. Right  
13 there, would you restate your name for us?

14 GARY BLEDSOE: Oh, Gary Bledsoe,  
15 President of the Texas NAACP.

16 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Got it.

17 GARY BLEDSOE: Thank you.

18 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you. Please  
19 go ahead.

20 GARY BLEDSOE: Thank you, Senator.  
21 Appreciate it.

22 So therefore, I think I'll stand on  
23 the statement, but I'm really saddened here as a  
24 Texan that I come in front of you today and I see  
25 what I feel is an overtly racist map, a map that

1 seems to take us back in time to time when people  
2 who look like me did not have representation, that  
3 our bodies were used to count for members of  
4 Congress. And you take away two or four  
5 congressional representatives for people of color,  
6 and are African American in this state. And you --  
7 actually, the three people who would probably lose  
8 their positions here under this map are people of  
9 color, two African Americans and one Latino.

10                   It's really sad that we're here. So  
11 this is not about anything other than race and the  
12 continuation of what's occurred in our state. We do  
13 know that many years ago, white citizens in our  
14 state went to the United States Supreme Court five  
15 times in 26 years to stop black people from being  
16 able to have a vote in our state. And that's really  
17 tragic, and this is nothing but a continuation.

18                   And I will say this: It was -- it  
19 occurred under Democrats, and it continues to occur  
20 under Republicans.

21                   SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you, sir.

22                   Members, any questions for these three  
23 witnesses? Senator Miles?

24                   SENATOR MILES: Thank you,  
25 Mr. Chairman.



1 I've got a question for Mr. Bledsoe.  
2 And so it's really a point of clarification,  
3 Mr. Bledsoe. Tell me -- explain to me what a  
4 minority opportunity district is. And then second  
5 to that, tell me what the ability to elect district  
6 is. There's two different kinds, okay? And I'm  
7 going to make sure I get a definition from you, and  
8 then I'm going to talk to my Chairman about it.

9 MR. BLEDSOE: Senator, you asked one  
10 of the most important questions because in the  
11 litigation that we are involved in now and in the  
12 litigation from the last decade, it became very  
13 clear, and the court rulings that actually exist now  
14 describe, for example, the 9th, 18th, and 30th as  
15 opportunity districts or ability-to-elect districts.  
16 So those have a certain level of protection that  
17 others do not have. And the same with the 29th.

18 And so that DOJ letter  
19 mischaracterized the nature of those districts.  
20 They are not coalition districts. And so as  
21 Professor Katz said the other day, if someone had  
22 submitted that as part of a project in her class,  
23 she --

24 SENATOR MILES: Let me stop you right  
25 there. You helped with the litigation to make

1 those -- to create those districts, correct?

2 GARY BLEDSOE: Yeah. There was  
3 litigation --

4 SENATOR MILES: So you would know.

5 GARY BLEDSOE: -- I was directly  
6 involved in --

7 SENATOR MILES: You would know.

8 GARY BLEDSOE: -- that the Courts held  
9 that these are ability-to-elect districts and the  
10 experts for the state acknowledged under oath --

11 SENATOR MILES: Right.

12 GARY BLEDSOE: -- okay, that they were  
13 ability-to-elect districts.

14 SENATOR MILES: Right.

15 GARY BLEDSOE: And I might even say  
16 with the 33rd, the whole issue that was raised in  
17 the letter -- the DOJ letter about the 33rd had  
18 already been answered. It was a Court-drawn seat,  
19 so Congressman Veasey's seat was drawn by the Court.

20 SENATOR MILES: Uh-huh.

21 GARY BLEDSOE: And with  
22 Congressman Veasey's seat, they said this is not a  
23 coalition seat.

24 SENATOR MILES: Uh-huh.

25 GARY BLEDSOE: This is a naturally

1 occurring seat as allowed by Bartlett v. Strickland,  
2 and this is what this is.

3 SENATOR MILES: Okay.

4 GARY BLEDSOE: But people wanted a way  
5 to go after the black and brown seats, so they  
6 mischaracterized them.

7 SENATOR MILES: Right.

8 GARY BLEDSOE: And so when you go  
9 forward today, you'll know and you'll understand  
10 you're destroying seats that have the highest level  
11 of protection, okay, under our --

12 SENATOR MILES: In the land.

13 GARY BLEDSOE: -- constitution. Yes.

14 SENATOR MILES: In our land, in our  
15 country.

16 GARY BLEDSOE: Yes.

17 SENATOR MILES: Correct?

18 GARY BLEDSOE: Yes.

19 SENATOR MILES: And you're stating  
20 today to this body that the DOJ letter obviously did  
21 not take that into consideration, or they wrote it  
22 wrong.

23 GARY BLEDSOE: They clearly wrote it  
24 wrong --

25 SENATOR MILES: They wrote --

1 GARY BLEDSOE: -- or I don't think  
2 they understood it to be very honest about it, and  
3 they completely mischaracterized the Petteway case.

4 SENATOR MILES: Gotcha.

5 GARY BLEDSOE: Those coalition  
6 districts are just very different. Coalition  
7 districts are legal, though. That's the other thing  
8 that they got wrong. They're not illegal.

9 SENATOR MILES: Uh-huh.

10 GARY BLEDSOE: You can't be obligated  
11 to draw one up under section 2 of the Voting Rights  
12 Act in the Fifth Circuit now.

13 SENATOR MILES: Uh-huh.

14 GARY BLEDSOE: Though other circuits  
15 disagree, but the United States Supreme Court has  
16 never decided that particular issue.

17 SENATOR MILES: Okay. And the other --  
18 the ability-to-elect district, same?

19 GARY BLEDSOE: Okay. And those are  
20 the same as the opportunity seats. And so those are  
21 the ones that are given the highest priority because  
22 you don't need to join with any other group, that  
23 your group has the power to be able to elect people  
24 in that district. And so that's what's protected.  
25 People are mixing up the Gingles 1 standard in terms

1 of trying to bring that into some constitutional  
2 standard about -- as if that black people can only  
3 have a seat if you have 50.1. But if 45 percent of  
4 whites can elect a candidate of choice, they can  
5 have a seat --

6 SENATOR MILES: Right.

7 GARY BLEDSOE: -- but black people  
8 need 50.1, which is absurd. That's not true.

9 SENATOR MILES: And to your knowledge  
10 today, has there been any legislation or any laws  
11 changed in the federal government that would change  
12 the position or the protection of these two seats?

13 GARY BLEDSOE: No.

14 SENATOR MILES: No.

15 GARY BLEDSOE: Nothing has changed.  
16 They're clearly opportunity seats. And in the  
17 current litigation that we're now involved in,  
18 Senator, the state has acknowledged in the current  
19 litigation.

20 SENATOR MILES: Right.

21 GARY BLEDSOE: So I don't know how the  
22 state is going to defend this man, when in the  
23 litigation in El Paso, they said, These are  
24 opportunity seats.

25 SENATOR MILES: Correct.

1 GARY BLEDSOE: And so now, all of a  
2 sudden, there's something different that can be just  
3 torn away and taken from the minority community.

4 SENATOR MILES: So our Voting Rights  
5 Act has been watered down over the last couple of  
6 years. They didn't affect -- these two -- they  
7 didn't affect these two, did they?

8 GARY BLEDSOE: No. The cases that I  
9 mentioned all come from Republican majority panels.  
10 So these weren't Democratic panels or what have you.  
11 These are three-judge panels that had African  
12 American -- excuse me -- that had Republican  
13 majorities on them that held that these were  
14 opportunity seats. And I'm saying that Ken Paxton's  
15 office has acknowledged that in the litigation.

16 SENATOR MILES: Okay. And just last  
17 question -- last -- just for clarification: To your  
18 knowledge, there is nothing that has changed in any  
19 laws that you know of the protection of these seats?

20 GARY BLEDSOE: No. They still -- none  
21 of the recent Supreme Court cases --

22 SENATOR MILES: Okay.

23 GARY BLEDSOE: -- touch on that issue.

24 SENATOR MILES: And the DOJ letter  
25 addressing these, in your opinion, would be

1 something -- an illegal act?

2 GARY BLEDSOE: Oh, it's inviting you  
3 to do something that's illegal.

4 SENATOR MILES: Exactly.

5 GARY BLEDSOE: So to the extent that  
6 you attempted to comply with the act --

7 SENATOR MILES: Right.

8 GARY BLEDSOE: -- the act invites you  
9 to do something that's unconstitutional.

10 SENATOR MILES: Okay. So can I change  
11 my direction to the question to the Chair -- to the  
12 author of the bill?

13 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator Miles,  
14 you're recognized --

15 SENATOR MILES: Thank you.

16 Senator King --

17 SENATOR CREIGHTON: -- to question  
18 Senator King.

19 SENATOR MILES: Senator King, you've  
20 told us time and time again, which -- that you  
21 would -- whenever you got a bill, that you would  
22 scrub the bill for its legality; am I correct?

23 SENATOR KING: Yes.

24 SENATOR MILES: You've told us that  
25 multiple times that you would scrub the bill for its

1 legality and to make sure that it was right by all  
2 laws of the government. And did you do that before  
3 you submitted -- I think you stated earlier today  
4 that you did that before you submitted SB 4.

5 SENATOR KING: Yes. Before I decided  
6 to file SB 4 as a companion to HB 4, I asked that it  
7 be reviewed thoroughly by our counsel. They  
8 reviewed it, and I understand the House counsel had  
9 also reviewed it and both concluded that the map was  
10 legal with regard to all applicable law.

11 SENATOR MILES: Can you hold right  
12 there, sir?

13 SENATOR KING: I'm holding.

14 SENATOR MILES: And you hear the  
15 statement from the author of the bill. What do you  
16 say to that, Mr. Bledsoe?

17 GARY BLEDSOE: Well, a couple of  
18 things. One of the things that's very disturbing in  
19 the litigation was that, you know, in the past  
20 sessions of redistricting, Senator, the legislative  
21 counsel was much more involved. And the  
22 redistricting committee in 2021 did not avail  
23 themselves in the same ways of the assistance of the  
24 legislative counsel. And the legislative counsel in  
25 2021 put out a guide, and it was a guide for



1 redistricting.

2                   And in that document, it tells you the  
3 level of scrutiny that you must undertake and what  
4 you must do to avoid adopting maps that cause  
5 dilution of minority votes. That's in there, but I  
6 think what's occurred is they've used outside  
7 counsel and with methodologies and things that we  
8 don't know whatever they use, because they use  
9 attorney-client privilege and things of that nature  
10 to prevent us from knowing what they're actually  
11 doing.

12                   So we don't know what mechanisms they  
13 use, but the bottom line is that anyone that knows  
14 that these are protected seats would agree with us  
15 that you couldn't do this, and anyone who would  
16 agree with the DOJ letter must not understand the  
17 applicable law because the DOJ letter is  
18 fundamentally wrong. So there is no way that that  
19 would be legitimate advice.

20                   But the problem is, Senator, I don't  
21 know if they would reveal to you what methodologies  
22 they used, the private individuals, the law firms  
23 that were put together, but they clearly have  
24 violated all -- so many of the traditional  
25 redistricting principles and how the map was put

1 together.

2 I mean, for example, you take people  
3 away from their home districts. You eliminate -- so  
4 three African American congresspersons, all three  
5 were removed from their districts. That's one of  
6 the things that the D.C. courts held was problematic  
7 last time for the state when they did that. So they  
8 do the same thing again.

9 And so you look on and on about the  
10 different things that they have done, and they  
11 should know better because of what's actually  
12 occurred. So these are clear examples of  
13 intentional discrimination and going forward with,  
14 you know, an agenda. And so you heard the terms  
15 packing and cracking. You look at the 9th, you look  
16 at the 18th, you look at the 29th, you look at the  
17 33rd, you look at the 30th, and 32nd, they've been  
18 packed and cracked like nothing else, and the 35th  
19 was destroyed as well.

20 And so -- and they're done with the  
21 purpose of diluting minority votes, and you cannot  
22 do that. The United States Supreme Court is still  
23 upholding the Voting Rights Act and the  
24 Constitution. We had the Milligan case recently.  
25 There was some success in the case out of Louisiana.

1 So I think that, you know, we still have a viable  
2 Supreme Court on those issues, the laws have not  
3 been overturned, but we're using a different law in  
4 Texas.

5 Kind of like -- one of the ironies,  
6 Senator, is if you go to the floor debate in 2021,  
7 and if you go to the floor debate in 2011, what  
8 you'll find is that the state said they weren't  
9 required to adhere to the cases in the Fifth Circuit  
10 that required coalition seats, okay? They said we  
11 don't ascribe to that, so we don't do them.

12 So if you go to the floor -- and so  
13 for now, for people to come forward and say that  
14 Petteway now frees us when you didn't follow the law  
15 prior to Petteway anyway, they didn't create any  
16 coalition districts. They refused. We tendered  
17 districts like that for them to create, and they  
18 said, Because they're not one-race districts, we  
19 don't have to follow that. And that's documented  
20 part of the record.

21 SENATOR MILES: Gotcha. So these are  
22 the most protective classes there are, in summary?

23 GARY BLEDSOE: Yes.

24 SENATOR MILES: And, Mr. Chairman,  
25 Senator King, I just want to put that on record that

1 there -- these are protected classes. And you've  
2 stated to this body multiple times that you would  
3 make sure -- before bringing the bill forward, that  
4 you would make sure, sir, that the bill would be in  
5 all legal aspects to protect our body, this  
6 institution as well.

7 And the man who fought these bills and  
8 designed these protected classes is here to say that  
9 they're not -- these are protected to the -- I mean,  
10 to the utmost. They have the ultimate protection.  
11 But yet we're still going to remove them. You  
12 understand what I'm saying, Mr. Chairman?

13 SENATOR KING: I understand what  
14 you're saying.

15 SENATOR MILES: And lastly -- and this  
16 is the last question.

17 SENATOR KING: Wait. Do you want me  
18 to respond to that?

19 SENATOR MILES: Yes, sir.

20 SENATOR KING: Oh.

21 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator King.

22 SENATOR MILES: Yeah.

23 SENATOR KING: Thank you. And I do  
24 understand what you're saying, and I really  
25 appreciate, Mr. Bledsoe, and you've always been so

1 involved in the redistricting process for as long as  
2 I can remember. I also recognize that you're an  
3 attorney representing your client and you're making  
4 the same arguments here that you made in the  
5 pleadings that you've had before the case in San  
6 Antonio -- I'm sorry -- in El Paso.

7               So I understand you're representing  
8 your client. I understand your statements. I don't  
9 agree with them, but I will say that, as to the DOJ  
10 letter, which you mentioned several times, I don't  
11 agree with the substance of the DOJ letter. I've  
12 said that repeatedly throughout the process. I did  
13 not take that into consideration with this bill --  
14 with this map.

15               In fact, that letter was not addressed  
16 to the legislature. It was addressed to the  
17 Attorney General, who responded directly to the DOJ,  
18 disagreeing with their conclusions. It was also  
19 responded by the litigation team for the Attorney  
20 General as they respond -- and they file -- with the  
21 filings they made before the Court three-judge panel  
22 in El Paso regarding it, and the Court has ruled on  
23 that.

24               And then it was addressed to the  
25 governor as well. And I'm assuming the governor's

1 response to it was, in part, calling the legislature  
2 and putting that on -- putting Congressional  
3 redistricting on the call, although I can't speak  
4 for the governor, and I can't speak for the Attorney  
5 General either.

6 But I don't agree with the conclusions  
7 that were reported in that letter of the DOJ, and  
8 that didn't -- and their letter had nothing to do  
9 with my intent or to -- or with my desire to be on  
10 this committee or file this map. But I hope that  
11 answers.

12 SENATOR MILES: Yeah, last question.

13 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator Miles.

14 SENATOR MILES: Last question. In the  
15 20 years that you've been fighting redistricting  
16 cases in the state of Texas, when it finally gets to  
17 the last court, have you ever lost one?

18 GARY BLEDSOE: We haven't lost yet,  
19 Senator. We -- every -- the sad thing is in  
20 redistricting, since the passage of the Voting  
21 Rights Act, the state has been found guilty of  
22 discrimination against Latinos and African Americans  
23 every single decade.

24 SENATOR MILES: Every single decade.

25 GARY BLEDSOE: And so that's the issue

1 here.

2 And I would say, Senator King, one  
3 thing that's very clear is this bill does attempt  
4 to. So I don't know what your intention was, what  
5 you're saying, but you didn't draft -- you didn't  
6 draw up the map. So the map clearly is a  
7 manifestation of the Trump letter. And I think what  
8 Senator Miles is getting at is there should be some  
9 unpacking that goes on by this committee, and there  
10 should be a process with integrity because we know  
11 that right now the process has no integrity.

12 Because with all these public hearings  
13 and all the individuals who talk, and there has been  
14 a lot of specific testimony. I know that's been one  
15 of the things talked about today. There's been all  
16 kinds of testimony about how -- you know, whether  
17 neighborhoods in Fort Worth have taken up, bottled  
18 up, and joined into districts in Dallas for the  
19 first time, or how districts in Dallas are cut out  
20 from the 30th district and put in another district  
21 for the first time.

22 You know, there's so much specific  
23 information that's actually in the record about what  
24 you do and how. For example, the 35th: When the  
25 state put together with one of the plaintiff's

1 parties, the 35th district put that forward as a  
2 minority opportunity district, got that upheld by  
3 the Courts in the 2011 round, and now you destroy  
4 the 35th congressional district.

5                   So, you know, Senator, you know, one  
6 has got to be real serious. You know, one can say  
7 that one did not actually try to implement the DOJ  
8 letter, but then that seems to me that this -- the  
9 stated purpose of this whole proceeding is to come  
10 up with these new seats, and that that's what the  
11 map does. And the map drawers who drew it, I guess  
12 -- I think Mr. Kincaid was involved this time again.  
13 So if Mr. Kincaid is involved, I think that, indeed  
14 -- that you're talking about implementing the  
15 objectives of that letter.

16                   SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator Miles.

17                   SENATOR MILES: But let's get -- let's  
18 keep this in a question format. The last question I  
19 have, and this is the last question for you,  
20 Mr. Bledsoe. If we're getting the elephant out of  
21 the room, could -- would you agree with me when I  
22 say that every case that's been brought against the  
23 state of Texas for redistricting against black and  
24 brown, the state of Texas has lost; yes or no?

25                   GARY BLEDSOE: I don't know about



1 every case, but they've lost every decade.

2 SENATOR MILES: Every decade. Every  
3 decade.

4 GARY BLEDSOE: So I don't know that  
5 every single case, but I don't think --

6 SENATOR MILES: But in this particular  
7 case --

8 GARY BLEDSOE: Yeah.

9 SENATOR MILES: -- we all know the  
10 reasoning, would you agree with me, that when -- if  
11 this push -- if this map is pushed through, which is  
12 voted through, it will give Donald J. Trump the time  
13 that he needs to secure the House -- U.S. House  
14 before that case will ever see the highest court to  
15 be reversed? Do you understand what I'm asking you?  
16 Is that a true statement?

17 GARY BLEDSOE: Well, I think it's a  
18 distinct possibility because it takes time for cases  
19 to go up.

20 SENATOR MILES: To move through the  
21 Courts.

22 GARY BLEDSOE: And so people  
23 understand that, and so the likelihood of harm to  
24 the minority community is --

25 SENATOR MILES: Will be done.

1 GARY BLEDSOE: -- yeah, is prescient.

2 SENATOR MILES: It will be done.

3 GARY BLEDSOE: And so that's a whole  
4 problem with this map. And so, Senator, I think  
5 what we know is --

6 SENATOR MILES: Last question.

7 GARY BLEDSOE: -- this is a matter of  
8 racism, right? And I'm hoping --

9 SENATOR MILES: Could you say that  
10 again?

11 GARY BLEDSOE: This is a matter of  
12 racism.

13 SENATOR MILES: Thank you.

14 GARY BLEDSOE: And so I'm hoping that  
15 people understand that if you don't share the  
16 beliefs of our state from the past, you know, that,  
17 at some point, people have to stand up and say that,  
18 I don't believe in that, that maybe I'm going to  
19 stand up for one time for black and brown people.  
20 But, you know, we have a sordid history in our state  
21 in terms of not respecting black and brown votes,  
22 and we're moving back in the other direction. And  
23 it's so obvious with the numbers.

24 And I just would reach out to you and  
25 say, Look, you know, would you guys put the skids on

1 this because this process is not done in the light  
2 of day? And let us move forward with the litigation  
3 in El Paso. We don't know what the Court's going to  
4 do. We may win. We may not win. I don't know.  
5 But let's at least allow that to happen instead of  
6 going through with this process for clearly wrongful  
7 reasons.

8 SENATOR MILES: Thank you, Mr.  
9 Bledsoe. I appreciate your testimony.

10 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Members --

11 SENATOR MILES: Thank you,  
12 Senator King --

13 SENATOR KING: Yes.

14 SENATOR MILES: -- and thank you,  
15 Chairman.

16 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Any other  
17 questions?

18 Senator King.

19 SENATOR KING: Oh, no, I'm sorry. I  
20 just had my light on.

21 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Okay, Members.  
22 We'll -- thank you. This panel's excused. We'll  
23 continue with our public testimony. At this time,  
24 there are no other witnesses registered to testify  
25 on the legislation on Senate Bill 4. We'll repeat

1 some names that we have previously called just to be  
2 diligent in making sure that if they are here and  
3 missed the time that they were called, they have  
4 another opportunity, a final opportunity.

5                   Anthony Gutierrez, we were told, has  
6 already exited, Nick Mollberg, Becky Bullard,  
7 Sarah Beck, John McKiernan-Gonzalez, Sarah Cinco.  
8 Just one more additional opportunity beyond the  
9 several times these names have been called to make  
10 sure if you are still here. We show you as  
11 registered, but you have not yet testified.

12                   Members, we'll give them just a minute  
13 in case they're in an adjacent overflow room to join  
14 us.

15                   Okay, Members. At this time, it  
16 doesn't appear that we have any other witnesses here  
17 remaining to testify on Senate Bill 4, so public  
18 testimony will close.

19                   Members, I believe Senator Miles has  
20 an additional question or two for Senator King.  
21 Senator Miles, is that correct?

22                   SENATOR MILES: Yes. Yes.

23                   SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator Miles,  
24 you're recognized.

25                   SENATOR MILES: Thank you,

1 Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Senator King, and thank  
2 you, body, for participating and being patient.

3 Senator King, I think some of these we  
4 may have answered around, but I'm going to ask some  
5 direct questions if you don't mind, so that we can  
6 get a clarification. And I hate to sound redundant,  
7 but this is what's necessary.

8 Chairman King, what was your  
9 understanding of the DOJ's letter regarding  
10 redistricting?

11 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator King.

12 SENATOR KING: Thank you. It made  
13 some assertions with regard to coalition districts,  
14 and it was -- as I mentioned earlier, it was  
15 addressed to the governor and the Lieutenant -- and  
16 the Attorney General. Both have responded. It was  
17 not addressed to the legislature. The legislature  
18 has not responded, and I really don't have any  
19 response with regard to it either.

20 I haven't talked to anybody at the  
21 DOJ. No one at the DOJ has attempted to talk to me.  
22 The letter says what it says. I disagree with it.  
23 I believe -- the map that the legislature passed in  
24 2021, I believe, was legal. I don't believe it  
25 contained any of the violations or now contains any

1 of the violations that the DOJ suggested.

2 And -- but, you know, attorneys have  
3 different opinions sometimes. I guess that's why  
4 there's trials, and these are things that attorneys  
5 argue in court. But my position on the letter is  
6 that it's not a subject for the legislature to  
7 consider or take up.

8 SENATOR MILES: With that said,  
9 Senator King, what was your primary objective during  
10 this whole rigged-districting process, as I call it?  
11 What was your objective, sir?

12 SENATOR KING: All right. I hope I've  
13 been very clear from the beginning. My hope was  
14 that we would increase the number of Republican  
15 congressional members elected from Texas. A  
16 secondary objective, as we listen to testimony  
17 during our regional hearings, became that we could  
18 make the map more compact in some districts. And so  
19 -- but the primary objective has been to increase  
20 partisan representation to increase Republican seats  
21 in the U.S. House.

22 SENATOR MILES: And was compliance  
23 with the DOJ letter one of your primary objectives  
24 during the process?

25 SENATOR KING: I think the overriding

1 thing is that -- well, there's no use doing  
2 redistricting unless you try to -- unless you're  
3 drawing a map that complies with the law because the  
4 map will not survive scrutiny. And so obviously, as  
5 I've also said, I would not file a bill until I was  
6 convinced that it was legal in all respects.

7 And I -- before I filed it, I had the  
8 map reviewed by our legal counsel, who has a -- and  
9 they have a long history in this field. And I also  
10 checked with the House and asked what the -- and  
11 tried to find out what their counsel had said.

12 SENATOR MILES: Uh-huh.

13 SENATOR KING: And I believe both  
14 counsels representing the House and the Senate  
15 concluded that the SB 4 and HB 4 in the House are  
16 legal under all applicable law.

17 SENATOR MILES: And were you concerned  
18 that failure to comply with the DOJ letter would  
19 result in a legal challenge? Was that any of your  
20 concern at all?

21 SENATOR KING: No. I haven't been  
22 concerned about that. I mean, there's already --

23 SENATOR MILES: Good.

24 SENATOR KING: -- a legal challenge  
25 going on to the existing map, and the DOJ, which was

1 a party to that litigation, had withdrawn. I -- no.  
2 That was of no concern.

3 SENATOR MILES: No concern. Did you  
4 consider at any time an alternative redistricting  
5 plan that did not comply with the DOJ letter?

6 SENATOR KING: No. I considered  
7 drafting a map, and we -- and I wondered if other  
8 Senators might submit a map. But when I saw the  
9 House map -- I'm obviously aware of its origin.  
10 When I saw the House map, and we reviewed it, it  
11 seemed to meet my objectives of electing more  
12 Republicans and secondary objective of improving  
13 compactness within the map. And so I decided to  
14 adopt it as it were and filed it as a companion to  
15 HB 4.

16 SENATOR MILES: And last question.  
17 I'm assuming you were reporting to the lieutenant  
18 governor on this, correct? That's who you got  
19 your --

20 SENATOR KING: Well, the lieutenant  
21 governor is the presiding officer of the Senate --

22 SENATOR MILES: Uh-huh. Yeah.

23 SENATOR KING: And he asked me if I  
24 would be interested in chairing the committee. And  
25 so I've interacted with him in the same manner that



1 every chair interacts with the presiding officer.

2 SENATOR MILES: Yeah. Did you express  
3 any concern about the potential of racial  
4 gerrymandering or intentional discrimination while  
5 attempting to comply with the DOJ letter to the  
6 lieutenant governor? Did you all have any  
7 discussion in that manner? Gerrymandering?

8 SENATOR KING: I think I mentioned to  
9 him that I thought the DOJ letter unnecessarily  
10 confused this process.

11 SENATOR MILES: You thought the DOJ  
12 letter confused the process?

13 SENATOR KING: Yes. I --

14 SENATOR MILES: You expressed that  
15 with him?

16 SENATOR KING: I -- yeah. I think in  
17 discussing it with him, I've mentioned that the DOJ  
18 letter, I thought, unnecessarily confused the  
19 redistricting process.

20 SENATOR MILES: And can you share his  
21 response with us?

22 SENATOR KING: To be honest, I don't  
23 recall.

24 SENATOR MILES: Don't recall. Okay.  
25 All right. That's all I've got, except for closing.

1 SENATOR KING: Thank you.

2 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Members, any other  
3 questions? Senator King, any follow-up comment?

4 SENATOR KING: Oh, I was just going to  
5 say that I can tell you that he told me that one of  
6 the reasons he wanted me to chair it is because I  
7 had some background in redistricting, but also he  
8 wanted to make sure that every T was crossed and  
9 every I was dotted.

10 SENATOR MILES: Well, I think I can  
11 share this with you. I've already told you. If I  
12 had to pick anyone -- he picked the right one for --  
13 to chair this committee.

14 SENATOR KING: Well, thank you.

15 SENATOR MILES: Senator King, I've  
16 expressed that with you already.

17 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Okay. Members,  
18 any other comments or feedback? If not, we'll call  
19 for a vote at this time.

20 SENATOR MILES: No. I got to close,  
21 Mr. Chair.

22 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Senator Miles for  
23 his closing.

24 SENATOR MILES: For -- let me close.

25 SENATOR CREIGHTON: You're recognized.

1                   SENATOR MILES: And then I'll let you  
2 all vote.

3                   Let me thank each and every one of my  
4 colleagues for being patient with me throughout this  
5 process. As I stated before, this is having a  
6 serious impact on the district that I was born and  
7 raised in. And I have the honor and the pleasure of  
8 representing three of them -- three districts. One  
9 of which still stands, which you packed pretty  
10 heavily, one of which you've done away with  
11 completely, and one on my east side that you've --  
12 the little, small piece that I had that you all  
13 moved completely out of my district.

14                  You know, so I'm truly saddened, but  
15 I guess, at this point, I should not be shocked by  
16 the fact that my colleagues, you all, have openly  
17 embraced an invitation to engage in overt racism,  
18 mindful of our sordid history of disenfranchising  
19 people who look like me, Members.

20                  The Trump DOJ letter asks you to  
21 discriminate against black and brown people, not  
22 against Democrats. And we're sitting here because,  
23 unfortunately, sadly to me, painful to me, you  
24 agreed to do it. You and drawing this map  
25 eliminates two districts where people who look like

1 me voted to elect people who look like me in the 9th  
2 and the 33rd. You took the 35th from a Latino  
3 community, which is a little bitty sliver of mine.

4 Let's be real. You cannot keep saying  
5 the process is race blind when it affects black and  
6 brown communities so drastically. This is all --  
7 all about race. You have packed and cracked our  
8 district so much that they look like Humpty Dumpty.  
9 These lines are not cohesive or straight. All you  
10 have done is gerrymandered the already gerrymandered  
11 districts. And that's what really happened. We  
12 were already gerrymandered, and you all came in and  
13 gerrymandered them even more, which is downright  
14 just a shame and disrespectful.

15 I want you to know -- and I mean no  
16 personal harm to any one of you. I mean no personal  
17 hatred to any one of you. But I got to say this:  
18 History will remember, the people of Texas will  
19 remember how torn through communities of interest  
20 and disenfranchisement for black and brown voters.  
21 You have joined the Night Riders, the plantation  
22 owners, in seeking to make people of color lesser.  
23 Because we don't have a voice. I want you to think  
24 about that as you go home tonight.

25 Let's say the quiet part out loud,

1 President Trump is a racist, and the leadership of  
2 this state and the members of this community are  
3 following the marching orders to get him five more  
4 seats. That was said publicly. That's  
5 unconstitutional and unconscionable. It really is,  
6 no matter how you feel about it. The state of Texas  
7 went to the U.S. Supreme Court five times in 26  
8 years to stop people who look like me. Five times,  
9 the state of Texas have gone in 26 years who -- to  
10 stop people who look like me and Chairman Hinojosa,  
11 black and brown citizens, from voting. And this  
12 rigged redistricting is simply a continuation of a  
13 bigoted mindset.

14 I know you all don't like what you're  
15 hearing, but it's clear that, especially in sitting  
16 through this hearing, that you all do not care what  
17 the public says. You are just going along to get  
18 along for the good President of this United States.  
19 These seats don't belong to Donald J. Trump. He's  
20 not owning -- he doesn't own anything, and we should  
21 not be auctioned off our votes to get him five more  
22 seats, Mr. Chairman. These seats belong to the  
23 people of Texas, the great state of Texas.

24 This is a farce. This is racism.  
25 This is discriminatory, and I will not take part in

1 it. I will not give any ballot by voting on this,  
2 Mr. Chairman. So when you take your vote, clerk,  
3 please call Boris Miles' name, and there will be an  
4 empty -- it will be silence because I will not be  
5 voting on this. And I thank you all.

6 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Thank you,  
7 Senator Miles.

8 Senator King?

9 SENATOR KING: Thank you,  
10 Mr. Chairman. And, Senator Miles, I really  
11 appreciate the fact when I called you and -- to  
12 discuss -- to talk about serving on the committee,  
13 and you know, you told me from day one that you  
14 would be strong in your opinions and that you would  
15 do what you believed was in the best interest of  
16 representing your district. And I have nothing but  
17 respect and friendship for you, even though we  
18 strongly disagree on this issue.

19 SENATOR MILES: Likewise.

20 SENATOR KING: I will say that time  
21 will tell whether this map elects more or less  
22 people of color. I actually have no idea which it  
23 will do. I will say that the reason I'm supporting  
24 this map is because I think the things that have  
25 occurred with the current Republican Congress and

1 Republican Senate and Republican President, even  
2 just over the last seven months, have been historic,  
3 and I want those to continue. And if we lose the  
4 Republican House, it will not continue.

5 Just look at the secure border we now  
6 have. Just look at the tremendous progress in  
7 stopping the flow of deadly fentanyl, something  
8 that's the leading killer of people, I think, 18 to  
9 35 across our country. The historic tax cuts were  
10 continued. We're seeing an amazing reset of the  
11 world trade imbalance. Our military is back in the  
12 business of national security and not social  
13 experiments. We're standing up to Iran and to China  
14 and to Russia.

15 We're seeing an end to men and boys in  
16 women and girls' sports. We're seeing a pushback  
17 against the rampant anti-Semitism that we saw on our  
18 college campuses. We're deporting dangerous  
19 criminal aliens, Venezuelan gangs, and people with -  
20 - child molesters and rapists and drug dealers that  
21 had come over within all the other immigrants over  
22 these last -- the previous four years.

23 I tell you I was in law enforcement  
24 when Castro opened the prisons in 1980, and we had  
25 an estimated 10,000 hardcore criminals that came

1 across. And in law enforcement, it took us years --  
2 I've dealt with some of them in Fort Worth -- it  
3 took us years to work those through the system and  
4 get them out of the public. And we have let  
5 hundreds of thousands of hardcore criminal aliens  
6 come across in the last four years. And my  
7 grandchildren will be dealing with the impact of  
8 that, and it's -- and for public safety in our  
9 country.

10 I could go on and on, but these are  
11 things that have occurred in just the last now eight  
12 months. And if we lose the U.S. House, we lose the  
13 continuation of those and the advancement of things  
14 like that. And so that's why I want to see Texas  
15 elect more Republicans to the U.S. House. I believe  
16 this map does that. And that's why I am asking the  
17 committee respectfully to vote for this map.

18 With that, I also want to say I really  
19 appreciate -- I know everybody's worked really hard  
20 in the last few weeks, and we've had a lot of  
21 hearings and a lot of discussions. And I just  
22 really appreciate everybody, Republican and  
23 Democrat, their courtesy, how we've shown respect to  
24 one another, and I know everybody has had to study  
25 hard because these are difficult issues. And I just



1 really appreciate everyone on the committee, your  
2 participation, and your effort.

3 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Okay, Members.  
4 Any other comments? Thank you, Senator King.  
5 Appreciate your comments, Senator Miles.

6 Senator Sparks moves that Senate  
7 Bill 4 be reported favorably to the full Senate with  
8 the recommendation that it do pass and be printed.  
9 The clerk will call the roll.

10 CLERK HERRELL: Senator Alvarado,  
11 Senator Hinojosa, Senator Hughes.

12 SENATOR HUGHES: Yes.

13 CLERK HERRELL: Senator Miles,  
14 Senator Parker.

15 SENATOR PARKER: Aye.

16 CLERK HERRELL: Senator Paxton.

17 SENATOR PAXTON: Aye.

18 CLERK HERRELL: Senator Sparks.

19 SENATOR SPARKS: Aye.

20 CLERK HERRELL: Senator Creighton.

21 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Aye.

22 CLERK HERRELL: Senator King.

23 SENATOR KING: Aye.

24 SENATOR CREIGHTON: And I would ask,  
25 as Chair, the clerk would please recognize that

1 Senator Hinojosa has submitted a motion in writing  
2 to vote no on this legislation. But the official  
3 count in committee --

4 CLERK HERRELL: Will be six.

5 SENATOR CREIGHTON: -- will be six  
6 ayes --

7 CLERK HERRELL: One nay.

8 SENATOR CREIGHTON: -- and one nay.

9 CLERK HERRELL: One absent and one  
10 present.

11 SENATOR CREIGHTON: One absent and one  
12 present not voting.

13 CLERK HERRELL: You can hand it back  
14 off to Senator King.

15 SENATOR CREIGHTON: Chairman, I'll  
16 hand the gavel back to you to conclude the hearing.

17 CLERK HERRELL: Thank you, sir.

18 SENATOR KING: Thank you,  
19 Senator Creighton, for handling the hearing today.  
20 The practice in the Senate is if it's the Chair's  
21 bill, then you turn the chairmanship over to the  
22 Vice Chair to conduct the hearing.

23 Members, again, thank you everybody  
24 for your time today. Thanks to all the public who  
25 testified. Thanks to everyone who was watching

1 online. I'm sure we had comments through the  
2 portal, and we thank you for each of those.

3 Members, is there any other business  
4 to come before the committee?

5 (No audible response)

6 SENATOR KING: Hearing none,  
7 Senator Hughes moves that the committee stand in  
8 recess, subject to the call of the Chair. Thank  
9 you, everyone.

10 (MEETING ADJOURNED)

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CERTIFICATE OF TRANSCRIPTIONIST

I certify that the foregoing is a true and accurate transcript of the digital recording provided to me in this matter.

I do further certify that I am neither a relative, nor employee, nor attorney of any of the parties to this action, and that I am not financially interested in the action.

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO under my hand and of office on this 19th day of September, 2025.



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