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REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, JULY 26, 2011

6:00 P.M.

WIREGRASS RANCH HIGH SCHOOL

WESLEY CHAPEL, FLORIDA

Transcribed by:

CLARA C. ROTRUCK

Court Reporter

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

2 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: If we could
3 get everybody to find a seat, we are going to
4 start momentarily. If we could get everyone to
5 find their seat, please. If we could get
6 everyone to grab their seat, please, we are
7 ready to start. Please find a seat.

8 Okay. Ladies and gentlemen, if we could
9 please get everyone's attention, we are going
10 to go ahead and get started. My name is Will
11 Weatherford, and I would like to welcome
12 everyone to the Joint Senate/House
13 Redistricting Hearing, and it is now called to
14 order.

15 First of all, I want to thank everyone for
16 taking the time to come out tonight in
17 beautiful Wesley Chapel, and Pasco County is
18 doing us proud tonight, and as you can see, we
19 have brought a lot of friends from the
20 Legislature to meet you and to hear from you,
21 and we really appreciate your participation, so
22 thank you for being here. We also want to
23 thank Wiregrass High School for allowing us to
24 use this wonderful facility.

25 And I also want you to know that I, along

1 with my colleague and co-Chairman, Senator Don
2 Gaetz, will be chairing today's hearing. It
3 will also be webcast live by the Florida
4 Channel over the Internet.

5 Before we get started and start going into
6 the public testimony, I would like to give
7 every member of the committee a chance to very
8 briefly introduce themselves and let you all
9 know who they are and where they are from. We
10 have a very diverse group here from both
11 parties and from all over the state that have
12 come to listen to you and to listen to the
13 concerns of Pasco County, and so we would like
14 to give them an opportunity.

15 But before we do that, I would like to
16 allow Representative John Legg, who is also a
17 Representative of Pasco County and one of the
18 co-Chairs of our congressional committee, to
19 speak and welcome everyone. So if you would,
20 please, everyone recognize Representative John
21 Legg.

22 REPRESENTATIVE LEGG: Thank you, Speaker
23 Designate, Representative Weatherford. I just
24 want to say welcome, everyone, to Pasco County.
25 I am a little biased to this area. I think it

1 is one of the greatest places on earth. But
2 the thing that is even better about this place
3 is its people, and I think tonight that members
4 of this committee will see some very passionate
5 people who really care deeply about this state
6 and this country who have a variety of views
7 about the lines on how they should be drawn,
8 and I just want to welcome members of the
9 State, the legislative -- all over the state to
10 this area, and also the people of this county,
11 and you do us proud, you work hard, we all have
12 various views and I am very proud -- proud of
13 this group and I look forward to hearing from
14 you guys tonight.

15 And for those of you who don't know me, my
16 name is John Legg. I represent the west side
17 of the county.

18 REPRESENTATIVE CLARKE-REED: Good evening,
19 I am State Representative Gwyndolen
20 Clarke-Reed, and I represent House District 92,
21 which is the northeast portion of Broward
22 County.

23 REPRESENTATIVE ROGERS: Hazelle Rogers,
24 State Representative, District 94 in Broward
25 County that boasts 1.8 million residents, one

1 of the most diverse counties in the state of
2 Florida. It is good to be here.

3 REPRESENTATIVE REED: Good evening, I am
4 Betty Reed. I represent District 59 in
5 Hillsborough County, which is Tampa.

6 REPRESENTATIVE CAMPBELL: Good evening,
7 Representative Daphne Campbell, District 108
8 from Miami.

9 REPRESENTATIVE JENNE: State
10 Representative Evan Jenne, District 100 in
11 southeast Broward, and thank you all for having
12 us here.

13 REPRESENTATIVE CORCORAN: Representative
14 Richard Corcoran from District 45, which is
15 Pasco and Pinellas Counties. Thank you for
16 being here.

17 REPRESENTATIVE STARGEL: Good evening, I
18 am Representative Kelli Stargel from Polk
19 County, District 64, and I love Pasco County, I
20 actually graduated from Land O' Lakes High
21 School.

22 REPRESENTATIVE ROUSON: Good afternoon,
23 Darryl Rouson. I represent District 55, which
24 is south Pinellas County, north Manatee, north
25 Sarasota and one little precinct in

1 Hillsborough County.

2 SENATOR JOYNER: Good evening, my name is
3 Arthenia Joyner, I am State Senator, District
4 18, representing portions of Hillsborough,
5 Pinellas and Manatee Counties.

6 SENATOR NORMAN: Hello, I am Senator Jim
7 Norman, representing Senate District 12, and
8 members that are all here today, welcome to
9 God's country. This is my district, and thank
10 you all for coming out, what an absolutely
11 wonderful turn-out, and this is the kind of
12 leadership that we told everybody that attended
13 tonight that would be representing Pasco
14 County, and thank you all for being here
15 tonight.

16 SENATOR SIPLIN: Jim, they like you.
17 State Senator Gary Siplin, Orlando,
18 Florida, District 19, Democrat.

19 REPRESENTATIVE NEHR: My name is Peter
20 Nehr. I am a State Representative from
21 District 48, which encompasses north Pinellas
22 County and south Pasco.

23 REPRESENTATIVE PLAKON: Good evening, I am
24 Scott Plakon, Florida House District 37, Orange
25 and Seminole Counties.

1 REPRESENTATIVE PASSIDOMO: Kathleen
2 Passidomo, Representative, District 76, from
3 Collier County. I represent Naples, Marco
4 Island, Everglades City, and I just want you to
5 know I spent a good deal of money in your
6 wonderful mall here, so I helped your -- thank
7 you.

8 REPRESENTATIVE GOODSON: Good evening,
9 Representative Tom Goodson. I represent House
10 District 29, Brevard County and Indian River
11 County.

12 REPRESENTATIVE CALDWELL: Good evening,
13 Representative Matt Caldwell, District 73,
14 which is Lee County, Ft. Myers, Lehigh Acres.

15 REPRESENTATIVE BURGIN: Good evening,
16 Representative Rachel Burgin from the city of
17 Tampa and eastern Hillsborough County, District
18 56.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WORKMAN: Hello, Ritch
20 Workman, District 30, it is Brevard County, the
21 Space Coast.

22 REPRESENTATIVE BRODEUR: Good evening, my
23 name is Jason Brodeur, State Representative
24 from District 33, which I am proud to represent
25 parts of Volusia County, Seminole County and

1 Orange County. Thank you.

2 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Steve Precourt,
3 House District 41, from the heart of central
4 Florida, basically Disney World and that
5 environment.

6 REPRESENTATIVE HOOPER: I am Ed Hooper,
7 House District 50, which is central Pinellas
8 County.

9 REPRESENTATIVE FRISHE: I am
10 Representative Jim Frishe, and I represent the
11 western edge of Pinellas County, all the
12 beaches. It is a tough duty.

13 REPRESENTATIVE EISNAUGLE: Good evening,
14 Eric Eisnaugle from Orlando, representing
15 District 40, which is -- takes in a portion of
16 Orange County.

17 REPRESENTATIVE DIAZ: Good evening, Jose
18 Diaz. I am from Miami, Florida, and I
19 represent District 115.

20 REPRESENTATIVE JULIEN: Good evening, John
21 Patrick Julien, representing House District
22 104, Miami-Dade County. It is a pleasure to be
23 here.

24 REPRESENTATIVE BERNARD: Good evening,
25 State Representative Mack Bernard, District 84,

1 West Palm Beach, Florida.

2 REPRESENTATIVE CHESTNUT: Good evening,
3 Chuck Chestnut, House District 23, a portion of
4 Marion County and a portion of Alachua County.

5 REPRESENTATIVE BAXLEY: Good evening,
6 Dennis Baxley, Florida House District 24,
7 Ocala, Marion County.

8 REPRESENTATIVE HORNER: Ocala fans.
9 Mike Horner, District 79, Osceola,
10 Okeechobee, Orange and Polk County.

11 REPRESENTATIVE CRISAFULLI: Good evening,
12 Steve Crisafulli, House District 32, which is
13 Brevard and east Orange County.

14 REPRESENTATIVE TAYLOR: Good evening,
15 everyone. My name is Dwayne Taylor. I
16 represent House District 27, which is in
17 Volusia County, I represent six cities there,
18 and I am glad to be here tonight with you in
19 Weatherford Chapel -- I mean Wesley Chapel.

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: All right.
21 Thank you very much, members. And ladies and
22 gentlemen, if we could, please, give a round of
23 applause. We have a lot of members came a long
24 way to hear you speak tonight. Thank you all
25 for being here. We are going to get moving

1 here, there's a lot to achieve and a lot of
2 people to hear from.

3 First I want folks to know that our sole
4 purpose here is to hear from the public about
5 how you believe the legal standards governing
6 redistricting should be applied in our
7 community here so that you are represented
8 properly both in Washington, DC, and in
9 Tallahassee. That is fairly, equitably and
10 sensibly, I might add.

11 Our procedures today are simple, but they
12 are very important. It is important that you
13 sign in so that we can create an accurate
14 public record of all the attendees and the
15 speakers. Also, you may opt to join our e-mail
16 lists so that we can keep you informed of how
17 the redistricting process is working
18 throughout. If you have not signed in, please
19 raise your hand, and a staff member will give
20 you an attendance card. If you wish to speak
21 today and you have not filled out an attendance
22 card, please raise your hand, and we will get
23 you a card and so we can make sure not to miss
24 your testimony.

25 Before we begin, for a few minutes I would

1 like to recognize my co-Chair, Senator Don
2 Gaetz, to explain today's hearing and how it
3 fits into the redistricting process. Senator
4 Gaetz.

5 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
6 Mr. Chairman, and let me take a point of
7 personal privilege. I am from the Panhandle of
8 Florida. I represent five counties in coastal
9 northwest Florida. I am from the other
10 chamber, I am from the Senate, so I don't have
11 a dog in the fight down here, but let me say
12 this: You are extraordinarily fortunate to
13 have in your legislative delegation the next
14 Speaker of the House of the State of Florida,
15 the Honorable Will Weatherford.

16 Every ten years, the Legislature is
17 required by the Constitution to redistrict the
18 state based on increases, decreases and
19 movements of population. Now, because Florida
20 has grown more than other states in the last
21 ten years, we will move up from 25 members of
22 the U.S. House of Representatives representing
23 Florida to 27 members, and we get two more
24 electoral votes in the presidential election.
25 Because some parts of our state have increased

1 or decreased disproportionately in population,
2 many Senate and House districts will change
3 their boundaries, either adding or losing
4 population, or being changed in configuration
5 altogether.

6 When redistricting is completed,
7 congressional districts by federal law must be
8 equal in population, equal in population, and
9 contain 696,345 people. That is for one
10 congressional district, not more, not less.
11 The 40 Senate districts, the state Senate
12 districts, must be nearly equal at about
13 470,000 people, and the 120 House districts
14 must be nearly equal at about 156,700 people.

15 Now, there are displays at the front of
16 the room -- or the back of the room here when
17 you came in showing maps that have the current
18 boundaries of districts in this area of the
19 state, and also you can see over there a chart
20 showing the number of persons that have to be
21 added to or subtracted from current districts
22 to achieve equal representation. And this is a
23 part of the state that has grown substantially
24 in population in the last ten years.

25 But equality of representation is not the

1 only legal requirement that redistricting plans
2 have to meet. The laws and the important court
3 cases governing redistricting are explained in
4 detail on the House and the Senate websites.
5 Those websites are listed in the "Redistricting
6 2012" brochure that was available to all of
7 you -- I see many of you have it in your
8 hands -- it was available when you came in.
9 Now, this "Redistricting 2012" brochure
10 summarizes federal and state laws and outlines
11 topics which we really need to hear from you
12 about at today's hearing. If you did not get a
13 copy when you came in, you can certainly get a
14 copy on the way out, or our staff will be happy
15 to give you a copy while you are sitting here.

16 The brochure lists the House and Senate
17 websites, and these websites are really good,
18 they are packed with information about
19 redistricting in Florida, including an
20 explanation of the laws and important court
21 cases we have to follow governing
22 redistricting. The two websites are
23 complementary, they are updated frequently.
24 Visit both, check them out often. It is a
25 great way to stay current about how your new

1 congressional Senate and House districts are
2 taking shape.

3 The websites also deliver to your
4 fingertips all of the demographic information
5 that we received from the U.S. Bureau of the
6 Census, demographic information that will be
7 used in drawing districts, and the exact same
8 computer programs that legislators and
9 professional staff will use.

10 Any member of the public can participate
11 in building plans or in seeing plans that have
12 already been submitted -- submitted by
13 legislators or by citizens or interest groups.
14 Before, during and after this hearing, House
15 and Senate staff are available to show anybody
16 the simple steps to getting on-line, building
17 districts, observing the districts that are
18 already there that you can see, and if you
19 wish, submitting a plan of your own for this
20 area of the state or the whole state now and in
21 the weeks to come. And I can tell you that I
22 am techno stupid, and it took them 15 minutes
23 to get me familiar with these websites and how
24 to use them, so I know you will be able to do a
25 lot better.

1 Recommendations from citizens and groups
2 of citizens will be made publicly available as
3 soon as we get your input. In fact, there are
4 already 16 maps which have been submitted. So
5 if somebody says, "Show me the maps," there are
6 16 maps on the website. Most of them are also
7 depicted in charts and maps on that side of the
8 room as you came in. I saw many of you looking
9 at them. You can look at them as you go out as
10 well. And we have received already about 70
11 written ideas for maps that are available on
12 the Web. So we have gotten -- there are 16
13 maps already produced and available for you,
14 and about 70 written submissions that say,
15 "Here is how we think our community or our
16 districts ought to be drawn." The submission
17 of proposed maps that makes sense for this
18 community is the single most effective form of
19 public participation in the redistricting
20 process.

21 Now, the redistricting schedule under
22 which we are operating, the timeline is imposed
23 by the State Constitution. We can't change the
24 timeline. The Constitution does not permit the
25 Legislature to vote on state legislative maps

1 before the second year after the census.
2 Census was taken in 2010, so our Constitution
3 says we can't vote before 2012. But we have
4 accelerated the process, we have speeded it up
5 as much as legally possible by moving up our
6 2012 legislative session from March, when it
7 usually begins, to January, which is the first
8 time we can legally vote, and by beginning our
9 statewide hearings five months in advance of
10 the 2012 session, and beginning committee
11 meetings in September instead of December so
12 that we can move as quickly as we get maps
13 submitted by legislators, by interest groups or
14 by individual citizens.

15 Now, it's been suggested that the
16 Legislature itself should draw maps first, and
17 then ask the public for comment; in other
18 words, not to ask you for your opinions, just
19 to give you maps. We believe that puts the
20 answer ahead of the question. We think there
21 ought to be no preconceptions created by
22 politicians, but, rather, public testimony
23 should be free and unrestricted. If we came to
24 you tonight and said, "Here are the maps that
25 have already been put together by legislators,"

1 there would be people who would stand up and
2 say, "How dare you not listen to the people of
3 Florida before you picked up the pen." So
4 Chair Weatherford and the Democrats and
5 Republicans on the Senate and House committees
6 have decided to listen before we draw. In
7 fact, a principal author of Florida's new
8 redistricting standards and the Chairperson for
9 the Fair Districts campaign are on record with
10 an agreement that new maps should not be drawn
11 until after the public has an opportunity to
12 comment.

13 Our intent is to use the recommendations
14 made at the 26 public hearings and through our
15 Internet sites as the basis for developing one
16 or more options for district maps. We will
17 discuss those options in open public meetings
18 before any votes are taken even in committee.
19 In other words, what we are literally saying
20 is, if you look at the maps in the back of the
21 room and if you go on the websites and look at
22 the maps that are there now, those maps
23 actually submitted to the Legislature by
24 Florida citizens are the maps that we will
25 begin with and begin the legislative process

1 with. We will solicit other suggestions from
2 the public, but we think we ought to start with
3 what communities believe themselves makes
4 sense, and then we can improve on them, if we
5 can. So if you want to know where we will
6 begin our deliberations, it is with those
7 public submissions and testimony from these
8 meetings and other input that you will give us.
9 Throughout the process, we will solicit
10 additional public comment so that proposed maps
11 can mature with the public involved, all before
12 the Legislature approves final maps.

13 Whatever the Legislature passes is then
14 submitted for judicial review. So we don't get
15 to decide what we want to do all by ourselves.
16 First we listen to you. Then we take your
17 input, we develop maps, then we vote on them
18 after we have had public hearings at which
19 people can comment. And then our maps are
20 submitted for judicial review to ensure that
21 any plan that is approved by the Legislature
22 meets constitutional requirements at the state
23 level and meets legal requirements at the
24 federal level.

25 Because, Mr. Chairman, our purpose today

1 is to hear from those who come here in your
2 hometown to share their views, all the time
3 between now and adjournment would be used to
4 ensure that every member of the public who is
5 here and wishes to speak will have some time to
6 present testimony. If after every citizen has
7 had his or her say, if there is time remaining,
8 and we hope there will be, before our scheduled
9 adjournment, then any member of the committee
10 may make any statement, answer or ask any
11 question, make any proposal. Any member of the
12 Legislature, Democrat or Republican, House
13 member or Senator, may today or at any time
14 either propose a map or associate themselves
15 with maps that have already been proposed, and
16 we will make any map that any legislator
17 proposes immediately available to the public
18 just as you have the maps in the back of the
19 room.

20 Mr. Chairman, Mr. Speaker, I hope this
21 description of our schedule and process helps
22 set the stage tonight for a successful hearing.

23 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
24 very much, Chairman Gaetz, for that thorough
25 explanation, and ladies and gentlemen, we are

1 going to go ahead and get started. We are
2 going to try to adjourn right at nine o'clock,
3 so there's over 60 individuals who signed up to
4 speak, and what we would ask is that you be
5 judicious with your time. We want to give
6 everyone the opportunity to say what they have
7 to say, but we try to ask everybody to hold it
8 to about three minutes, if possible.

9 I am going to call out two names at a
10 time, the speaker and then the person who is on
11 deck.

12 Our first speaker tonight is Mr. Cliff
13 McDuffie. Mr. McDuffie is Mayor of
14 Zephyrhills. Mayor, you are recognized here to
15 speak before the committee.

16 After Mr. McDuffie, we will have Mr. Wil
17 Nickerson.

18 You are recognized, sir.

19 MAYOR McDUFFIE: Thank you, I am not used
20 to being first.

21 My name is Cliff McDuffie. I am the Mayor
22 of Zephyrhills, and I have lived in Pasco
23 County for 14 years now. I came up from
24 Hillsborough County, so I am familiar with the
25 area.

1 I have a number of things. First I would
2 like to say I do not envy you at all at what
3 you are doing. I spent most of the day looking
4 at districts on the computer, and my eyes are
5 kind of blurry, but --

6 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: If you could,
7 Mayor, I'm sorry, just speak up a little bit.
8 It is kind of hard to hear.

9 MAYOR McDUFFIE: Do I need to get right on
10 top of it? Okay.

11 I don't think that the current districts,
12 in my opinion, adequately represent the people
13 that y'all are supposed to serve, and I
14 understand you do this by the numbers, so my
15 biggest problem there is the fact that
16 Zephyrhills is thrown in with Hillsborough and
17 Polk County on the Senate side, the only place
18 in Pasco County that's done that.

19 Currently we have some six House
20 Representatives who represent Pasco as well as
21 other counties. I don't think that they can do
22 that adequately. The old saying is you can't
23 serve two masters.

24 I would prefer that Pasco County be more
25 strongly represented, and I know that we do

1 this by the numbers, but I think that we have
2 the numbers in Pasco County now that we can
3 hopefully, as far as the House goes anyway, cut
4 that up so that we can have our own
5 Representatives and not somebody else's.

6 And I hope that this particular trial
7 doesn't morph into what we see in Washington
8 right now. I hope that our elected legislators
9 can put this together in an ethic way -- an
10 ethical way, and I hope that the partisanship
11 is not going to be an issue here and that
12 personal politics is not going to be an issue
13 here. But, again, I appreciate what y'all are
14 doing and I hope that we get it done right, if
15 that -- if you can ever do that. Thank you
16 very much, and I thank you all for representing
17 the State of Florida. Thank you.

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
19 Mayor, we appreciate your comments, sir.

20 Next up we have Mr. Wil Nickerson, and if
21 we could, I know there is some chatter in the
22 back, if we could take all the chatter kind of
23 outside the room. It is already hard to hear
24 in here, and we want to make sure that the
25 committee and all the members of the public can

1 hear our speakers.

2 Mr. Nickerson, you are recognized.

3 MR. NICKERSON: Well, thank you very much.

4 I would like to thank all the esteemed
5 legislators for coming out and hearing us, and
6 with that, I will get right into it.

7 I will have to agree somewhat with the
8 last speaker, we do have quite an abundance of
9 legislators in our county, but we also have a
10 very diverse county, and with that, I think we
11 have a good checks and balances with the
12 people.

13 We have extreme dense population on our
14 west side, we have farm, rural and industrial
15 on our east side, and right up the middle on
16 the 41 corridor we got quite a mixture. So we
17 are very diverse and we need diversity in our
18 legislators.

19 We also -- the one little corner, the
20 southeast corner, mostly Crystal Springs, parts
21 of Zephyrhills that Mayor just spoke to, we do
22 have two Representatives in that area, which
23 probably confuse the issue a little -- sorry,
24 Ronda -- but, you know, it is a very miniscule
25 in numbers compared to some of the other areas

1 of Pasco.

2 To get into some of the things on the --
3 the, yeah, minority groups, and Pasco also is
4 very diversified in that, instead of what I
5 have read in a lot of the redistricting, there
6 are needed areas that need -- minorities need
7 representation. In Pasco County, and I have
8 been here through in real estate back in the
9 '80s when the minority representation was under
10 .5 percent, now the Hispanic and blacks are
11 representing approximately 15 percent, if I am
12 correct on that figure. But it is a very
13 diverse representation, again, from the east to
14 the west, to the Wesley Chapel area, and we
15 need to keep that diversity so that we have
16 people looking for what they need from their
17 representation.

18 I understand the one person, one vote
19 premise of the whole thing of redistricting,
20 but when you look at the last elections in
21 Pasco County, and if I am going to read my crib
22 sheets here, the -- 19 percent came out in the
23 primary, 64 percent in the general, and in
24 2000, going back the ten years that we are
25 looking at redistricting, those numbers didn't

1 change a whole heck of a lot. A lot more
2 people came out for the primary and --

3 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Mr.
4 Nickerson, you know I love you, buddy, but you
5 are going to have to help me out, keep it under
6 three minutes. So if you could kind of put a
7 bow on it for me.

8 MR. NICKERSON: Okay. You know me, I
9 can't help myself.

10 But all things considered, I think we are
11 doing a good job here in Pasco, we got good
12 representation. We just need to watch that we
13 don't ruin the balance that we do have.

14 So thank you very much. Have a great
15 evening.

16 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
17 very much.

18 And I apologize, I didn't give this next
19 person a heads-up, that was my fault, but
20 Anthony Lister, Tony Lister, is next as our
21 speaker. Mr. Lister, you are recognized, sir,
22 and after Mr. Lister we are going to have
23 Mr. Ed Blommel.

24 Tony, thank you for being here, buddy.

25 MR. LISTER: I will try to hurry up. I

1 got my notes on my little iPad thing here,
2 sorry.

3 Good evening, my name is Anthony Lister.
4 I am a former city commissioner and Mayor of
5 the City of San Antonio, Florida. I want to
6 thank you all for being here this evening. I
7 know your job is very difficult, and with that,
8 I will get right to it.

9 I would like to speak to the differences
10 between east and west Pasco, not disrespecting
11 west or east Pasco, but just to draw some
12 differences between the two. I believe, you
13 know, in my times on the city commission that
14 east -- east Pasco is a very rural, very
15 agricultural type of community, and west Pasco
16 has just really exploded, and I think we have
17 -- because of that, we have a bunch of
18 differences that maybe the representation, you
19 know, should be like there are -- in east
20 Pasco, we have a lot of, again, rural and
21 agricultural, we have a lot of farms, we have a
22 lot of citrus -- citrus farms, we have
23 businesses that are not necessarily made and
24 bought and sold, but, rather, handed down from
25 generation to generation. And working with

1 these people, you know, on the city commission,
2 it is just a different type of lifestyle. It
3 is very wonderful, it is very laid back, it is
4 very refreshed, and in an attempt to try to get
5 like representation, the other speakers and
6 speakers, I think, will probably, you know,
7 outline those differences as well.

8 Another note is it is very difficult,
9 because Pasco County is so fragmented, to be
10 elected to, you know, Congress and -- you know,
11 and to have representation, you know, a strong
12 representation here in Pasco County, it is, I
13 think, very important, and east Pasco, just
14 trying to draw those differences.

15 So I don't know if I filled my three
16 minutes, but I do appreciate you all coming
17 down this evening. Thank you.

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
19 very much, Mr. Lister. We appreciate your
20 comments.

21 Next up we have Mr. Ed Blommel. Followed
22 by that, we have Steve Grossenbacher. Steve,
23 if you could get ready to go.

24 Ed, thank you for being here, you are
25 recognized.

1 MR. BLOMMEL: Thank you. I want to
2 appreciate -- tell you how much I appreciate
3 what y'all are doing, it is an awesome task
4 that you have.

5 But I want to go back just a little bit in
6 history. Ten years ago when we went through
7 redistricting, afterwards it made no sense when
8 you looked at it on paper. And I do want to
9 say that my comments are not politically
10 motivated. So I have friends who are in all
11 the parties from municipalities all the way
12 through Congress. But I am the fourth speaker,
13 and I am already hearing a pattern being
14 developed over the difference in the east and
15 west of Pasco County, and even if you look at
16 Hernando and Sumter County, and if you take
17 into consideration communities of interest, you
18 can see some definitely difference in those
19 areas between east and west.

20 In the past, in dealing with a lot of
21 folks, you would ask them who their
22 Representative was, who their Senator was, who
23 their congressional representative was, they
24 weren't sure, and maybe part of that is because
25 they didn't get involved. But if you look at

1 the maps, it was really difficult to figure out
2 who is serving who.

3 I would encourage you to take into
4 consideration some geographical boundaries.
5 Look at something like either the Interstate or
6 the Suncoast Parkway, look at the counties that
7 I mentioned, Pasco, Hernando and Sumter, look
8 at the difference between what we see on the
9 east and west side and take into consideration
10 your communities of interest. I think it will
11 mean a lot if you do that, and I -- once again,
12 I want to thank you and I appreciate your time
13 and what you are doing. Thank you.

14 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
15 very much, Mr. Blommel.

16 Mr. Grossenbacher, good to see you, sir,
17 you are up, and after that we have Ms. Jocelyn
18 Dickman. You are recognized, sir.

19 MR. GROSSENBACHER: Hi, my name is --

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Please speak
21 very close to the mike. We want to make sure
22 everybody can hear you.

23 MR. GROSSENBACHER: It kind of rattles
24 around.

25 My name is Steve Grossenbacher, and I live

1 at 26511 Whirlaway Terrace in Wesley Chapel,
2 beautiful downtown Wesley Chapel, I might add,
3 and I am a life-long Florida boy. I grew up in
4 Hillsborough County. I left there in some
5 dismay after a lot of things that I don't like
6 politically in Hillsborough County, and I'm
7 sorry, I had to say that, and I came to Pasco
8 County in 1990. And my discussion and my
9 comments are going to be very brief.

10 My wife asked me to speak on her behalf.
11 She is very capable, that is my beautiful bride
12 over there, and --

13 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: That young
14 lady over there? How did you pull that off?

15 MR. GROSSENBACHER: To make this short, I
16 wanted to -- to speak, and she gave me
17 permission to do that, so I am happy about
18 that.

19 The point I would like to make, I am very
20 happy with my representation in Pasco County,
21 both in the House and in the Senate, and our
22 U.S. Representatives as well. So I don't like
23 the fluidity that I have seen in the past,
24 years back, where some areas, it looks like
25 jello when you look at a map. I would like to

1 see that condensed. I like Pasco County
2 geographically like it is.

3 So that is all I have to say, and thank
4 you all for hearing us.

5 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
6 very much. We appreciate those comments. Next
7 up we have Ms. Jocelyn Dickman. Followed by
8 Ms. Dickman, we have Ronnie Deese.

9 Ms. Dickman, you are recognized. Thank
10 you for being here.

11 MS. DICKMAN: Thank you, and thanks
12 everyone for coming up to Wesley Chapel and
13 Pasco County. I am used to seeing everyone on
14 TV, so it is nice to see you all here.

15 The first thing is, I know you all are
16 sitting up there and we all are sitting back
17 here, but I think it is important, especially
18 in this process, to remember that people are
19 elected to serve the people, so we are here,
20 but we're your bosses. So this process is
21 being done for us, the voters, who in November
22 did vote overwhelmingly for the Fair Districts
23 legislation, which means we want our districts
24 drawn, key word, fairly, and we as citizens and
25 voters are here to say that we want to choose

1 our legislators and not have our legislators
2 choose their constituents. And I think my
3 friends on both sides of the aisle can agree
4 with this, that this is a small government
5 issue. The more government tells us what our
6 districts are and who our elected officials are
7 going to be, the worse it is for the people.

8 And I did note the little run -- I didn't
9 notice that -- maps of what it might be are not
10 here, and the maps are the old maps, and I
11 would really wonder where the maps are of what
12 it could be.

13 And, again, I welcome you and I thank you
14 for having these meetings and ask you to please
15 remember that it is about the citizens first.
16 Thank you.

17 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
18 very much.

19 Mr. Deese, you are recognized, sir, and
20 then following Mr. Deese, we have Ms. Vonnie
21 Mikkelson from the Greater Zephyrhills Chamber.

22 You are recognized.

23 MR. DEESE: Thank you, and good evening.
24 I want to thank the Florida Legislature for
25 going into the communities of Florida and

1 listening to input from the Florida residents.
2 I especially want to thank you tonight,
3 Representative Weatherford and other members
4 here, for coming into our local community.
5 Thank you.

6 My name is Ronnie Deese, and I have lived
7 and worked in the bay area for 40 years, and
8 prior to that, up around Panama City, Florida.

9 Pasco County is distinct and different
10 from Hillsborough and Pinellas Counties. While
11 those counties are becoming national urban
12 centers competing with each other and other
13 major metropolitan regions in terms of jobs,
14 art, sports and living conditions, Pasco County
15 retains two distinct communities: A small
16 urban west side of the county and a more rural,
17 small charm county located on the east side of
18 the county. You cannot compare Pasco with any
19 of its other neighbors. East Pasco is very
20 similar to the southern portions of Sumter
21 County; however, as a whole, I suspect Sumter
22 politics is increasingly dominated by The
23 Villages.

24 Hernando County shares the most similarity
25 to Pasco County. West Hernando has built along

1 Highway 19 and is comprised of large retirement
2 and urban communities very similar to west
3 Pasco.

4 East Pasco, on the other hand, with its
5 pure rural lifestyle and Tampa commuters is
6 very similar to east Pasco. Lake County and on
7 the other side of Pasco County will have some
8 rural areas adjacent to Pasco County. Lake as
9 a whole, the other areas of Lake County and its
10 representation is increasingly being dominated
11 by the metropolitan lifestyle of Orlando, its
12 tourist attractions and the commercial
13 attractions in the I-4 corridor.

14 In my experience working for 23 years with
15 the people of Pasco County, I find two distinct
16 groups of people with different views. East
17 Pasco, east Hernando, southern Sumter and west
18 Lake County are all currently rural and/or
19 small-town views and are comprised of a mixture
20 of rural and Tampa working adults. The west
21 Pasco population reflects a more urban and a
22 retiree lifestyle. Recent studies supporting
23 modifications to Pasco County impact fees
24 recognize these differences, and Pasco County
25 adopted ordinances that support the two

1 different populations and their different
2 lifestyles.

3 Because of the diversity of Pasco from
4 surrounding counties, and because of the two
5 different and distinct populations living
6 within Pasco County, in my opinion, Pasco
7 County needs to have their own representation
8 for these communities and not diluted with
9 votes from non-similar populations. Two
10 Senators, three House seats for Pasco County,
11 the Senate seats being divided along the same
12 line as currently separating the two lifestyles
13 within Pasco County, perhaps the Suncoast
14 Parkway.

15 Finally, as to our Washington
16 congressional seats, please give consideration
17 to the fact that the Pasco vote is so diluted
18 by the current arrangement, it is difficult to
19 impossible to elect someone from Pasco County
20 to represent the Pasco County residents.

21 I thank you for your time.

22 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
23 Mr. Deese.

24 Next up we have Vonnie Mikkelson.

25 Followed by Ms. Vonnie, we have our Supervisor

1 of Elections, Brian Corley.

2 You are recognized, Vonnie. Thank you for
3 being here.

4 MS. MIKKELSON: Thank you, Chairman
5 Weatherford, committee and the Florida
6 Legislature for providing this opportunity for
7 citizens' input in this very important process.

8 I am Vonnie Mikkelson, Executive Director
9 of the Greater Zephyrhills Chamber of Commerce,
10 and on behalf of the more than 400 businesses
11 and community organizations served by the
12 Zephyrhills Chamber, I would like to present a
13 couple of our ideas.

14 I would, after hearing the last speaker,
15 in all due respect, would like to disagree with
16 the fact that the east side of Pasco is rural.
17 I actually live in central Pasco in Land O'
18 Lakes, and I have worked for the Greater
19 Zephyrhills Chamber of Commerce for the last
20 year and a half. I have been pleasantly
21 surprised on a daily basis of the activity and
22 the potential for growth in this side of the
23 county, and I think it is part of my job to
24 make sure that residents, visitors,
25 Congressmen, Congresswomen and Representatives

1 of our great county and our great area know
2 this and continue to look forward and
3 appreciate at least our perceptions and our
4 ideas to change these perceptions.

5 During the last year and a half as
6 Executive Director, I have come to understand
7 some of the interesting dynamics of this area.
8 As economic and business development has been
9 discussed with local businesses, business
10 owners, government staff, elected officials, it
11 has become and more evident that we must think
12 collectively and regionally.

13 It is obvious that we are a smaller part
14 of the Tampa Bay/west central Florida economic
15 region; however, over the past several years,
16 as growth has occurred in this region, the
17 central east Pasco area has become a more
18 significant player in the region for growth.
19 Based on the evolving submarket region,
20 business owners believe it to be imperative to
21 have representation on both the state and
22 national level that understands the
23 significance of this growth region.

24 We are centrally located in the state of
25 Florida to all regions. We have the ability to

1 capitalize on a variety of logistics from two
2 Interstates, rail, port access, air expansion
3 possibilities and the availability of land.

4 We are enthusiastic about our future, but
5 we can better utilize these resources with
6 Representatives that will work with our local
7 communities as a whole and understand these
8 attributes to develop them to the highest level
9 possible. In today's climate, many entities --

10 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Ms. Vonnice, I
11 am going to need you to wrap it for me.

12 MS. MIKKELSON: I will be wrapping it up,
13 thank you.

14 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

15 MS. MIKKELSON: We are looking forward --
16 we are -- and many entities are looking to
17 forward-thinking leaders, not only at the local
18 government, that would represent the state and
19 national levels. We need local representation
20 to assist us in bettering our possibilities in
21 a very competitive market. While east Pasco is
22 a relevant submarket of central Florida and
23 Tampa Bay, we share many commonalities with our
24 partner communities of central and east Pasco.
25 Those would be Zephyrhills, Crystal Springs,

1 Wesley Chapel, Dade City and so forth. We --
2 however the lines are drawn, we are asking for
3 representation that makes sense, and sensible
4 representation.

5 I would like to invite everybody to the
6 greater Zephyrhills area, the best-kept secret
7 in Pasco County --

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: All right.

9 MS. MIKKELSON: -- and thank you again for
10 your time.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
12 very much, Ms. Vonnice, we appreciate your
13 comments.

14 Next up we have our wonderful Supervisor
15 of Elections, Brian Corley, and after Brian,
16 Ralph Grant. All right.

17 MR. CORLEY: Thank you Mr. Chairman, good
18 evening. Welcome, members of the Legislature,
19 welcome to the best county in Florida. Nice to
20 have y'all here.

21 I want to first thank you all for the
22 opportunity to provide input on the front end
23 of this very important topic, and I want to go
24 on record to applaud all of you for this
25 unprecedented level of transparency of the

1 process to date. The posting of
2 citizen-submitted district maps and comments
3 on-line and these meetings are to be commended.

4 As has already been stated, I don't envy
5 the daunting task that lies ahead for all of
6 you. However, I will say this: I am confident
7 when it is all said and done, my fellow
8 supervisors and I with my great staff will
9 continue to make Florida shine with elections
10 administration.

11 My comments are in a slightly different
12 light from the other speakers, Mr. Chairman. I
13 want to briefly focus on two issues that are
14 very important to my colleagues and I. First,
15 the issue of time. To conduct successful
16 elections in 2012, we as elections officials
17 need time to complete required tasks, time to
18 adjust precinct lines to new districts, gain
19 approval of those precincts by the Board of
20 County Commissioners and notify all voters, all
21 11 million plus, and nearly 300,000 in Pasco
22 alone, well in advance of election day. And as
23 you all are well aware, we can't re-precinct
24 our counties until your work is done.

25 As such, I would respectfully ask that you

1 approve the new maps as early as possible in
2 the 2012 session. The earlier in the session
3 you all approve the plans, the more it will
4 help us with our required tasks. We have a
5 very short window of time to do our part, to
6 get ourselves, and more importantly, the voters
7 ready in time for election day.

8 The second issue I would like to address
9 is district lines. In short, please respect
10 communities when you draw district lines. I
11 would like to thank the legislative staff, and
12 particularly Mr. John Guthrie, who has been a
13 great resource and has provided training for my
14 colleagues and I. For many of our supervisors,
15 including myself, this is our first go-round
16 with redistricting, and it is not a lot of fun
17 so far and I can only imagine what it is like
18 for you all. Also, by allowing us to provide
19 our county voting tabulation districts data,
20 which is a step in the right direction, as it
21 takes into consideration the following: Intact
22 communities, traffic patterns, physical
23 barriers. Ladies and gentlemen, please adhere
24 to these lines wherever possible. Ideally, we
25 would ask that you draw a district line along a

1 county line whenever possible.

2 Again, thank you for the opportunity to
3 provide some input on this very important
4 process. As an elections administrator, it is
5 very much appreciated. Thank you all very
6 much.

7 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
8 very much, Mr. Corley, and thank you very much
9 for your service to the state and to our
10 community.

11 Next up we have Ralph Grant. After
12 Mr. Grant, we have Milton Chojnowski. Ralph, I
13 saw you earlier. He may have stepped out for a
14 moment. How about Milton Chojnowski, is Milton
15 here? I hope I said your last name right
16 there, sir. If not, you can correct -- okay,
17 good.

18 Mr. Chojnowski, thank you for being here,
19 and we will try to get back to Ralph. You are
20 recognized, sir.

21 MR. CHOJNOWSKI: My comments are really an
22 approach that you should take, I think, to get
23 started. I would suggest that you look at this
24 whole process by way of the computer. Let the
25 computer by the various restraints you want to

1 put in it, east and west, rural, city wide,
2 whatever, and let that make the first cut, and
3 then after you do that, without getting into
4 too many side bars, I think you would be able
5 then to make some modifications to that and not
6 get into gerrymandering and all the rest of the
7 stuff. That is all I have to say. Thank you.

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
9 very much, sir. Brevity gets bonus points.
10 Good job.

11 Okay. I don't see Ralph here. Ralph
12 Grant, is he back? If not, we are going to
13 move on to Ms. Rachel O'Connor. Rachel, you
14 are recognized, and after Rachel, we will have
15 Fern Williams.

16 Rachel, thank you for being here.

17 MS. O'CONNOR: Hi. My name is Rachel
18 O'Connor. I have been a resident of Pasco
19 County for over 18 years, and I currently live
20 in Wesley Chapel. So, first of all, I would
21 like to thank you guys for taking the time to
22 get the input of the public, and second of all,
23 for entering into this public discourse without
24 pre-drawn maps, because I think that is
25 emblematic of your openness and willing to

1 consider and use the input of the public.

2 What I would like to say is when you are
3 drawing the new redistricting -- the new
4 districts is I think that Pasco County has
5 benefited greatly from having multiple
6 representation. As the people before me have
7 said, Pasco is very diverse, with the west side
8 being very urban, and the central and east side
9 still being agricultural based, even though it
10 is growing, and I would like the Board to
11 consider when drawing these new districts that
12 we should probably look at moving the --
13 looking north, drawing districts north, because
14 the counties north of us are also designed in
15 the same way, with the west coast being the
16 most populated and the east sides of the county
17 being very agricultural based, and I think they
18 would be best represented in that way, so thank
19 you.

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
21 very much, Rachel.

22 I see that Ralph is here, but you know
23 what, I believe that ladies always go first, so
24 we are going to let Fern -- come on, Ms. Fern,
25 you go first, and then after that, we will have

1 Ralph Grant.

2 Thank you very much for being here, Fern
3 Williams.

4 MS. WILLIAMS: Good evening. Thank you
5 for the time. My name is Fern Williams and I
6 live here in Pasco County now. I have been a
7 Florida resident and a voting resident for 50
8 years, and I have seen a lot of changes. I
9 have seen gerrymandering, both sides of the
10 aisle.

11 I brought a couple of maps that I got off
12 your website, and these are examples of what
13 the districts look like now. This is Florida
14 Senate 27, and it goes from the -- from the
15 Atlantic Ocean in Palm Beach County all the way
16 to the Gulf, and I just don't see that anybody
17 can adequately represent that area. It
18 certainly is diverse. This is -- this is in
19 Orange County, and this is two districts, 9 and
20 19, and as you can see, they are interesting.

21 The Fair District amendment is voted, was
22 bipartisan, it was voted by 63 percent of the
23 voters, and some of it says that the lines
24 cannot be drawn to favor a party or an
25 incumbent, and they must be contiguous,

1 compact, adhere to existing local boundaries,
2 and these obviously don't. I just hope that
3 you take that into consideration, and we will
4 have better districts and better
5 Representatives for all of us. Thank you.

6 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
7 very much, Ms. Williams. We appreciate those
8 comments.

9 Next up we have Mr. Ralph Grant, and then
10 after Ralph, we have Justin Cracchiolo. You
11 are recognized, sir.

12 MR. GRANT: Are you taking questions as
13 well, or just comments?

14 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: I'm sorry,
15 sir?

16 MR. GRANT: Are you taking questions as
17 well, or just comments?

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: You can ask
19 questions, yes, sir. In fact, what we will do,
20 and I probably didn't state that at the
21 beginning, if you have specific questions, as
22 opposed to getting in a back and forth, if you
23 state them, at the very end, we will try to
24 answer every single question that is asked
25 today.

1 MR. GRANT: My specific point is primarily
2 the Senate Districts with Pasco County, they
3 seem to be pretty well distributed right now,
4 with only one being down only seven percent in
5 population. Are you looking at population
6 growth within the districts? Because the next
7 time you do, are you looking to look at the
8 growth within each district before you start
9 the redistricting, before you start redrawing
10 the lines? If not, I would like to see if --
11 since we are so well represented as far as the
12 Senate is within the Pasco County, to keep
13 those districts as close as possible to what we
14 already have. Can you answer that as far as
15 looking at potential growth within those areas,
16 or --

17 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Yes, we will
18 get to that answer, and, in fact, with regard
19 to the growth specifically, I will go ahead and
20 do that. In the back, there is a chart, and
21 John Guthrie is here and can walk you through
22 it, it actually explains the deviation and who
23 is over-populated and who is under-populated.

24 MR. GRANT: Right, I understand that, but
25 as far as how far out are you looking at

1 growth?

2 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: How are we
3 looking -- I'm sorry.

4 MR. GRANT: How far out are you looking at
5 the growth?

6 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: We just look
7 at -- based on the census from 2010.

8 MR. GRANT: Okay. That is it. That is my
9 question.

10 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Okay. Thank
11 you very much, you got it.

12 Next up we have Justin Cracchiolo, and
13 after that we have Jim Cracchiolo. I'm sorry,
14 Justina. I said Justin.

15 Ms. Cracchiolo, how are you doing today?

16 MS. CRACCHIOLO: Good. How are you doing?

17 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you for
18 being here.

19 MS. CRACCHIOLO: My name is Justina
20 Cracchiolo, and I live in Wesley Chapel,
21 Florida, and I have lived in the community for
22 31 years in east Pasco.

23 I want to thank the committee for allowing
24 the citizens to make a contribution with the
25 redistricting process. Truly an educated

1 citizen can understand the decisions that
2 ultimately become law. In fact, the My
3 District Builder software on the
4 floridaredistricting.org website has become the
5 hottest new game in my house.

6 This evening I would like to specifically
7 address the community of Wesley Chapel,
8 Zephyrhills and Dade City in east Pasco County,
9 because the needs of these east Pasco
10 communities are very different from those of
11 our neighbors to the west of the Veterans
12 Expressway.

13 In the course of drawing up my own maps, I
14 believe that the communities of interest and
15 compact geographic areas causes -- offer
16 compelling standards to apply to the east Pasco
17 County when drawing up the boundaries for our
18 district. It is my hope that you will keep the
19 communities of Zephyrhills, Wesley Chapel and
20 Dade City together and not split them up.
21 These communities are contiguous and are within
22 10 miles' drive from one to the other. I have
23 raised four children in this district.

24 My children were born in Dade City,
25 educated in San Antonio, Zephyrhills and Wesley

1 Chapel. Whether volunteering in the community,
2 at church, the PTA or school advisory council,
3 I have come to recognize that my fellow
4 citizens in Zephyrhills, Dade City and Wesley
5 Chapel share common interests and goals for
6 their families, neighbors and communities. I
7 hope that the committee will consider my
8 testimony this evening and to the best of their
9 abilities decide to keep Zephyrhills, Dade City
10 and Wesley Chapel communities together in one
11 district.

12 Thank you again for allowing me to express
13 my opinion on redistricting. I am proud to
14 live in a state that is giving the voters a say
15 in picking their lawmakers, rather than the
16 lawmakers picking their voters. Good evening
17 and God bless.

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
19 very much, Ms. Cracchiolo, we appreciate that.

20 And now that we have heard from your boss,
21 Mr. Cracchiolo, you are now able to speak, so
22 you are recognized, sir. And after
23 Mr. Cracchiolo, we have Steve Van Gorden.

24 MR. CRACCHIOLO: That is a hard act to
25 follow. I didn't know we were going to put

1 that in line like that.

2 I want to thank the Legislature as well
3 for coming tonight. Welcome, everybody, to
4 Pasco County, great to have you here.

5 My first step in Pasco County was in 1973.
6 The first impression was memorable. It was
7 like a glimpse into the wild, wild west. There
8 were cowboys and cattle and Indian history, and
9 it was all surrounded by this little seasonal
10 midwestern retirement community called
11 Zephyrhills. Highway 54 was sparsely inhabited
12 with isolated dots of populations along the
13 way, Saddlebrook was just getting started, and
14 Bruce B. Downs was known as the road to nowhere
15 basically. Pasco County was completely
16 polarized really east and west as well, and
17 there was very little in between.

18 Moving here after getting married took
19 quite a bit of convincing, I might add. After
20 all, east Pasco was not quite the midwest urban
21 upbringing my wife was accompanied to. Feeling
22 pioneerish, we made the commitment and raised
23 our four children here in Pasco. Zephyrhills,
24 Dade City and Wesley Chapel, although somewhat
25 geographically isolated, became the communities

1 we were involved with, always driving long
2 distances, it seemed, from school to stores to
3 events and so forth.

4 Since these early days of isolated
5 population dots along Highway 54, growth has
6 connected the dots and the picture has changed
7 rather dramatically. With the growth over the
8 past ten years, these communities of
9 Zephyrhills, Dade City and Wesley Chapel have
10 now established a true sense of community.

11 During this redistricting process may this
12 sense of community that has been created over
13 the past couple of decades be preserved by a
14 redistricting plan that will enhance our
15 community by maintaining the current boundaries
16 rather than carving up our community we have
17 all worked so hard to create.

18 Thanks again for coming. We really
19 appreciate you being here.

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
21 very much.

22 Next up we have Mr. Steve Van Gorden.
23 Following Mr. Gorden, we have Ms. Doris Tosen,
24 I hope I say that right, Tosen.

25 Steve, thanks for being here.

1 MR. VAN GORDEN: Thank you, Representative
2 Weatherford, and thank you, legislative
3 redistricting committee. It is great to see
4 you guys out here to Wesley Chapel area and
5 taking your time and listening to the citizens.

6 I am going to be very brief with my
7 comments. I echo a lot which was already
8 previously stated. I am a current principal of
9 Zephyrhills High School. I was very privileged
10 also to be the principal of Hudson Middle
11 school. And there's been a lot already tonight
12 talked about east versus west, and there are
13 distinct differences. There's also very
14 distinct differences between Wesley Chapel --
15 Wesley Chapel, Land O' Lakes, the New Tampa
16 area, and then also the Dade City community,
17 San An, Zephyrhills, Crystal Springs and
18 Trilby.

19 I would like to see you when you go ahead
20 and start drawing these plans look at three
21 state House districts for Pasco County, one in
22 eastern Pasco, one in central Pasco and then
23 one on the west side. I would like to see us
24 look at two state Senate districts, with the
25 Suncoast Parkway being the dividing line. And

1 I would also like to see us have one
2 Representative for the U.S. Congress, and have
3 it a solely Pasco County seat to give Pasco
4 County what they deserve.

5 So with that, I -- as my colleagues
6 stated -- as my colleagues stated earlier, and
7 fellow citizens, I think you have a daunting
8 task, but I am confident in each one of your
9 leadership's ability to do what is best for all
10 the citizens of Florida, but particularly the
11 citizens of east Pasco County. So thank you
12 and God bless each one of you.

13 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
14 Steve.

15 Next up we have Ms. Doris Tosen, and after
16 Ms. Tosen, we have Kim Irvine. Is Doris here?
17 There she is. I hope I didn't mess up your
18 name too bad; if I did, I apologize.

19 MS. ROSEN: I believe you meant to say
20 Rosen instead of Posen.

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: I'm sorry.
22 It is misspelled, that is our fault, but,
23 Ms. Rosen, thank you very much for being here.
24 You are recognized.

25 MS. ROSEN: Okay. I am adaptable.

1 This is my third redistricting event and
2 the second time I have spoken in front of this
3 august body.

4 I want to tell you now that we have
5 Amendments 5 and 6 which were voted by
6 63 percent of the voters. The people have
7 spoken. We want fair and reasonable districts.
8 We don't want them to favor either party. I
9 was here in 1990 when it favored the Democrats,
10 I was here in 2000 when it favored the
11 Republicans, and it is time to get it right and
12 not favor any political party. It should be
13 fair and equitable.

14 There are no survivorship rights to
15 districts. There are no survivorship rights to
16 districts. No politician is entitled to grow
17 into a district. He has to earn it. We need
18 action and not words, we need the maps, we need
19 to get started and we need to move now. Thank
20 you.

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

22 Next up we have Ms. Kim Irvine. After
23 Kim, we have Jim Mathieu.

24 Ms. Irvine, thank you for being here, you
25 are recognized.

1 MS. IRVINE: Thank you very much, and
2 thank you for taking the time to listen to us.
3 I really -- the public, we do appreciate you
4 taking the time and we appreciate the
5 opportunity to speak.

6 First of all, I am not unhappy with the
7 way the representation has gone at this point.
8 I do realize we are diverse, but I think our
9 government should be gender blind. I think it
10 should be race blind. We are all people. We
11 are all Americans. You should serve all of us
12 equally. Color shouldn't play into it. Gender
13 shouldn't play into it. Party shouldn't play
14 into it. We need representation from our
15 legislators that represent us all as Pasco
16 County residents.

17 I have been here over 18 years, I love
18 Pasco County, and I am thrilled to be here and
19 I trust that you will all make the effort
20 required to make sure that this is a fair
21 process and will represent the people of Pasco
22 County to the best of your ability. Thank you
23 again.

24 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
25 Ms. Irvine.

1 Next up we have Jim Mathieu, followed by
2 Ilene Miller. And I just want to make a quite
3 point. We've got about 50 people still to go,
4 we've got two hours left, so you can run the
5 math. If we can keep it at two to three
6 minutes, that would be great. The last couple
7 of speakers have been wonderful. We just want
8 to give everybody the opportunity.

9 Mr. Mathieu, thank you very much for being
10 here, sir.

11 MR. MATHIEU: James Mathieu, I will be
12 brief in light of that comment. Thank you for
13 letting me speak, Representatives, Senators,
14 and thank you for this open process. It is
15 very impressive.

16 I am an attorney. I have been here in
17 Pasco County now for seven years. I have been
18 a city attorney in the city on the west side, I
19 have also been a city manager. I feel that I
20 have a pretty good feel for the wants, needs
21 and concerns of the people of Pasco County, and
22 my observation after seven years is that Pasco
23 County needs three separate legislative
24 districts at the Representative level and at
25 least two State Senators.

1 The western side of the county is
2 predominated by U.S. 19, which is a major
3 artery. It is somewhat of a retired area,
4 people with retirees, people do not commute
5 into Tampa, it is too far. It has one of the
6 highest crime levels. Just a quick check of
7 the sheriff's office will see that. It has
8 riparian water rights, it has access, it has
9 marinas. This is one type of -- one part of
10 the county.

11 When you go to the middle of the county,
12 it is, in my opinion, a bedroom community.
13 Many of the developments, as I call them, of
14 this area here are sandwiched between the
15 Suncoast and 75. That is what created these
16 communities. They have zoning issues, they
17 have commuter issues, they have transportation
18 issues. These are distinct, different issues
19 from those on the west side.

20 On the east side of the county, Sans --
21 Dade City, it is an agrarian area. They have
22 many different needs, wants and desires and
23 concerns.

24 And if you cannot statistically and
25 mathematically get three and two, then I think

1 if you are going to look one way or the other,
2 you have to push us to the north and hook up
3 with Hernando County as opposed to Tampa, which
4 has much different needs than we do. Thank you
5 very much in allowing me to speak.

6 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
7 very much, Jim. We appreciate that.

8 We have Ms. Ilene Miller, and after
9 Ms. Miller, we have Sandy Graves.

10 You are recognized. Thank you for being
11 here.

12 MS. MILLER: Hello. My name is Lavonne
13 Miller, but anyhow --

14 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: I apologize.

15 MS. MILLER: No, no, it's fine.

16 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: It is my
17 eyes, I can assure you.

18 MS. MILLER: I signed "Ilene L."

19 But I have been a resident of Pasco County
20 for thirty some years. I moved here when I was
21 ten. But, anyway, I would love to see our
22 county where we have a Representative that only
23 represents us here in Pasco County. I don't
24 know -- I don't know how -- I haven't looked at
25 the maps, I didn't know there were maps. They

1 are on -- and I will look at those tomorrow and
2 probably then make some comments to you all.
3 But what I would like to see is I would love to
4 see equitable, true Representatives of the
5 people here in Pasco County.

6 I realize that all of you have traveled to
7 be here tonight. I don't know what that is
8 costing you all, but some of that probably
9 would have been better off staying in the
10 budget and doing something else with it,
11 education, one thing and another.

12 But, anyway, just look carefully, make
13 certain that the -- that the districts are
14 equitable and that we have true representation
15 just for Pasco County.

16 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
17 very much.

18 Next up we have Sandy Graves. Following
19 Ms. Graves, we have Jarrod Scharber.

20 You are recognized.

21 MS. GRAVES: Hi, my name is Sandy Graves.
22 I live at 21946 Shamu Drive in Land O' Lakes,
23 Florida. I am a native Floridian, a native
24 laker and a native Pasco resident. I was
25 probably here when Mr. Cracchiolo came and saw

1 the cowgirls and cowboys. I was probably one
2 of them.

3 But, anyway, I want to thank the
4 delegation for allowing me to offer my two
5 cents' worth on redistricting, and because I
6 realize that the new amendments to our
7 Constitution will most likely end in
8 litigation, and I do not have the wherewithal
9 to litigate, hopefully my two cents will be
10 worth something now.

11 I am here for the representation of my one
12 vote because I feel the founding fathers were
13 quite specific that the vote be heard and
14 counted, a vote that represents me and my life
15 according to my community and what affects me.
16 Though there may be some here tonight that seek
17 to have that vote superseded by special
18 interests that do not have my vote or the best
19 interests of Pasco citizens in mind, I ask that
20 you look beyond their voices and consider some
21 very unique issues that face Pasco and the
22 people that live here, and why we need our
23 representation to have teeth and not to be
24 diluted by special interests or voters not
25 concerned with what face us daily.

1 Some Pasco-specific issues are insurance.
2 After 15 years with Liberty Mutual, I was
3 dropped and given reasons of sinkholes. Now I
4 am the proud owner of Citizens Insurance,
5 because of no choice of my own, though I
6 thought I lived in a country of free trade and
7 competition.

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Sandy, I love
9 you, but we got to keep it on redistricting.

10 MS. GRAVES: Okay, I am just going to pass
11 on, but basically Pasco has a lot of issues
12 that affect her, and we have neighbors to
13 either side that conflict with us sometimes.
14 So what I would like to ask is that you not
15 dilute our vote by having us with Hillsborough
16 or Pinellas so much, because we need to be
17 considered with what our issues are. We have
18 economic issues here that don't necessarily --
19 which conflicts with Hillsborough, sometimes in
20 Pinellas we have the water issue, and we have
21 the insurance issues. So I just ask that you
22 -- and I was getting to that point, but most of
23 all I want to thank you for being here and
24 listening to me, and though I think there is a
25 difference between east and west Pasco, there

1 is also a difference between our neighbors,
2 Hillsborough and Pinellas, so I want you to
3 consider that when you are thinking about us
4 and our representation. I also want to pray
5 for your discernment and your wisdom and your
6 mental health. Thank you very much.

7 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you for
8 your prayers, Sandy, we appreciate that. We
9 all appreciate that.

10 Next up we have Mr. Scharber, followed
11 by -- I want to say this right, William
12 Peterseim I believe is how it is -- I believe
13 is how it is spelled.

14 Jarrod, you are up. Thanks for being
15 here.

16 MR. SCHARBER: Thank you. First I want to
17 thank Representative Weatherford again and the
18 remainder of the committee members for taking
19 the time to get some input from the public this
20 evening. It certainly means a lot to all of us
21 that you would take the time to listen to what
22 we have to say before acting on such an
23 important issue.

24 As stated, my name is Jarrod Scharber. I
25 am not here as a representative of any group or

1 organization. I am here tonight representing
2 Jarrod Scharber, and by extension, my family.
3 I am a fourth-generation resident of Pasco
4 County, and other than a brief period when I
5 left to pursue my education, I've resided in
6 the San Antonio and Dade City area my entire
7 life.

8 As you all know, as Will certainly knows,
9 there have been significant changes in our
10 county, especially this portion of our county,
11 over the past ten years, and there have been
12 developments in the patterns of growth such
13 that even an outsider could examine a map, take
14 a look at where the growth corridors are, what
15 goes on on the west side of the county, what
16 goes on on the east side of the county, and
17 make an analysis of what we need in terms of
18 our representation moving forward both at the
19 state and the national level.

20 Much of what I was going to say is going
21 to dovetail with what you've already heard.
22 The western side of our county is largely made
23 up of smaller urban centers, New Port Richey,
24 Hudson, Holiday, things -- getting on up in
25 Hernando, Weeki Wachee, Spring Hill. Those

1 communities, while they have their own
2 interests that are very important and specific
3 to them, they don't necessarily always align
4 with what we have in terms of our goals, our
5 needs and what we see as our future challenges
6 here on the east side of the county.

7 When you are making an analysis of what
8 our Representatives are going to be, I think it
9 is important that you make the distinction
10 between the types of communities and then the
11 types of people who actually reside in those
12 communities. Drawing district lines somewhere
13 near the center of the county, whether it is
14 U.S. 41, whether it is Suncoast Parkway, making
15 a distinction between the west side of the
16 county, the east side of the county, and
17 certainly I think there should be no question
18 that we need to have ourselves separate and
19 distinct from the northern portions of
20 Hillsborough County. Grouping this east side
21 of the county in with southern
22 Hernando/southern Sumter Counties I think is
23 going to give us what we all want, elected
24 officials, the one we send to Tallahassee and
25 the ones we send to Washington, are going to be

1 there to represent our interests, and that is
2 exactly what we are electing them to do is
3 represent our interests, not the interests of
4 north Tampa, not the interests of New Port
5 Richey, but the interests of east Pasco. And,
6 again, I think that -- again, some of my
7 thunder has been stolen this evening, but three
8 districts in the House, two districts for the
9 Senate, and trying to keep as much of east
10 Pasco independent of some of these other
11 competing interests as possible, that is going
12 to serve everybody's best interests. Thanks
13 again.

14 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
15 very much.

16 Next up we have Mr. Peterseim, I believe,
17 I hope I said that right, followed by James D.
18 Porter, who I know -- I believe is Don Porter.
19 I hope I have that right.

20 MR. PETERSEIM: That is correct. How are
21 you?

22 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: You're up.

23 MR. PETERSEIM: I am a -- my name is Bill
24 Peterseim. I am a certified financial planner,
25 economist, political analyst and 20th century

1 historian, and I broadcast daily into 38
2 nations on five continents about what is going
3 on in this country.

4 I thank you for being here because, quite
5 frankly, I don't think any time in the history
6 of our nation until the past four and a half
7 years have we had such a feeling of total
8 disconnect between the electorate and the
9 elected officials across this nation as a
10 disconnect between what we want, what we
11 believe in, and what the Legislatures are
12 voting. So I would remind you, it is a
13 republican form of government, and I thank you
14 for that.

15 I also thank you for the moment of levity
16 when we said there would be no political issues
17 involved in gerrymandering redistricting. It
18 was a good moment of levity.

19 And I do have one question that I really
20 would like clarified, because it really wasn't
21 that clear on the ballot in November, and I am
22 sure I am not alone on that, but there was a
23 specific proposal that was voted on and
24 approved that had direct influence on the
25 redistricting process, and I am sure you know

1 what I mean. If you would, please, take a
2 moment to explain that and clarify it for all
3 the voters. Thank you.

4 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Yes, sir.
5 Thank you very much, and Mr. Peterseim, we will
6 make sure and do that. We addressed it in the
7 very opening of our comments about Amendments 5
8 and 6, but I can assure you my colleague,
9 Chairman Gaetz, at the very end will make sure
10 that he goes through it one more time to
11 explain its impact on the process and how we
12 plan to follow it.

13 J. D. Porter, you are recognized here. In
14 fact, I will take a moment of privilege. We
15 are actually sitting on land that was donated
16 by the Porter family to allow Wiregrass to be
17 built. It is an honor to have you here, and
18 thank you all for your kindness in unofficially
19 hosting us tonight.

20 MR. PORTER: First of all, thank all of
21 y'all for coming out this evening. I really
22 appreciate it. As stated, my name is J. D.
23 Porter. I work for a small family business
24 here called Wiregrass Ranch. We happen to be
25 sitting on one of the pieces of property that I

1 grew up on. It has been in our family for
2 going on 80 years.

3 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Speak a
4 little closer to the mike, if you could, J. D.

5 MR. PORTER: Sorry about that.

6 This piece of property has been in our
7 family for around 80 years, and I think it is
8 important for everybody to know and everybody
9 to understand and recognize that Pasco itself
10 has been kind of in the background for an
11 extended period of time. We have been here
12 through that.

13 It is coming into the forefront now, and
14 it is important to the representation that
15 where we are seeing and one of the important
16 facts that was not mentioned is during the
17 growth boom, Pasco County was the second
18 fastest-growing county in the state. That kind
19 of growth everybody in this room felt and
20 everybody in this room saw. It is something
21 when those kind of people and when we get that
22 kind of density that you are seeing, whether it
23 is at the Shops at Wiregrass, the community
24 college that is coming up down the road, one
25 of the -- the best high school, in my opinion,

1 in the county that we are sitting in right now,
2 you are seeing growth that is taking place
3 during a depressed market. We need to make
4 sure that our representation is basically
5 correct and dead-on for the type of
6 constituents that are in the areas.

7 A lot of people said west Pasco is a lot
8 different than east. I agree with that, but we
9 are in central Pasco. Where we are at now, you
10 are seeing in a lot of the things that we have
11 done and a lot of the things that we feel and
12 that we have seen in the past, we came from a
13 ranching background, we came from a setup where
14 we still run cattle, we still have citrus
15 trees, but we are also seeing a lot of smart
16 growth and we are trying to do the right thing.
17 We are trying to protect the land and do things
18 that benefit the community.

19 I think a lot of the other communities
20 like Dade City, like Zephyrhills, like San
21 Antonio, they are going to feed off growth, and
22 we share a lot of the same community
23 backgrounds and values that have been here
24 forever, and a lot of the people that have
25 stand up all have made good points, but there

1 is a distinctive difference between the west
2 side and when you get on the other side of the
3 Suncoast, maybe even 41, but I think the
4 Suncoast is a good place to put that, a lot
5 different dynamics and a lot different
6 demographics there than what there is here.
7 There is a way -- if we are going to go anyway,
8 I think that we should go north and extend
9 districts northward, because they are going to
10 benefit off the growth and the change that we
11 are seeing, even during a downtime.

12 When you are looking at areas and when you
13 look at certain things, I like looking at the
14 past as being a historic example of what is
15 going on. This is very similar to a setup like
16 in Atlanta where you have Buckhead growing to
17 the north. That is a very good layout, that it
18 changed over time, and because of districts and
19 because of representation at the state level,
20 they were able to be successful, and I think
21 that is very important for all of y'all to take
22 into consideration. Thank you.

23 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
24 very much, J. D. We appreciate that.

25 I apologize to the next speaker, I don't

1 think I gave you a heads-up, but Mike Pheneger,
2 President of the ACLU of Florida. Mike, are
3 you here, sir? I'm sorry that I did not give
4 you a heads-up on that. After Mr. Pheneger, we
5 have Georgiana Jones.

6 Mr. Pheneger, thank you very much for
7 being here, sir.

8 MR. PHENEGER: Yeah, actually, we are a
9 lot of things. I happen to be the President of
10 the ACLU of Florida. I am also a retired Army
11 colonel. I think elections are extremely
12 important. In 30 years in the Army, I managed
13 to vote each one of those 30 years, 15 of them
14 overseas from such unlikely places as Korea,
15 three years in Vietnam, Panama, Germany and
16 Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. I also managed to
17 spend the afternoon in church with Senator
18 Joyner and Representative Reed this afternoon.

19 Here -- the purpose of my appearance
20 tonight is to talk about Amendments 5 and 6,
21 which got almost no notice during your
22 introduction and no comment on what they all
23 mean. Now, I support Amendments 5 and 6, and
24 have since the outset. I actually am involved
25 in supporting the suit to oppose the suit

1 against Amendment 6, but I am doing it with my
2 money, not the taxpayers' money. I understand
3 that the House of Representatives is doing it
4 with about \$300,000 worth of taxpayer money,
5 according to the recent issue in *The New York*
6 *Times*.

7 So I think what we need to do is to focus
8 the Legislature on implementing the will of the
9 people in terms of Amendments 5 and 6, which,
10 to remind, have several things. They say that
11 you can't draw a district to favor or disfavor
12 an incumbent or a party. Districts should be
13 contiguous, they should be compact, they should
14 be roughly equal in population, they should use
15 existing city, county and natural boundaries,
16 and most of the time right now, if you look at
17 our district maps today, they don't do that,
18 and finally they should preserve the ability of
19 minorities, both language and racial, to vote
20 for Representatives of their choice.

21 Someone here earlier talked about the
22 possibility of litigation, but, frankly, if you
23 all fulfill your constitutional mandate in 5
24 and 6, you won't have to worry too much about
25 litigation, because you will have basically a

1 fireproof solution to the problem.

2 I think it is important for you all to
3 develop maps, simply because the Constitution
4 requires that in 2012, you actually vote on new
5 districts. It would be nice for us to see what
6 you are considering before you do it so we can
7 kind of advise your deliberations while you are
8 doing that in the legislative session early
9 next year.

10 And, finally, I would like to recommend
11 that in contrast to people that we have in
12 Washington nowadays, I wish you all would
13 refrain from taking any pledges before you
14 arrive there, because it is going to be hard
15 enough to draw these districts, and if you have
16 pledged yourself into a solution before you
17 have a chance to deliberate and debate, it is
18 not going to work very well. Thank you.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
20 sir. Thank you, Mr. Pheneger, and thank you
21 for your service to our country. We are very
22 grateful for that.

23 Next up we have Ms. Georgiana Jones, and
24 followed by Ms. Jones, we have Steve Graves.
25 Thank you for being here, ma'am.

1 MS. JONES: I want to tell you that I am
2 very pleased to see you all here today to
3 listen to all of us. I must say in confessing
4 that I have been in Tallahassee during sessions
5 during the past three years, and in the past
6 two years when we spoke as educators and others
7 working in public service, I don't feel that
8 there was listening.

9 I do want to say, as so many others have
10 spoken before me, that it is very important
11 that you understand that we speak and you are
12 working for us. We have already voted for
13 Amendments 5 and 6, and you have heard before
14 me exactly what that means and what your task
15 is for us.

16 I am very concerned, and this is my last
17 statement, that there seems to be another check
18 place that if you fairly redistrict, there are
19 new voter laws in place that will pull people
20 out of lines and ask for certain important
21 pieces of identification to prove themselves by
22 names, addresses, changes. I do not believe
23 that we are on the road to fairness and justice
24 in Florida, and I want you to know that we are
25 not going to go backwards. We are moving

1 forwards, and I hope that you will take into
2 consideration that you have been given a task
3 by us.

4 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
5 very much, Ms. Jones.

6 Next up we have Steve Graves, and after
7 Mr. Graves, we have Bill Bunting.

8 Steve, you are recognized, sir.

9 MR. GRAVES: Yes, thank you,
10 Representative Weatherford. I would like to
11 thank all the panel for being here and coming
12 to Pasco County and listening to the voters and
13 what we have to say.

14 My name is Steve Graves. I have lived in
15 Pasco County for approximately 16 years in the
16 Land O' Lakes area.

17 Just concerning the State Senate seat,
18 based upon the current amendment, each Senate
19 seat is supposed to have approximately 470
20 voters. Pasco has right now 464. I believe
21 that Pasco County should have at least one, or
22 only one Senate seat. However, if whenever the
23 grand scheme comes together you see that Pasco
24 has to be divided, I don't think that it should
25 be any more than two. Currently we have three,

1 and I think that is one too many.

2 For the State House, under the amendments,
3 it's 157,000 -- 157,000 citizens per seat.
4 Again, with the 464,000 citizens in Pasco
5 County, that equals to about three state seats.
6 That is what I think that the current number
7 should be. As of right now, it is six.

8 For the congressional seat, it is 696,000
9 citizens, with 464. Currently we have two
10 congressional seats. I think we should keep
11 that.

12 If there should be any type of divisions
13 that should be made, I agree with a lot of the
14 other past speakers about taking a look at
15 either 41, the Suncoast, as being maybe the
16 line of demarcation, and from there, take a
17 look at the west side and plus the central and
18 east together.

19 Again, I want to thank all of you for
20 being here and thank you so much for this time.

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
22 very much.

23 Next up we have Bill Bunting, and after
24 Bill, we have Ken Blankenship.

25 Bill, thank you for being here, sir.

1 MR. BUNTING: Well, thank all of you for
2 being here. You guys are doing a great job.
3 Now you will hear from me, and we will see how
4 great it is going to be.

5 Okay. One, I am going to be more specific
6 on the growth. First of all, I am a Pasco
7 resident for 23 years. I am on the
8 Governmental Affairs Board of Directors for
9 West Pasco Chamber with 1,400 businesses, and I
10 am on the Advisory Board of Directors for the
11 Salvation Army, so I am involved in my county.

12 One, we would like to see Richard
13 Corcoran's seat move up out of Pinellas.
14 Pinellas is going to lose their growth, they
15 have to give up ground, so there is no
16 question. Representative Corcoran has
17 represented Pasco very well, and we think he
18 should be a full Pasco legislator, just like
19 John Legg and hopefully Will Weatherford will
20 be out of Hillsborough and be a full
21 legislator, too.

22 The second part is extremely important,
23 and that is Congressman Bilirakis' district,
24 District 9. He represents three counties. It
25 would be -- behoove us if we could get

1 Mr. Bilirakis out of Hillsborough County and up
2 into east Pasco so he would only have two
3 counties to represent, it would be easier
4 access for all of the people to get in, and he
5 also is a great legislator.

6 And on the Senate seats that you are
7 hearing here, they are going to be contested in
8 Pasco, we have three precincts from a State
9 Representative whose name escapes me from
10 Hernando County, if we could push him back into
11 Hernando County, that would solidify what we
12 have to do.

13 And we think it is important that these
14 legislators come here, Mr. Weatherford is here
15 and John Legg is here and Mr. Corcoran is here.
16 Crime is an issue on the west side of Pasco
17 County, and the more we have legislators that
18 are directly involved in their own county and
19 they can work with our sheriff, we will be
20 better served. And I look forward to seeing
21 y'all on television when you have to redistrict
22 Corrine Brown's district. Thank you.

23 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
24 very much, Bill. We appreciate that, sir.

25 Next up we have Ken Blankenship, and after

1 Mr. Blankenship, we have Nick Bliesner.

2 Mr. Blankenship, are you here, sir? There he
3 is. Mr. Blankenship had the misfortune of
4 having to teach many of my brothers and sisters
5 in Land O' Lakes High School. Thanks for
6 bearing with us then and we appreciate you
7 being here tonight, sir.

8 MR. BLANKENSHIP: I think I even got to
9 teach you one day as a sub.

10 I am Kenny Blankenship. I am from Land O'
11 Lakes, Florida, I am a teacher in Pasco County,
12 and I have lived here since there was one house
13 in Lake Padgett Estates. There was no Trinity,
14 there was no Wesley Chapel when I moved.

15 This -- you can answer something for me.
16 I am a bit confused. You and Mr. Legg must be
17 playing tag team with the chairmanship. I got
18 a letter stating Mr. Legg was going to be the
19 Chairman, so -- but no problem. I always enjoy
20 when you are Chair, too.

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: He is a
22 Chair, he is a co-Chair.

23 MR. BLANKENSHIP: Co-Chair, okay.

24 To me, not having maps to comment on is
25 kind of confusing. I am a visual person, I

1 like to see things that I make comments on.
2 And I think -- I think it would have probably
3 been a little bit more prudent to have maps
4 drawn as other states have already done and
5 then take public comment on those maps and make
6 adjustments according to the public's desires
7 as you went along.

8 Will you be holding public hearings once
9 the maps are completed is one question that I
10 have. I would encourage you to complete the
11 maps -- the drawing of the maps and the
12 preliminary hearings that you are going to be
13 conducting that begin in September so that you
14 can vote on them during the first week of the
15 legislative session. I think waiting and
16 pushing it out to the last possible minute
17 would be confusing for voters and those who may
18 desire to run for office. I would like to know
19 which district I am going to be voting in well
20 in advance of any deadline to either register
21 to vote in or to run for office should I so
22 desire.

23 My desire is that you draw the maps
24 according to Amendments 5 and 6 that were
25 ratified by the people of Florida so that they

1 are equitable, that they are fair and that they
2 are contiguous. I hope that you will -- also
3 hope that you will withdraw from the lawsuit
4 that you entered into and that you would save
5 that \$30 million that you had set aside and
6 follow the Florida Constitution and the will of
7 the people in Florida. And thank you very
8 much, and thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for
9 being here.

10 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
11 Mr. Blankenship. You brought up several
12 questions there, and I believe our co-Chairman,
13 Senator Gaetz, will make sure and try to
14 address each and every one of those questions,
15 so thank you very much for that.

16 Nick, you are up, sir, and after Nick, we
17 have -- I believe it is Maurice Massey. Thank
18 you for being here today.

19 MR. BLIESNER: Thank you, Chairman
20 Weatherford, Chairman Gaetz. I am actually --
21 lived for the last ten years on Indian Rocks
22 Beach, the beautiful pristine coast, the Gulf
23 Coast. There was no oil, I checked before I
24 left, but I -- the last four years, I have been
25 a resident of Pasco County, attending St. Leo

1 University. I am only 23 years old. I think
2 that is relevant, because it is a travesty that
3 there aren't more students, more younger people
4 my age involved in this process. And having
5 been in Pasco for the last four years, I have
6 noticed that it is -- it is a wonderful
7 community and it is a -- truly it is a
8 different community than the one that I grew up
9 in back in Pinellas, and it definitely
10 encompasses that melting pot that -- you know,
11 culture that the state prides itself on, and I
12 think that the biggest issue that we face is
13 trying to encompass all of that into one, you
14 know, area, and having one district, two
15 districts, even three I don't think is enough
16 to represent the wonderful aspects of Pasco
17 County.

18 But I think the other important thing,
19 too, is that we as residents and citizens of
20 the state of Florida, and you as the Board,
21 might -- we all might misunderstood, and I was
22 a history major at St. Leo, so I came across
23 this quote by James Madison that I think was
24 extremely relevant, and it says, "A dependence
25 on the people is no doubt the primary control

1 on government, but experience has taught
2 mankind the necessity of auxilliary
3 precautions." While, yes, we have the right to
4 express our opinions and we have the right and
5 the honor of electing you all, we also need to
6 know that we do need the help of you all.

7 So thank you for your time, and I know
8 that you all will make the right decisions.

9 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
10 Nick.

11 Next up we have Maurice Massey. Is
12 Maurice here? All right. We will put him on
13 the side, we will keep moving.

14 Matt Edwards, I saw Matt was here earlier.
15 Is Mr. Edwards here? Okay, we will keep going.

16 Next up, Lutfi Jadallah. Mr. Jadallah,
17 sir, I'm sorry if I mispronounced that. It is
18 good to see you again. Thank you for being
19 here, you are recognized.

20 MR. JADALLAH: Yes, sir. My name is Lutfi
21 Jadallah. I have been a Wesley Chapel resident
22 since '97. I want to thank you for being here.
23 Welcome to Wesley Chapel.

24 You know, I am glad I am involved in this
25 thing, because I think we want to move forward.

1 I believe Amendment 5 and 6 says that you have
2 to follow contiguous, follow city lines,
3 counties, and where it's feasible, be feasible.
4 Right now we have Representative in -- for
5 Pasco that is part of Hillsborough or Polk
6 County, and even though I respect the other
7 counties, but we want to have a Representative
8 for the Pasco County.

9 Also I want to ask you all -- I believe
10 that you all are adults and mature, and I would
11 truly, truly appreciate that you will behave
12 that way in Tallahassee. I have been a
13 Republican since I was old enough to vote, so I
14 understand, but also we want to quit this us
15 and them, us and them. I think we should be
16 we.

17 So please keep in mind Amendment 5 and 6,
18 and keep in mind the people who put you there.
19 Thank you very much.

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
21 sir.

22 And I apologize, next up we have David
23 Kulscar, or Kulcsar. Did I say it right? I'm
24 sorry, David. You are up, sir, and after that,
25 we will have Mr. Gary Willner.

1 MR. KULCSAR: Thank you for coming
2 tonight. A lot of people that spoke tonight
3 are acting like it is a turf war between east
4 Pasco and west Pasco, whatever. We are not
5 Europe, and I think we should act that we are
6 not like going to be having wars over this.

7 I see you right there, Mr. Weatherford, I
8 see you there, Mr. Norman, I see you there, Mr.
9 Gaetz. I know what each of your districts look
10 like. For example, Mr. Norman, you used to
11 represent in the County Commission of
12 Hillsborough County, north Tampa --

13 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Speak into
14 the mike a little bit. It is kind of hard to
15 hear you.

16 MR. KULCSAR: Sorry. And you represent
17 districts that are very much areas. For
18 example, Mr. Gaetz, your district is on the
19 coast in Pensacola, and you are probably not
20 going to be drawn into the areas of north
21 Escambia and north Santa Rosa, because they are
22 just too -- just different from where you are.

23 Mr. Weatherford, you represent Wesley
24 Chapel and the eastern part of this county.
25 These areas, they may have been scorned by the

1 people that voted for 5 and 6 about how they
2 are drawn for gerrymandering purposes, but I
3 think one thing is this: These districts can
4 be drawn fairly without much changing of the
5 status quo. For example, Mr. Norman, how often
6 have you gone up and down U.S. 41 and not even
7 notice the difference between Lutz and Land O'
8 Lakes? There's not much difference, is there?

9 So I think we should at least be
10 acknowledging about the way some areas are.
11 Some areas can't be drawn from another one.
12 For example, Mr. Rouson's district, his
13 district goes from Tampa to St. Petersburg to
14 Bradenton and Sarasota. Now, his district is a
15 little more complicated than most, but the
16 think of the contiguousness of 5 and 6 asking
17 for it. It says here in the pamphlet you gave
18 us that the districts have to be contiguous,
19 and a district is contiguous if all of its
20 territory is interrupted. And I think we need
21 to look into this more often because, well, we
22 have bridges in Florida, whatnot, but it is
23 kind of wrong to see a Representative
24 representing just a part of a city for
25 political purposes or whatever purposes, to get

1 the numbers up in a certain demographic, simply
2 out of political expediency. And I think that
3 perhaps by drawing your districts in a fair
4 way, at least think of like where the core of
5 the district would be, whether it be a House
6 district, a Senate district or congressional
7 district, that at least adheres to a bit of
8 compactness. And I think by doing that, it can
9 easily be achieved, voters can be happy, you
10 can be happy, of course, you will at least have
11 shorter places to drive when you have
12 constituent services, and we can at least have
13 some parity when it comes to our congressional
14 districts, State House districts and State
15 Senate districts. And I think that should be a
16 standard that we should try and strive for, and
17 for -- and it is probably the best for Florida
18 anyway. So thank you.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
20 very much. Great comments.

21 Next up we have Mr. Gary Willner, and
22 after Mr. Willner, we have Mr. Charles Waller.

23 MR. WILLNER: Good evening, Gary Willner,
24 I live in Trinity.

25 First of all, I hope you all have tough

1 skin, because when this is over I figure six
2 million people are going to love you, six
3 million people are going to be angry at you,
4 and the six million that don't know what is
5 going on won't care.

6 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: The question
7 is which one of those are you going to be?

8 MR. WILLNER: I am hearing two schools of
9 thought tonight. One is to sort of try and
10 keep counties together. I am not of that
11 school at all. What I would hope you would do
12 is consider areas of interest together. For
13 example, the coastal areas of Citrus, Hernando
14 and Pasco have a great deal in common. They
15 have issues around the Gulf, they have issues
16 in restoring beaches, they have issues in how
17 do you get away from a hurricane, which are
18 considerably different than the inland issues
19 of Citrus, Hernando and Pasco. Now, I am not
20 an expert on Hillsborough County, but I've got
21 to think that the people in Tampa have
22 different issues than the area where they grow
23 the strawberries. They are day and night. So
24 I would hope you would sort of not get hung up
25 on the counties, but keep in mind that the

1 areas of interest that people have.

2 Frankly, I am kind of happy that there's
3 three Senators in Pasco. I think that is three
4 votes we have in the Legislature. I am not
5 bothered by the fact that we have six, and I am
6 delighted that we are -- the next Speaker and a
7 future Speaker. I kind of like that. I love
8 my Congressman, and I hope I am -- I always
9 joke on Congressman Bilirakis -- I am the last
10 house in Congressman Bilirakis' district, and
11 when you are done, I would be very happy if I
12 am still the last house in Congressman
13 Bilirakis' district.

14 Thank you for what you are doing, but
15 please try and keep the common interests
16 together, more than county lines, because
17 there's a lot of different interests and issues
18 that can take place in the same county. Thank
19 you for being here tonight.

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
21 very much. We appreciate those comments,
22 Mr. Willner.

23 Next up we have Mr. Waller, and following
24 Mr. Waller, we have Peter Hanzel.

25 Thank you for being here, sir.

1 MR. WALLER: I realize the acoustics here
2 are not the best. I hope they are better up
3 there than they are back here.

4 I am Charles Waller. I would just like to
5 let you know that my children are
6 seventh-generation cattle ranchers here in
7 Pasco County, Florida. We are -- I've been an
8 attorney here in Pasco County for 41 years, I
9 served 12 years as city attorney, City of
10 Zephyrhills, I have been appointed by three
11 different Governors to the Tampa Bay Regional
12 Planning Council, so I have an interest in my
13 community.

14 What you might not know, and I am not
15 going to throw stones, but about 35 years ago
16 it went on a referendum here to actually
17 separate west Pasco from east Pasco. Thank
18 goodness it was defeated, but we do -- we do
19 have a diverse interest. And when I come to
20 you, I like to come with a solution. I don't
21 know if it is permissible to give a document,
22 Mr. Weatherford, or not, but if I can, I would
23 like to pass this around, because you need to
24 do some research, and I've come here to help
25 you, I have done the research for you. And

1 we've got communities here of like interest.

2 There is nothing wrong with the people in
3 New Port Richey and Hudson. We have -- in
4 addition to living in Dade City, we have a
5 weekend home over there, but we speak a
6 different language. Over there, they talk
7 about arts and crafts. Over here, we talk
8 about rodeos and county fairs. Someone said
9 this is not rural. I don't want to see rural
10 then. I still take in chickens and eggs for
11 making wills and doing divorces. But we need a
12 Representative who can talk our language, and I
13 say "ours." We have in northeast Pasco a huge
14 minority population who help us out and work in
15 our businesses and in our agricultural
16 business. They need representation.

17 So I've got a solution for you, and that
18 is simply take the Parkway, make that the
19 dividing line. That area over there has
20 similar interests up and down that coast, and
21 if you will take that Parkway and come forward
22 then through the rest of central and east
23 Pasco, come up through Sumter County and
24 Hernando County, we speak the same language.
25 We are farmers, we are ranchers, we are chicken

1 farmers, we are cattle farmers, we own groves,
2 and we need someone who can look out for our
3 interests. And in the past, you know, we have
4 had great representation, but it is not easy
5 trying to balance the interests of New Port
6 Richey and Dade City, and we need someone who
7 has an agricultural interest who can speak for
8 us.

9 And thank you for coming. I wish this
10 meeting were in Dade City, because in Dade
11 City, we have never seen this many suits and
12 ties in one place ever. And I know our
13 hospitality here in Pasco County, and I feel
14 assured that Representative Weatherford is
15 going to invite all of you over to his house
16 for dinner when this is over with, but if it is
17 permissible to hand something --

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Yes.

19 MR. WALLER: And maybe you can pass this
20 around so --

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Counselor, we
22 will make sure everybody gets a copy of that.

23 MR. WALLER: And that will solve the whole
24 constitutional issue that we have here of
25 community interest. Thank you for your time.

1 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
2 Mr. Waller. We appreciate that.

3 All right. Next up we have Mr. Peter
4 Hanzel, and after that, we have -- I believe it
5 is J. Arnigale, Sr. I hope I said that right.

6 Peter, thanks for being here, sir, you are
7 recognized.

8 MR. HANZEL: I want to thank all of you
9 for coming out and listening to us tonight
10 before you produced any maps, and I would like
11 to say something to my friends over here to the
12 right. I don't know what it is, whether it is
13 optical illusion or not, but you all seem so
14 far away, so I hope you all listen to my
15 comments tonight, please, I need you, I need
16 your help. I do need you all.

17 I am here as an individual citizen, and my
18 concerns are -- and I am going to start with my
19 third concern and move my way up to my top
20 concern. My third concern deals with District
21 12. We already heard one remark tonight, how
22 it should include Zephyrhills, which is
23 currently in District 10, and I agree that it
24 should be moved into District 12. And to make
25 it fair and balanced, I would say let's take

1 that area that is represented currently in
2 District 12 and remove the areas of
3 Hillsborough into another district. That is
4 basically the New Tampa area.

5 The second request I have deals with one
6 of my favorite districts, House District 61. I
7 think that district does need to lose some
8 individuals. I don't mean lose them like in
9 lost. I mean reduce the number of people
10 there. I want to make myself clear on that. I
11 think the line needs to move east to Land O'
12 Lakes and delete that portion that currently is
13 in Hillsborough County.

14 And I apologize, I made a mistake earlier.
15 This area is in the New Tampa area that deals
16 in Hillsborough. The other area that was in
17 Senate District 12 was basically Citrus Park
18 and Northdale area and some other communities
19 over in that area. I apologize for that
20 mistake.

21 But I also agree, and it was mentioned
22 earlier, that the Crystal Springs area should
23 move into District 61. It is a very small area
24 and it is currently in House District 62.

25 Now, my other concern is this: I sit on a

1 community development district board, and, you
2 know, I don't have to say this, but that was
3 created by Florida Statute 190. And they are
4 basically -- I call them amoebas, but they are
5 very small governmental districts. And what I
6 would like to ask, and I need your help on this
7 one here, is to make sure that wherever you
8 draw those lines at for these larger districts,
9 the more important districts -- and you see
10 where I am going, don't you -- I am going to
11 make sure that when you do draw those lines,
12 that there is no line that would separate or
13 divide those CDD districts.

14 And, again, I want to take the opportunity
15 to thank all of you for being here, and thank
16 you all over there to my right for listening to
17 me. Don't forget, help me out on this issue,
18 please. Thank you.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
20 Peter. We appreciate that, sir.

21 Next, I don't know if I said the name
22 right, and I apologize, I am sure it's just my
23 eyes, J. Arnigale, Sr., from 2595 Southern Bell
24 Drive. I see somebody -- no? Okay, we will
25 put him off to the side for just a minute.

1 Next we've got Paul Waltenberg, Watenberg,
2 or Wartenberg, I'm sorry. Paul? Is Paul here?

3 Okay. Next up we have Sheada Madani
4 Practico. Sheada?

5 All right. Greg Lenners, I saw Greg
6 earlier. I don't know if he is still here.
7 Greg Lenners, is Greg here? Greg runs the mall
8 that Kathleen spent all her money at earlier
9 today. I don't see him here either.

10 Okay. Gary Worthley. Is Gary here?
11 Okay, he says he is not speaking, he is just
12 happy to be here. All right, we are happy to
13 have you.

14 Karen Hanzel, I know Karen is here. Is
15 Ms. Hanzel here? There she is. All right.
16 After Ms. Hanzel, we will have Emily Barsch.

17 Ms. Hanzel, thank you very much for being
18 here. We are excited to have you. You are
19 recognized, ma'am.

20 MS. HANZEL: Thank you. I am Karen
21 Hanzel. I live in Wesley Chapel. I have been
22 there for 11 years.

23 When possible, I would like to see the
24 Senate and House districts be drawn into one
25 county. For as an example, I think Pasco

1 District 61 should be exclusively represented
2 in central and east Pasco. The portion of
3 Hillsborough County which is now included in
4 61, which is south of Wesley Chapel, I believe
5 should be removed from that district.

6 Basically what I am saying is try to keep the
7 State Representatives in one county, rather
8 than spread out.

9 Thank you, and I really commend all of you
10 for being here. Thanks a lot for listening.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
12 very much. We appreciate that.

13 Next up we have Ms. Emily Barsch.
14 Following Ms. Barsch, we have John Russell.

15 Emily, thank you for being here.

16 MS. BARSCH: Good evening, and thank you
17 all for coming. We really appreciate it.

18 I am a native Floridian, growing up in the
19 metropolitan area of Jacksonville, probably
20 only one of 20 people that ever lived in Two
21 Egg, Florida, and also I have lived in the
22 Marion County area and now in Pasco County.

23 Having been in such diverse areas of
24 Florida, rural opposed to metropolitan, I think
25 it is extremely important to keep that in mind

1 when redistricting Florida. As many have said
2 before me, it is very imperative that we
3 remember that there is a diverse group in this
4 county, and we need to make sure that people
5 are represented according to their diversity.

6 We appreciate the fact that you will
7 listen to us and not to groups that are -- that
8 have ulterior motives, and we trust that you
9 will do what is best for this county and what
10 is best for the people of this county. The
11 special interest groups do not always have our
12 best interest at heart, so we know that you
13 will listen to we, the people. Thank you very
14 much for being here, and we certainly
15 appreciate it.

16 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
17 very much, Emily, we appreciate that.

18 Next up we have Mr. John Russell.
19 Following Mr. Russell, we have Hugh Townsend.

20 Mr. Russell, you are recognized, sir.

21 MR. RUSSELL: Thank you very much. Of
22 course, we appreciate everyone being here. I
23 think some of you have driven some distance to
24 be here.

25 I would like to say how I would have done

1 this. No one has said this. I think we have
2 some people who have gone to business school
3 here, run some businesses, and quite frankly,
4 the parameters that are outlined in Amendments
5 5 and 6 are quite precise. So rather than have
6 this quite discombobulated effort of people
7 drawing up their own districts and -- I mean,
8 in reality, if people -- if a thousand people
9 drew districts, which wouldn't be an outrageous
10 number, you are on the Internet, what are you
11 going to do with those? The idea is to draw
12 fair districts. The parameters are quite
13 strict. So you draw the fair districts, you
14 come here with pro forma designs, which
15 Mr. Chojnowski said earlier in this program,
16 and you put it on a computer like they have
17 done in Hillsborough County to redo the county
18 commission districts, and then your task is
19 greatly simplified.

20 But, of course, we know this is political,
21 it is inherently political. And the bottom
22 line is, we know how -- those of us who have
23 run for office know how things work. With one
24 single variable being the great arbiter between
25 who gets elected, that being money, no one

1 knows better than Mr. Weatherford with \$927,000
2 for a \$30,000 --

3 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Mr. Russell,
4 we would like you to keep the focus of the
5 conversation on redistricting.

6 MR. RUSSELL: It is focused totally on
7 redistricting, Will, totally.

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Please do.

9 MR. RUSSELL: This is our political
10 system, which is sadly broken. And this is one
11 effort that the public of all political
12 persuasions have decided, they have had their
13 vote, they have had their vote counted, and it
14 is counted greatly in the majority to have the
15 districts fairly apportioned. It is your job,
16 because you work for us, as people have said,
17 but we know that, when we are in politics, we
18 understand that these people here don't get
19 great sums of money nearing a million dollars
20 or whatever to do the will of the people. It
21 is to do the will of the powers that be.

22 And so, quite frankly, I am going to hand
23 you this, and the guy's name is Dan Hardy. You
24 know, if you truly were interested in doing
25 this properly, you would give Dan a call. I

1 talked with Dan, and Dan ran this thing, it is
2 about being objective. There's nothing
3 subjective about doing this.

4 So I could go on and on about how broken
5 the political system is. Most people
6 understand it. It is money that is the
7 problem. But we have the people here who,
8 because of the money, they are mostly
9 appointed, you are appointed by virtue of the
10 amount of money that you receive from the
11 powers that be. Same with the judiciary where
12 this is going to go.

13 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Mr. Russell,
14 I think it is time to wrap up, sir.

15 MR. RUSSELL: Hold on one second, I am
16 almost done. Let me make my conclusion here,
17 Will.

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Okay.

19 MR. RUSSELL: The judiciary likewise is
20 appointed in the same way, so we know this is
21 going to the courts --

22 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Mr. Russell,
23 I think we get your point. We really
24 appreciate your comments tonight.

25 MR. RUSSELL: Will, I know. Just let me

1 complete my sentence.

2 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: If you keep
3 it on redistricting, I will let you finish.

4 MR. RUSSELL: The bottom line is --

5 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Mr. Russell,
6 I will give you 15 seconds to wrap it up.

7 MR. RUSSELL: Exactly.

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: There you go.

9 MR. RUSSELL: Shouldn't have been
10 interrupted in the first place.

11 The judiciary will see fit, and you are
12 going to run this thing through using our tax
13 dollars against us. I thank you very much.
14 This is a dog and pony show. It is a fig leaf
15 over what will be the end result. Thank you
16 very much.

17 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
18 very much, sir.

19 All right. Moving on, we are now going to
20 hear from Mr. Hugh Townsend. Hugh, thank you
21 for being here, sir. After Mr. Townsend, we
22 are going to hear from Tom Hanlon.

23 You are recognized.

24 MR. TOWNSEND: Well, first of all, good
25 evening and thank you all for coming out, both

1 our elected officials and our residents here.
2 My empathy to you. Having been on the Board of
3 Planning and Zoning, I have faced that same
4 type of interesting exchange.

5 But on a much brighter note, I came down
6 here to Pasco County in '93, and for almost the
7 entire time I have been the President of my
8 homeowners' association. We, however, in our
9 association, are split between two
10 congressional districts. If at all possible --
11 again, to reiterate -- to keep homeowner
12 associations and major communities intact with
13 representation from one congressional district
14 would be the first thing I would like to see,
15 if possible.

16 Secondly, I serve on the parish council of
17 St. George Greek Orthodox Church. I am very
18 active in the Greek community, despite the
19 name, and I would like to see an ethnic
20 community that we have established in this
21 greater west Pasco area and northern Pinellas
22 of Hellenic Americans continue to be
23 represented as they are currently with an
24 excellent congressional district that can
25 address the needs of not just the general

1 populi, but that of the specific Greek
2 community.

3 So I would like to see our congressional
4 district that is currently occupied by
5 Congressman Bilirakis to stay for the most part
6 intact and able to represent the Greek
7 communities that range from our church here in
8 Pasco County on the southwest side all the way
9 down through Clearwater.

10 I also am fortunate to serve as co-Chair
11 of the Juvenile Justice Board and on the
12 Juvenile Justice Council, because the Sixth
13 Judicial Circuit, as some of you are aware, is
14 all of Pasco and Pinellas, so in that respect,
15 moving on to a Representative seat, I would
16 like to see the existing Representative seat
17 continue to represent both this area. The fact
18 that we have three Representatives representing
19 Pasco actually makes a great deal of sense.
20 You have heard in great length about the
21 patrician families and the agriculture to the
22 east, which is true. We also have a growing
23 population of young, upward professionals
24 moving from north Tampa, and, of course, we
25 have the Hellenic community that I like to

1 represent, as well as the New York community
2 that's moved down and taken over the west side
3 of Pasco. So having three different State
4 Representatives would be essential to maintain
5 a homogenous representation for those
6 communities. If --

7 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Hugh, I am
8 going to have to ask you to wrap it up.

9 MR. TOWNSEND: Lastly --

10 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Okay.

11 MR. TOWNSEND: -- if we can get one Senate
12 seat representing all of Pasco, that would be a
13 wonderful conclusion to a good process every
14 ten years that we serve here. Thank you all
15 very much.

16 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
17 very much.

18 Next up we have Tom Hanlon, and after Tom,
19 we have Randy Hixson.

20 Tom, thanks for being here, sir. You are
21 recognized.

22 MR. HANLON: My name is Tom Hanlon. Thank
23 you --

24 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: If you would
25 get real close to that mike. There you go.

1 MR. HANLON: My name is Tom Hanlon. I
2 appreciate you giving me the opportunity to
3 talk to you. We on the east side are happy to
4 give you the flavors we do on this side, and
5 they never will match that on the west side,
6 and you have to take that into account. We are
7 a rural company -- I mean part of the county.
8 We are happy to give you that, give you the
9 beauty. And just don't take -- what we need is
10 a Representative to represent our interests.
11 You know, the County -- the County just made
12 the growth in central Pasco -- they don't want
13 to have growth, and we are happy to do that,
14 and we ask you to do the same thing and take
15 care of our interests in east Pasco. Thank
16 you.

17 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
18 very much, Tom, we appreciate it.

19 Ladies and gentlemen, if we could ask
20 people in the back, if you are having a
21 conversation, it is getting a little hard to
22 hear in here, we would ask you to take it
23 outside. So please give the speakers the
24 respect that they deserve.

25 Mr. Hixson is up. After Mr. Hixson,

1 Ms. Alison Morano.

2 Randy, good to see you, sir. You are
3 recognized.

4 MR. HIXSON: Thank you. Thank you,
5 Representative Weatherford and members of this
6 Legislature. I just wanted to -- my name is
7 Randy Hixson. I am a Pasco County resident,
8 been here 11 years, live in Seven Oaks.

9 I just want to reiterate one of my
10 thoughts for you to take away from this
11 meeting. It has been said a couple of times
12 before, but I live in Seven Oaks, as you are
13 drawing these lines, I think it is very
14 critical and important that you don't just take
15 a pencil and draw through communities, that you
16 use community boundaries as a boundary so we
17 can keep communities together as they are CDD
18 communities that have common -- common
19 interests, and also to keep that community
20 unity together. So I think it is very critical
21 that you do that. There are some communities
22 that are divided. I would ask that you
23 consider putting those back together and then
24 not dividing any future communities.

25 I thank you for your time, and God bless

1 you and I thank you for your work here. Thank
2 you.

3 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
4 Mr. Hixson. We appreciate it, sir.

5 Next up we have Ms. Alison Morano.
6 Alison, it is good to see you. Followed by
7 Alison, we have Mr. Robert Nathe.

8 MS. MORANO: Hi. Good evening,
9 Representative. Good evening, everybody. I am
10 a resident of Wesley Chapel, and I have lived
11 here for about 11, 12 years. I know this
12 county pretty well. I have served on the Board
13 of Pasco United Way, I have served on the Pasco
14 County Long-Range Library Planning Committee, I
15 have served on the Boards of Leadership Pasco,
16 I have served on Leadership Tampa Bay, I have
17 served on several other committees, including
18 being -- serving as the Chair of the Greater
19 Wesley Chapel Chamber of Commerce for three and
20 a half years. I was here before this high
21 school was built. I was here for the
22 groundbreaking of Wiregrass. So I know this
23 county pretty well.

24 One of the things I would like to disagree
25 with that's been brought up is that Wesley

1 Chapel actually is a very diverse, growing
2 community. I absolutely do believe that we
3 work with New Tampa and that we -- I have an
4 identity with Hillsborough County. I would not
5 like to see that cut off in any way.

6 But I would like to say thank you and that
7 I appreciate all the legislators that are here,
8 and I appreciate that you are taking this time
9 to listen to us.

10 I also appreciate the 63 percent of the
11 voters that came out in 2010 to pass Amendments
12 5 and 6, and I hope that you will all take the
13 time to implement what we have asked for and
14 what the voters have asked for.

15 And as far as the maps being drawn, I
16 think that 5 and 6 pretty much lay out the
17 makeup of what you need to do in order to draw
18 these maps, and it may be an arduous task, but
19 I think that the rules are there and the lines
20 are there to be drawn and the numbers are there
21 from the census and the demographics are there
22 to make this a lot easier than it would have
23 been if you are starting from scratch. And
24 what you have asked us to do basically is start
25 from scratch, because we -- we do not have your

1 knowledge of the census or the demographics,
2 and we can go on the software, and maybe it is
3 very advanced, but we believe that all of you
4 providing us the starting point and then we can
5 have our input is the way this process is
6 supposed to go.

7 Now, having said that, another thing that
8 was brought up this evening by our Supervisor
9 of Elections from Pasco County is the matter of
10 timing. I realize that the Legislature is
11 going to start in January 2012, as I believe
12 happens every time there is a redistricting
13 process, you start in 2012. I am not sure that
14 this year is an exception. But I think that if
15 you don't give us maps by August -- by January
16 when you are ready to meet, and you wait until
17 August, as Brian Corley brought up, you put us
18 in a very difficult position of being able to
19 tell people who they are voting for and where
20 they are voting. You are right on the tail of
21 the primary, which is only two weeks later,
22 given the date that I have been reading about,
23 and I don't know how we get through the court
24 process and then the Department of Justice
25 process and then the redistricting and the

1 precinct re-draws and notifying everybody where
2 it is they are supposed to vote in time to be
3 able to even think about a primary. That
4 doesn't even start with the fact that the vote
5 by mail ballots go out so soon after you are
6 talking about passing these maps. I just think
7 that the timing is very bad, and I would
8 appreciate it if you could come into the
9 January legislative session in 2012 with maps
10 drawn, put them on the table and let us start
11 from there. This process of going around the
12 state and holding these hearings is taking a
13 very long time, and I believe that we could
14 have maps in that process that you could be
15 bringing with you.

16 So thank you for your time and thank you
17 for coming out, and I hope you enjoy Wesley
18 Chapel.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
20 very much, Alison.

21 Next up we have Robert Nathe, Jr.,
22 followed by Jeff Novotny.

23 Junior, good to see you, sir. You have
24 the floor.

25 MR. NATHE: Thank you all. Thank

1 everybody for being here. I am
2 fourth-generation native of Pasco County, Dade
3 City area, and I am not very good at speaking.

4 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: You are doing
5 good.

6 MR. NATHE: Our family has been in ag, and
7 the east side of the county is heavy -- heavily
8 rural agriculture, and with -- the other
9 counties is Sumter and part of Hillsborough and
10 Hernando Counties, you have the same
11 demographics. The west side of Pasco County is
12 a lot different. I have seen this county
13 change dramatically over the years, and I just
14 bring that up. Thank you all.

15 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Yes, sir,
16 thank you very much. Great comments.

17 We have Jeff Novotny up, and after
18 Mr. Novotny, we have Robert Graydon.

19 Jeff, good to see you.

20 MR. NOVOTNY: Good to see you, too. Thank
21 you very much for coming out and for your time
22 and your patience to listen to all of us here
23 tonight. My name is Jeff Novotny, I live at
24 29725 Chapel Park Drive, Wesley Chapel. I am a
25 business owner here in Wesley Chapel, one of

1 the few ten years ago, but our area has changed
2 from being a pass-through zone to being an
3 origin point for many people. It is now
4 becoming a destination for many.

5 The boundaries between the counties
6 somewhat get muted. Other than our children
7 going to different schools and our taxes being
8 collected by a different tax collector, many of
9 the people that live here also commute down to
10 the New Tampa area. So I think it is important
11 that as you are drawing districts, you look at
12 different areas and the character of the
13 communities, the areas that you serve, the
14 needs and the interests of the people and how
15 they align. It is also important that you look
16 at communities and developments and keep those
17 common and together.

18 With that, I think if you were to look at
19 Wesley Chapel in ten years, maybe it serves its
20 own House district because it will be large
21 enough. However, until that point, if you were
22 to take Wesley Chapel and expand beyond that,
23 there are similarities with New Tampa, so it
24 does make sense to include New Tampa in some of
25 the discussions there.

1 There is a big difference between this
2 area and the western part of the county on the
3 other side of Suncoast Parkway, so a dividing
4 line makes sense at that point. As you expand
5 from Wesley Chapel, the Land O' Lakes and Lutz
6 area have a lot of similar character, as well
7 as Zephyrhills, so that becomes kind of a
8 contiguous zone with common interests.

9 So with that, I appreciate your time, and
10 have a good time.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
12 Jeff. We appreciate that.

13 Next up we have Mr. Robert Graydon. After
14 Robert, we have Cliff Gill.

15 MR. GRAYDON: Hello, my name is Robert
16 Graydon. I am actually a native Floridian,
17 born and raised in the Panhandle of Florida,
18 moved here in '88 and actually live in Wesley
19 Chapel now since '93, raising my family here.
20 It is a great place to raise your kids.

21 Like -- actually, like the previous
22 speaker, one thing I do want to say is I am
23 generally pretty happy with the way that our
24 district is. I do want to encourage you to
25 definitely keep in mind the types of

1 communities in the area. Obviously, western
2 Pasco is definitely different than central
3 Pasco, but we are also considerable different
4 than the rural farming areas. This area is
5 growing like crazy. It wasn't too long ago
6 that we would have been in a cow pasture right
7 here. I have seen all of that change since I
8 have been here. When I first moved here in
9 '93, again, Bruce B. Downs was a road to
10 nowhere.

11 So it is definitely growing. It is a
12 great place to be. We need representation that
13 recognizes that it is a growth area. It is
14 very important to us to continue that growth
15 and to make it even more of a destination
16 rather than just a bedroom community to Tampa.

17 That is all I have to say. Thank you.

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
19 very much.

20 Next up we have Cliff Gill, and after
21 Cliff, we have Joe Worrell. Cliff? I don't
22 see Cliff, so we will put him to the side and
23 allow Joe to come up.

24 Joe, good to see you, sir, and after
25 Joe -- I apologize if I can't say this name

1 right, but Colleen Branch, maybe, or Calvin
2 Branch, on 12718 Sugar Creek Boulevard. There
3 we go. Sorry about that, sir. I'm sure it is
4 my eyes.

5 Joe, you are recognized.

6 MR. WORRELL: I'm Joe Worrell. I have
7 been a resident of Pasco County for 25 years.
8 I am glad to see all of you here. A lot of you
9 are from south Florida. You had a good trip
10 up, I hope.

11 When I moved to Pasco County, I closed on
12 my home in '87, I drove down Bruce B. Downs,
13 581 30th Street, met one car. The sign for
14 Wesley Chapel was at Smith Road. The rest of
15 it was all Zephyrhills. Now they have moved it
16 and they've got the sign up at Marsh Ridge
17 Road.

18 What I would like to see is if we are
19 going to have three Representatives, one for
20 the east, one for the central, one for the
21 west, but don't split communities, don't split
22 neighborhoods. We have the population now for
23 Senate seat for the entire county. We've got
24 the people say we've got a problem with the
25 east and the west. We already have to go to

1 New Port Richey every other week and then to
2 Dade City the other week for county business.
3 That's not going to change. Tom has to go both
4 sides to cover the news for *The Tribune*. The
5 rest of the county is used to the east and the
6 west working together. I think we deserve one
7 county, one Senate seat. Thank you.

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
9 very much.

10 Next up we have Calvin Branch, I believe,
11 and then after that Joel Coston, or Coston.

12 MR. BRANCH: Yes, thank you very much. I
13 have been watching you and listening to you,
14 and thank you for being here. And I started
15 doing a rough count, and you are just a little
16 bit larger than one of the last classes I ever
17 taught, which was on the introduction to
18 philosophy, which I taught for a quarter of a
19 century.

20 One of the classes -- one of the books we
21 taught in that class was a book called *Theory*
22 *of Justice* by John Rawls. And in that, there
23 was an interesting little experiment, and I am
24 going to ask you for a moment, because you have
25 been really good for the last three hours, I am

1 going to ask you for a moment just to play
2 along with me a bit.

3 In this *Theory of Justice*, Mr. Rawls said
4 consider yourself, and right now I am going to
5 draw a veil of ignorance across you. You do
6 not know what is on this side. Now, over there
7 on that side, you are responsible for setting
8 up a theory of justice, and you don't know what
9 you are going to be when that veil is down.
10 Male or female, rich or poor, whatever, you do
11 not know. The theory was that when you have to
12 do that, you will, in fact, set up the most
13 perfect theory of justice you can, because you
14 don't know what you are going to be here.

15 Now, here's where we get down to what you
16 are doing. You have to set up a theory,
17 redistricting. And I am going to suggest that
18 what you do is forget for a moment whether you
19 are a Democrat or Republican or whatever. What
20 you should do at this point is to say, "When
21 the veil of ignorance comes down, I don't know
22 what I am going to be here, I don't know what
23 community of interest I am going to be in," but
24 you should, in fact, pay attention to all the
25 communities of interest and then try to make

1 sure that the way you draw things up will serve
2 those communities of interest. Thank you.

3 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
4 sir.

5 Joel, you are next, sir, and after Joel,
6 we have James Quinlon. Thank you for being
7 here.

8 MR. COSTON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You
9 are also my Representative, and I am very
10 pleased.

11 I, too, am a transplant to Pasco County,
12 originally born and raised in Tampa, Florida.
13 We came up from Tampa 32 years ago, live in a
14 little community in northeast Pasco called
15 Blanton. Some of you know who -- I know you
16 do, Will.

17 What I would like to say is in the past, I
18 also served in the political process in Pasco
19 County. From 1980 to 1984, I was Vice-Chairman
20 of the Republican party. I had the opportunity
21 to meet Governor Reagan three times before he
22 was elected President of the United States, and
23 supported his campaign in 1980. But I would
24 like to say that looking at the county now,
25 it's come a long ways, baby, and we have six

1 Representatives, three Senators and two
2 Congress members for the county.

3 I, too, agree with Mr. Van Gorden who
4 spoke before me, and Mr. Waller, about the
5 content and the characteristics of east Pasco
6 County. I hope at the end of this process we
7 can get a consideration up for that. We are a
8 rural community. I grew up in south Tampa,
9 went to Plant High School, the whole business
10 down there. Came up here a long time ago to
11 get in the country. I would like to keep it
12 that way like -- and others have done the same
13 as I. We are very pleased with the life up
14 here in Pasco, it is a wonderful place. We
15 would like to see it continue to be that way.
16 And let's have a haven for that lifestyle when
17 you're drawing these districts and setting the
18 lines.

19 And, Will, I hope you don't go away,
20 because I know you are over -- according to the
21 model out here, you are over the top, but I
22 hope you stay my guy and keep doing what you
23 are doing. And I thank every one of you for
24 coming. I know you came from a lot of far
25 distant places to be a part of this process.

1 And thank you, too, Ms. Storms.

2 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
3 very much. Thank you for your kind words. We
4 appreciate that.

5 Next we have James Quinlon, and after
6 James, we have Joe Wicker.

7 MR. QUINLON: I will be very brief since I
8 didn't actually sign up to speak, but in any
9 event, I am a little disappointed that -- I
10 understood Senator Gaetz's point about not
11 having come here with maps and giving us the
12 opportunity to give our input first, but I
13 really think that you all being the
14 professionals, it would have been more helpful
15 if you had the maps and we reacted to them.

16 In any event, I want to thank you for
17 being here, and I just want to point out that
18 Amendments 5 and 6 have been approved by a vast
19 majority, as everybody has pointed out, and I
20 beg you, please don't subvert them with
21 litigation, please implement them fairly and do
22 it soon, because time is running out. Thanks.

23 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Yes, sir,
24 thank you very much. We appreciate those
25 comments.

1 Joe Wicker, and followed by Joe, we have
2 Jim McBride. Joe, are you here, buddy? There
3 we go. And if we can get Jim McBride in the
4 queue. After Jim, it is going to be Greg
5 Armstrong. I saw Greg earlier.

6 Mr. Wicker, you are recognized, sir.
7 Thanks for being here.

8 MR. WICKER: All right. Thank you very
9 much. I am Joe Wicker. I am a former Army
10 officer, and now I am in business and one of
11 the 3.8 million new Floridians in the last --
12 over the last ten years, and I have been here
13 about three years now, trying to settle in and
14 finally live somewhere for a little while.

15 So here we are in this decennial process
16 of reapportionment, and we got organizations
17 from all over the place coming to Florida to
18 influence policy, and it is a difficult
19 process, so I appreciate what you guys are
20 going through, and, you know, it is the off
21 season and you are here and you're touring
22 Florida, and we appreciate that. Redistricting
23 is always difficult, it is going to be
24 difficult every single time.

25 And before I bring up gerrymandering,

1 which, you know, gets brought up every
2 redistricting process, I just want to remind
3 people that when you -- when you vote for a
4 constitutional amendment, those have second and
5 third order effects that are very serious, and
6 we are going to live through some of that. You
7 are going to get judges involved instead of
8 your Representatives who you can more directly
9 interact with. So we will see how that turns
10 out.

11 But it is natural for people to have a
12 distrust of government. I mean, were seeing
13 that more and more now. You all are aware of
14 that. But, you know, before the committee can
15 really get into some of what do seem like
16 legitimate issues, you know, having one Senate
17 seat or two Senate seats, Pasco and the
18 different lines, I mean, those are some
19 legitimate concerns, but before the committee
20 can even get into that, they have to deal with
21 a number of other issues, which is based off of
22 law, they have to deal with the
23 majority-minority district, the minority
24 crossover district, the minority coalition
25 district, meaning that if there's two or more

1 minority groups, they can make it a
2 majority-minority district, and then the
3 minority influence district, and all that
4 before they get into the compactness, the
5 contiguity, the preservation of the counties
6 and political subdivisions, before they can get
7 into preservation of communities of interest,
8 preservation of cores of prior districts and
9 compliance with Section 2 of the Voting Rights
10 Act, of which Hillsborough County has to
11 receive pre-clearance, and all this has to be
12 done within a very small deviation of the
13 population, so it is extremely difficult.

14 So just in closing, you know, for the
15 people, I would like to say that I am really
16 proud that we got this much involvement, and I
17 would ask that we realize that what we think is
18 fair tends to be from where we sit and not from
19 where someone else sits, and to remember that
20 you want your Representatives to be involved in
21 this process, you do not want the courts
22 deciding how you get represented.

23 And for the committee, with all the
24 back-door meetings that are going on in DC
25 right now, I am really appreciative that you

1 are doing this out in the open so everybody can
2 see it and we can put it on TV, there's no
3 back-door deals at least for right now. But
4 keep getting out in front of the people so that
5 we can be proud of the integrity that we have
6 in this process. Integrity was one of the key
7 values of being a military officer, and I
8 believe that Florida is going to be able to get
9 through this and show that value, and I know
10 that you will use common sense, even though
11 common sense is not very common, and I
12 appreciate your time. Thank you very much.

13 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
14 very much, Mr. Wicker. We appreciate that,
15 sir.

16 Next up we've got Mr. McBride, and after
17 Mr. McBride, we have Mr. Armstrong.

18 You are recognized, sir.

19 MR. McBRIDE: How do you do,
20 Mr. Weatherford?

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Please speak
22 into the mike.

23 MR. McBRIDE: Jim McBride, one of the few
24 people that you have heard here tonight that is
25 several generations of Floridians. In fact, I

1 have lived in the same house in excess of 50
2 years up near the intersection of 41 and 52,
3 and I want to tell you all it is a real
4 pleasure for a guy with this kind of gray hair
5 to stand out here this whole meeting and
6 identify with each one of you behind your
7 yellow name tag and let you know that a person
8 that has voted every year in the military
9 absentee in Pasco County, to thank you for
10 being out here.

11 In America at this time, we know what is
12 going on in Washington, there's a lot of tough
13 things going on. You all have got some of the
14 toughest decisions to make, and I want to tell
15 you this: My heart and my prayer goes out with
16 every one of you all. You've got a tough
17 decision to make. I have the utmost confidence
18 in every one of you all that you are going to
19 do what is right for Pasco County and Florida,
20 myself, my family and my grandchildren. Thank
21 you very much for coming out here tonight.

22 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
23 Mr. McBride. And, most importantly, thank you
24 for your prayers, sir. We greatly appreciate
25 that.

1 Greg Armstrong, is Greg here? I saw him
2 earlier. We are going to put him to the side.

3 Next up we've got Jason Smith. Is Jason
4 here? Mr. Smith, welcome. After Mr. Smith,
5 we've got Mary Hanchan, I hope I said that
6 right, 5603 Grindstone Loop.

7 Mr. Smith, you are recognized, sir.

8 MR. SMITH: Thank you, and thank you guys
9 for being here, I really appreciate it. My
10 name is Jason Smith. I have lived in Pasco
11 County since the age of two, and I am a proud
12 resident of Pasco County and my family is
13 growing up here.

14 I do have some comments specifically on
15 how I would like to see the districts redrawn,
16 but I came here skeptical. Like a lot of
17 folks, I guess I just am not fully sure that I
18 can trust the process, but, actually, in
19 learning about the website and everything, I
20 did go on and register and try to do the
21 mapping. I found that very difficult to do, I
22 will be honest with you. I am going to keep
23 working with it and try to do it to where I
24 draw lines, but I did not find that process
25 very friendly.

1 District 9 specifically I would like to
2 speak to, Bilirakis' district. I would like to
3 see that actually moved out of Polk County
4 completely. I think we go too far away from
5 Pasco County with that. I would like to see it
6 move into Hillsborough County somewhere, maybe
7 go as far south as Tampa Road and then up to
8 Gunn Highway or something, and then maybe even
9 push it down south a little bit into St.
10 Petersburg.

11 If it is possible, based -- and another
12 thing I learned tonight is that you have
13 restrictions on -- your hands are tied
14 apparently on a lot of this as far as how you
15 are going to redraw the lines, and I actually
16 like that, I like that there are rules of the
17 road and that there's more -- that the citizens
18 have kind of tied your hands and that there's
19 more regulation around this and I am glad for
20 that because I think part of the skepticism
21 that I came here with and a lot of people came
22 here with was because in the past, things were
23 done in back rooms, you know, in smoke-filled
24 rooms, and I hope that if any of you are on a
25 committee that actually does draw some lines

1 and it is not your folks that, you know, like
2 smart people like Jason back there figuring out
3 everything for you, if you are actually in a
4 room and the moment comes when you are looking
5 at drawing some lines, I hope that politics
6 don't play a part in that. Please resist the
7 urge. That is why 63 percent of us voted for
8 this is because we want politics out of it. We
9 want that to stop. And I want to urge you
10 please keep the politics out of it, keep it
11 clean.

12 And if it is possible, one last thing, I
13 would like to see a Senate representative just
14 for Pasco, if that is possible, based on -- I
15 know you are restricted based on how many
16 people live there, and there is a population
17 number you have to meet, but as much as that as
18 possible, as close to that, because three
19 representatives all sprawled out, some in
20 Hillsborough, some representing other areas, we
21 have issues in Pasco that don't pertain to
22 places like Hillsborough. They got funding,
23 for instance, for schools, we didn't, and our
24 schools are funded differently. Our county
25 commissioners dictate, you know, how funding is

1 worked out. So I would like to keep us as
2 autonomous as possible so that we can deal with
3 our issues internally.

4 So I appreciate your time, thank you for
5 being here and I really appreciate you doing
6 this. Thank you.

7 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thanks very
8 much. We appreciate it.

9 Mary -- Mary Hanchan. Is Mary here?

10 Okay, Dave Domino. Dave, are you here?

11 All right. Moving on, Suzanne Fulford.

12 Ms. Fulford? After Suzanne, we have her
13 husband, Kevin. And while we are waiting for
14 her to come down, after Kevin, we will have
15 Joyce Hamilton Henry.

16 Ms. Fulford, it is good to see you. You
17 are recognized.

18 MS. FUL.FORD: Hi, how are you?

19 First of all, I would like to thank you
20 all for coming. I know that you have taken a
21 lot of time out of your schedules to go around
22 the state and listen to everybody, and I would
23 like to -- I would like to thank you for the
24 transparency and actually coming and listening
25 to us and hearing what we have to say.

1 That being said, I am going to be short
2 and sweet, because a lot of people have said
3 exactly what I have been thinking, and the
4 first thing is basically the three separate
5 districts for Pasco County I think is
6 important, east, central and west, because of
7 the population, the way it is separated and the
8 different needs of the communities. So thank
9 you very much.

10 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
11 very much. We appreciate the brevity. We are
12 giving bonus points at this point for that, so
13 that was wonderful, Ms. Fulford.

14 Mr. Fulford, your boss has also gone
15 before you, so you are now recognized to speak.

16 MR. FULFORD: Good evening. Thank you all
17 for coming. I know this is a monumental task
18 and a rather unenviable task as well.

19 I am Kevin Fulford, and I live and work
20 here in Pasco County. Thank you. I just
21 wanted to not get hit by the microphone.

22 I just want to say a couple things. I
23 grew up in St. Petersburg, and then when I was
24 stationed at MacDill Central Command, I lived
25 in Valrico, but now I live and work in Pasco

1 County, and they are very different areas.

2 A couple of thoughts that I had is just to
3 consider not splitting a city right in the
4 middle. Hillsborough County is very different
5 than Pasco County when we look at drawing the
6 lines, and if you look at the makeup of the
7 areas, urban versus rural, and the Highway 19
8 corridor here in Pasco County versus the east
9 side. And I just looked at the numbers real
10 quick based on the population. It's gone from
11 344,000 in 2000 to 464,000 now based on the
12 2010 census. That gives us, based on the
13 recommended numbers of representation, three
14 Representatives and one State Senator. So the
15 three distinct areas in Pasco County, east,
16 central and west, would perhaps make a lot of
17 sense, and also one Senator seat. So thank you
18 for your consideration.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
20 very much, Mr. Fulford. We appreciate that,
21 sir.

22 Next up we have Joyce Hamilton Henry with
23 the American Civil Liberties Union of Florida,
24 and after Ms. Joyce, we have Hutch Brock.

25 MS. HENRY: Good evening.

1 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Good evening.

2 MS. HENRY: My name is Joyce Hamilton
3 Henry, and I am here to speak on behalf of the
4 ACLU of Florida. I am the Director for the
5 mid-Florida regional office, which represents
6 20 counties, and so I am here and will continue
7 to be here as long as you are meeting in my
8 region.

9 The ACLU of Florida, as you know, is a
10 nonprofit, nonpartisan organization. We
11 protect and defend the American Constitution
12 and Bill of Rights.

13 I want to speak to an area of this issue
14 that I have not heard mentioned very often, and
15 part of it has to do with putting this issue in
16 context on behalf of a population of
17 individuals that have been historically
18 under-represented.

19 I want to speak to the Voting Rights Act.
20 I know many of you are already familiar with
21 it, but bear with me. I would like to review
22 some key components of this act. It was passed
23 in 1965, and stands as one of the most
24 important legislative achievements of this 20th
25 century. Signed into law shortly after the

1 murder of civil rights activists in Mississippi
2 and the unprovoked attack against peaceful
3 marchers across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in
4 Selma, Alabama, the Voting Rights Act outlawed
5 discriminatory tests like literacy tests, tests
6 of good character, racial gerrymandering and
7 the use of poll taxes in many southern states.

8 Coupled with intense and sustained
9 enforcement by the federal government, the
10 Voting Rights Act opened the door for millions
11 of blacks for the first time to be able to
12 participate in the political system. Over the
13 years, amendments to the Voting Rights Act have
14 been used to protect the voting rights of other
15 previously disenfranchised groups such as
16 language minorities. This act was intended to
17 create a level playing field to ensure that
18 under-represented and historically marginalized
19 Americans would have an opportunity to
20 participate fully in the Democratic process.

21 Every ten years, as you know, and we are
22 here because of that, due to the census, we
23 have to redraw the district lines, and for the
24 purpose of ensuring that we franchise our
25 growing citizenry, one person, one vote.

1 You have been hearing over the past couple
2 of weeks from everyone, groups of individuals,
3 their wish list as to what they want to see the
4 maps look like. You have a mandate from
5 63 percent of Floridians to draw the map, and
6 you have heard this already, compact,
7 contiguous, meet the interests of communities
8 of interest, but also does not favor or
9 disfavor any political group. I would like to
10 remind you of that mandate.

11 You have heard some great suggestions from
12 other groups, including the League of Women
13 Voters yesterday, about the timeline, some
14 ideas about expediting the timeline to ensure
15 that we all not only have an opportunity to
16 respond to the maps -- and, yes, we are still
17 waiting to see the maps -- but we also want to
18 make sure that when you do draw the maps, that
19 there is sufficient time for all of us to know
20 who our Representatives will be, for those who
21 are running for office to know which districts
22 they represent, and to also make sure that --
23 and you've heard from Supervisor of Elections,
24 that they know the parameters and timelines.

25 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Ms. Henry, I

1 am going to have to ask you to kind of wrap it
2 up. There are several speakers, and we want to
3 get to everybody.

4 MS. HENRY: And I will.

5 What I would like to close by saying is
6 this: You have also been hearing a lot of
7 distrust in government, and there is good
8 reason for that. And you have also been
9 hearing the importance of being fair and
10 transparent in the process. I implore that you
11 listen to what we, the citizens, have been
12 saying to you. Thank you.

13 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Yes, ma'am,
14 thank you very much. We appreciate that.

15 Next up we've got Hutch Brock, former
16 Mayor of Dade City. Mayor, it is good to see
17 you. And after Mr. Brock, we've got Ms. Annie
18 Baker.

19 Good to see you.

20 MR. BROCK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Folks,
21 thanks for coming to Pasco County, we
22 appreciate your time. I know this has been an
23 enjoyable three hours. It is very important,
24 though, and we do appreciate your
25 attentiveness.

1 One of the things that I have not heard
2 for last three hours -- and by the way, I
3 didn't get the memo to show up early and sign
4 up early, but one of the things I have heard,
5 or have not heard in the last three hours is
6 that we are looking for an unfair line or we
7 are looking for gerrymandering or we are
8 looking for something that is going to create a
9 problem. I think we all have a common interest
10 that we want something that can be sustained
11 and that will be fair.

12 I have read the literature about what it
13 is that is going to direct and lead you all in
14 consideration of these very difficult
15 decisions, and what rings with me are the
16 issues of common interests, common
17 transportation corridors and common industry.
18 So let's talk about that.

19 If you are looking for common
20 transportation corridors and you are trying to
21 suggest that east Pasco and west Pasco are
22 common, I need you to go ride around the
23 county. I was talking to a friend of mine who
24 took his child up to the University of Florida
25 to look around the campus, and it was the first

1 time he had been there, and until he was there,
2 he didn't appreciate how broad it was and how
3 much transportation on that campus was
4 important. He didn't know until he went and
5 looked. I invite you to look. I think you
6 will see common industry runs on the spine of
7 301. Common industry runs on the spine of U.S.
8 19. There appears to be a divide. I sit on
9 Boards that are spanning the county and, quite
10 frankly, in the Tampa Bay area, and no one
11 likes to say we are divided, but there are some
12 natural divisions, whether it is the Parkway,
13 whether it is 41, certainly there is a division
14 on a perspective. So it applies to
15 transportation corridors and it certainly
16 applies to industry as well. If you look at
17 the industry of the 19 spine of U.S. 19, you
18 see a much different and dramatic picture than
19 what you see along the 301 corridor going up
20 into Sumter and Hernando County. I don't think
21 anyone will deny that.

22 So we are urging you, when you consider
23 these issues on the House side, and in
24 particular on the State Senate side, and even
25 when you are looking for the congressional

1 seat, that you follow these directives and you
2 look around and you consider the differences
3 between the east Pasco and the west Pasco side,
4 and you give us proper and adequate
5 representation.

6 Folks, thanks again for all of your time,
7 and good luck with the process.

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
9 Mayor. Good to see you.

10 Next up we've got Ms. Annie Baker, and I
11 saw Ms. Baker earlier. I don't know if she is
12 still here. If she is not here, we will keep
13 moving. Mr. Colson, Clay Colson, I see you
14 back there, sir, and after Mr. Colson, we've
15 got George McDowell.

16 Clay, good to see you, sir. Thanks for
17 being here, and you have the floor, my friend.

18 MR. COLSON: Greetings. My name is Clay
19 Colson. I am a native Floridian and one of an
20 endangered species.

21 I would first like to say that I am not
22 going to come up here and tell you all how I
23 think you should draw districts or how it
24 should represent three parts of Pasco or any of
25 that stuff. I believe that y'all are all here

1 because you are going to carry out the will of
2 the people. That is your job, that is what got
3 you elected, and to do that, you only have to
4 do some very simple things.

5 First like to refer to our correspondence
6 that we had, Will. You tell me in your
7 correspondence that you wanted to make it clear
8 that what you wanted to do was to finalize the
9 redistricting process prior to June of 2012,
10 and that June of 2012 is a deadline and not a
11 goal. You are confident that the Legislature
12 can complete this work on the redistricting
13 plans prior to then. You also say you believe
14 that guidance from the Florida residents can
15 create new district maps that will represent
16 how it is that Floridians want their
17 communities to be represented in Tallahassee
18 and in Washington, DC. And you point out it is
19 important to note that Florida's redistricting
20 timeline is in part mandated by the Florida
21 State Constitution, cite Article III, Section
22 16. So I looked it up and checked it out. It
23 doesn't say you have to do it in 2012. It
24 doesn't say you can't do it beforehand.

25 So in that vein, I would like to give you

1 a little guidance. I ask that you act swiftly.
2 Florida has been one of the very last states to
3 complete redistricting historically. This
4 hurts candidates, voters and ultimately the
5 quality of our governing. Most of the states
6 complete their redistricting process this year.
7 It is time to bring Florida to the front of the
8 pack. The Legislature can speed up this
9 timetable, and they should work hard to do
10 exactly that.

11 Now, here is why I am not worried about
12 how you are going to draw these maps, you see,
13 because you are here to carry out the will of
14 the people, and 63 percent of the voters told
15 you what they wanted you to do. We now have a
16 constitutional amendments, 5 and 6, which are
17 part of the Constitution that you pointed out,
18 and all that you have to do is follow these
19 constitutional guidelines. That means that we
20 shall -- that -- all that means is that
21 districts shall be nearly equal in population
22 as is practicable, districts shall be compact,
23 districts shall, where feasible, utilize
24 existing political and geographical boundaries.
25 These standards make sense. I love the KISS

1 doctrine. I say keep it simple, stupid. It is
2 really simple.

3 I know that some of you don't feel too
4 much for John Russell, but he makes a very good
5 point. Let's take the politics out of this.
6 Hillsborough County is successfully doing their
7 redistricting of commission seats, using a
8 computer program where you just put in the
9 pertinent data and you put all the data in, and
10 the computer will draw the districts, and then
11 there is no politics involved. It is that
12 simple, and that is exactly what you should do.

13 Now, in closing, I would like to point out
14 the City of St. -- or *The St. Petersburg Times*
15 wrote an article back on the 20th of this month
16 talking about the fact that the Legislature has
17 spent our money fighting Amendment 6. So far
18 to date, you spent \$350,000 of our money when
19 63 percent of us told you what we wanted. What
20 gives you the right to spend our money? What
21 are you doing holding off money to do
22 litigation? You have no right to do that. You
23 are in violation of what people elected you to
24 do. You are here to carry out our will. Our
25 will is clear. Thank you for your time.

1 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
2 Clay. Good to see you.

3 Next up we have George McDowell. After
4 George -- good to see you, sir -- we've got
5 Stephen Sarnoff.

6 MR. McDOWELL: I will keep this simple. I
7 am George McDowell from Land O' Lakes, I am a
8 Florida native.

9 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Please speak
10 into the mike, sir.

11 MR. McDOWELL: Thank you. I appreciate
12 your allowing this platform.

13 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: We cannot
14 hear you, sir.

15 MR. McDOWELL: You can't hear me?

16 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: No. Get
17 really close.

18 MR. McDOWELL: Okay.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: There you go.

20 MR. McDOWELL: Basically I want my
21 Representative to be local. I would hope that
22 you will take the information from the latest
23 census and draw up a plan so that when I call
24 my Representative, that he can have empathy for
25 my concerns because he is in the area. I live

1 in Land O' Lakes. I have nothing in common
2 with a guy from Gulfport. I know that isn't
3 relevant, but I think you get the picture.

4 So I am hoping that you will use due
5 diligence in drawing up the new districts.
6 Thank you.

7 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Yes, sir,
8 thank you very much.

9 Next up we have Stephen Sarnoff.
10 Following Mr. Sarnoff, we have David Bussey.

11 MR. SARNOFF: Good evening. As a child
12 growing up, I learned that before I was a
13 Floridian, a New Yorker, a Bronxite, a Jew, I
14 was an American. Some reason today, we have
15 the hardest the time remembering that we are
16 all Americans.

17 The reason why I supported and voted for
18 Amendment 5 and 6 was because about three years
19 ago, I sat in a schoolroom in a political
20 science seminar and demonstrated to me on a
21 screen was how political consultants decide how
22 to gerrymander. They have tremendous databases
23 of who is registered and what political party,
24 how often they vote in an election, and if I am
25 a well-financed candidate for office, I can pay

1 one of these people to show me the perfect
2 district that will get me elected every time.
3 That is why I believed that we needed Amendment
4 5 and 6, and many Floridians agreed and voted
5 the same way.

6 One of the hardest things that I can't
7 understand about this process was the fact that
8 if it was not for Amendment 5 and 6, I really
9 feel the process probably would be done by now,
10 or would have been well underway much more than
11 it is now. I understand that we had to go to
12 court to uphold the will of the people, and
13 even though I know there is some resentment or
14 some animosity towards the judicial, thank God
15 for the balance of power, because that is a
16 true American democracy.

17 Yesterday Lori Edwards, Supervisor of
18 Elections in Polk County, told this committee
19 -- told the committee that waiting until the
20 last deadline to approve the maps will force
21 election officials not to have or to have
22 barely enough time to change districts,
23 precincts and a myriad of other things, and if
24 the Legislature waits to the end of the
25 session, followed by the court review and the

1 Department of Justice 90-day, they take 90 days
2 to review, election supervisors in the state
3 could have only two weeks before the absentee
4 ballots have to be mailed for the August 14th
5 primary. If that happens, then during the
6 two-week period, we would have to change all
7 district maps, align the precincts and
8 boundaries with the new lines --

9 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Mr. Sarnoff,
10 I am going to have to ask you to wrap it up.
11 We are getting really tight on time here.

12 MR. SARNOFF: Thank you. Every court,
13 every -- each home in each district, check and
14 recheck voter rolls and notify the voters that
15 he or she is in a new district, all within two
16 weeks before the absentee ballots. That is not
17 American democracy, that is what we call
18 disenfranchisement, and it needs to be stopped
19 before it starts. Thank you.

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
21 sir.

22 Okay. We've got Mr. David Bussey.
23 Mr. Bussey, good to see you, sir. After
24 Mr. Bussey, we have Jerry Marshall Hester.

25 Good to see you, sir.

1 MR. BUSSEY: Yes, good to see you all too,
2 Senator Storms. I will try and keep this -- I
3 will keep this under three minutes.

4 When I came in here tonight, I really
5 don't have a clue about what redistricting is
6 all about. I have learned a lot out in the
7 hallway and listening to everybody in here.

8 Kind of sounds like where I live. I live
9 in Zephyrhills in a retirement snowbird
10 community. I live there year-round. We have
11 about 300 residents there and we have a
12 homeowners' association and we are guided by
13 condominium rules. And basically what that
14 means is that each of us that live there can't
15 do things the way we think it ought to be done.
16 We have to give away some of our wants and
17 desires for the greater good of everyone that
18 lives there. I can't just go and plant a tree
19 on my neighbor's property without getting
20 permission, which I wouldn't get. Once in a
21 while, we get some people that do some things
22 like that, and then we have some real problems.
23 You folks have, from what I am seeing
24 here -- God bless you, and I mean that, we need
25 to be praying for our State Senators and

1 Representatives this coming session that they
2 are given the wisdom they need to do what needs
3 to be done, because if you do what we have all
4 asked you to do, boy, it is going to take a big
5 computer to figure that out. I have never -- I
6 have not been in a room where I have heard so
7 much personal agendas voiced, and rightly so, I
8 mean, I understand your concerns. I have
9 concerns, too. I am just praying that you will
10 lay down your -- set aside your political
11 agendas and do what is right for the farmer and
12 do what is right for the businessman and do
13 what is right for the hairdresser and do what
14 is right for the maid, try and put it all
15 together in a way where we all don't get what
16 we want, but some of us don't get screwed real
17 bad either, you know what I mean. You have a
18 tremendous undertaking, and I pray that
19 providence will be with you.

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
21 Mr. Bussey.

22 Mr. Hester, we have been advocating for
23 you all night, because you are our last
24 speaker, we made it to you. So
25 congratulations, and you are recognized for the

1 floor.

2 MR. HESTER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My
3 name is Marshall Hester. I am a resident of
4 Wesley Chapel. I came up here tonight just to
5 represent myself and my family. I've got a
6 little bit different take perhaps on what some
7 other folks have said.

8 I believe the current structure of our
9 representation here in Pasco County is of great
10 benefit to me, and I prefer it not be changed,
11 and I will tell you why. Pasco County, as is
12 presently apportioned, is represented by six
13 State Representatives, three State Senators and
14 two Congressmen. This provides me and my
15 family with many different avenues of redress,
16 and it gives us a very powerful voice in
17 legislative matters. Thank you.

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
19 sir. Thank you for your brevity. If we had a
20 balloon, we would give you one. That was
21 great. Thank you very much.

22 Ladies and gentlemen, that concludes the
23 public hearing portion of this. We have a few
24 minutes left. What I would like to do is if
25 there are any members on the body or in the

1 committee that would like to speak -- if we
2 could, Mr. Chairman, we will start off with
3 House members. Members, are there any House
4 members who would like to take just a minute or
5 two to speak or have something to add to the
6 conversation? Anyone, anyone? Yes, sir,
7 Representative Baxley. We will bring the
8 microphone to you.

9 REPRESENTATIVE BAXLEY: I want to thank
10 our Chairmen for their leadership tonight and
11 how orderly these meetings have run and how
12 patient people have been to hear one another.

13 One thing that I am -- I am one of the few
14 people on this line-up that's ever been through
15 redistricting, and what I would like to --
16 there is a great myth out there that everybody
17 is picking their own seat. Most of these
18 people ran for seats that somebody else drew.
19 I am probably the only -- is anybody else was
20 in the process last time, ten years ago? I am
21 it. And so they are not designing districts
22 for themselves. They are trying to design
23 districts that serve communities. Obviously a
24 lot of things go into that, but term limits
25 took care of that problem. Congressmen do not

1 draw districts. Your elected members draw that
2 map, trying to fit together all these different
3 parameters. I hope that gives you some
4 consolation about the myth of self-service in
5 this regard. Term limits has changed that
6 dimension already. Thank you.

7 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Okay. All
8 the House members, any other House members that
9 wish to speak? Okay, Representative Williams
10 and Representative Corcoran.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WILLIAMS: Thank you,
12 Mr. Chair. I just want to introduce myself.
13 My name is Alan Williams. I represent Leon
14 County, Tallahassee, Florida. I wasn't here on
15 the front end, because I got caught up in your
16 traffic on 75 north, and so I am hopeful that
17 DOT will get some more funding so we can fix
18 that process.

19 REPRESENTATIVE CORCORAN: Real fast, as
20 one of your Pasco Representatives, I just want
21 to say of how proud I am of all the testimony
22 that you guys gave today. This is my fifth
23 hearing from around the state, and I can
24 unequivocally say that over 90 percent of the
25 people that testified today gave us specifics

1 that we can start to work with on what the
2 communities of interest that matter to you.
3 That is a significant input that benefits all
4 of us, and I just want to thank you guys for
5 making this, for me, and I am very proud of
6 Pasco, one of the most informative
7 constituent-related public hearings that we
8 have had to date. Thank you very much.

9 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: All right.
10 Any Senators? Any Senators that would like to
11 contribute? I'm sorry, we've got one more
12 Representative, Representative Workman. You
13 are recognized, sir, for very brief comments.

14 REPRESENTATIVE WORKMAN: Very brief. I
15 just wanted to tell Steve -- Representative
16 Steve Crisafulli, it is his 21st birthday
17 today -- Representative Crisafulli, happy
18 birthday.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Happy
20 birthday, Representative, but I don't think it
21 is your 21st.

22 Okay. If we could, for just a moment, we
23 are almost done, ladies and gentlemen, there
24 were some statements that were made tonight and
25 some questions that were raised tonight that I

1 want to make sure we have clarification on. My
2 partner in this process, Chairman Gaetz,
3 Senator Gaetz, is going to take just a few
4 minutes to clarify a few of those points to
5 make sure everybody walks out of this room with
6 the same understanding as to where we go from
7 here and what this process will entail here on
8 the back end. I want to thank you again, and I
9 will turn it over to Senator Gaetz.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.
11 Let me just go briefly through some factual
12 questions that were raised so that, as the
13 Speaker indicated, we all have the same
14 understanding as we leave.

15 First, there were several speakers who
16 said 63 percent of the voters voted for fair
17 districts, why don't you just be precise and
18 implement fair districts. I have taken tonight
19 nine pages of notes, and those notes show that
20 even within this room, there is substantial
21 disagreement or at least a little bit of
22 tension as to what people think fair districts
23 means and how those standards ought to be
24 applied.

25 I will give you an example. We heard

1 tonight nine different times the term
2 "communities of interest," that it was very
3 important that communities that -- I believe
4 the phrase was had common interest, had common
5 transportation borders, had common industry,
6 went to school together, that that ought to be
7 the definition of an entity that then you would
8 use as a building block for representation.
9 Well, Amendments 5 and 6 don't talk about
10 communities of interest. As a matter of fact,
11 there was an effort made to add the term
12 "communities of interest" to the Constitution,
13 and the Supreme Court struck that down. And
14 so, therefore, what we are left with is on the
15 one hand, a number of people testifying
16 persuasively about the need to maintain
17 communities that have some integrity together,
18 and other people persuasively testifying that
19 it ought to be county lines that would be the
20 determining factor, not communities of
21 interest.

22 I only mention this to say that there was
23 one rather emotional young man who said that he
24 thought that -- that what we were doing tonight
25 and around the state wasn't very useful. I

1 think he called it a fig leaf. Well, the fact
2 is we have to hear from people at the local
3 level as to what they believe and how these
4 standards ought to be interpreted in order to
5 be faithful to the Constitution. The reason
6 why is because the language of Amendments 5 and
7 6 are brand-new. Taken together, altogether,
8 these templates or mandates have never been
9 applied to a single state before. So we can't
10 say, "Well, let's just do it the way Indiana
11 does it." Instead, we are charting new ground
12 now, and we have to be careful so that we are
13 faithful to our constitutional oaths and to the
14 will of the voters.

15 So as somebody from the Panhandle of
16 Florida who lives in the central time zone, I
17 couldn't have sat in Tallahassee in an echo
18 chamber just filled with legislators and
19 special interest groups and figured out all of
20 the nuances and particular concerns that all of
21 you expressed tonight. I've got page after
22 page about east Pasco and west Pasco and
23 Hernando versus Tampa and all of the things
24 that matter to you.

25 So I would simply say that Democrats and

1 Republicans, House members and Senators, all
2 are learning from these hearings, 26 of them,
3 to understand the local issues that will help
4 us properly and faithfully implement Amendments
5 5 and 6. But it isn't easy. Let me give you a
6 sentence from Amendments 5 and 6. This wasn't
7 quoted by the gentleman who described them.
8 Here it is, and it is a direct quote from the
9 Constitution, listen carefully: "No line -- no
10 line may be drawn with the intent to either
11 favor or disfavor any incumbent or any
12 political party." Now, draw the first line.
13 You can understand how there can be differences
14 of opinion as to what all of that might mean.
15 So that is why it is important to listen to
16 you.

17 Questions about the timeline. Other
18 states may have completed their redistricting
19 already. That is true. Illinois completed it
20 very early. They had a group of politicians,
21 went in a closed room, came out, said, "Here
22 are the maps, take them or leave them," and
23 that was that, and the one political party
24 dominated everything. We don't think that is
25 the right way to operate.

1 Also, Florida was one of the last states
2 to receive its census data from the U.S. Bureau
3 of the Census. Not all states got it at the
4 same time, it came in different tranches, and
5 we were not the last, but we were one of the
6 last. And you can't begin to draw any lines or
7 even conceive of where districts might be until
8 you know where the people live. And so that is
9 why we are a little bit later than some states,
10 first because we didn't believe in the back
11 room, and secondly, because we got our census
12 data later than many other states.

13 But the other thing is that there are some
14 states, for example, Louisiana, who completed
15 their redistricting earlier, and that is
16 because they have their elections on odd
17 numbered years, and so they completed theirs in
18 time for odd number year elections and they
19 were able to get their census data earlier and
20 get their process going earlier because of that
21 fact.

22 Contrary to what some may have thought and
23 maybe even said tonight, final deadlines for
24 action on maps do not prevent -- do not prevent
25 earlier action. We can vote as soon as

1 January. Can't vote earlier than that, because
2 of the State Constitution. If our Fair
3 Districts friends would have wanted to change
4 the Constitution so we could vote in September
5 or in August, they could have done that, but
6 they chose not to include such a change in
7 their amendment.

8 Those are -- who are concerned that the
9 Legislature shouldn't take all the time that it
10 legally can I think make a good point. We
11 would urge you to also encourage the other
12 parties, the Federal Justice Department, the
13 courts, the Attorney General, not to take all
14 the time they can, but, rather, to take the
15 time that they need, and that is what the
16 Legislature is going to do as well. As Speaker
17 Weatherford indicated, we can vote as early as
18 January. We can vote as early as members of
19 the Legislature and citizens come forward with
20 their individual maps and suggestions.

21 There were suggestions tonight that the
22 current maps are examples of gerrymandering.
23 Maybe they are, but only Representative Baxley
24 was in the Legislature when those maps were
25 drawn, so it is all his fault. No, not really.

1 The fact is that all of the rest of us ran in
2 districts where somebody else drew the lines.
3 So we didn't draw lines for ourselves. We ran
4 in districts that were drawn by others for
5 either good or bad reasons. We are trying to
6 correct that in this process.

7 There were several questions. Are we
8 looking at population growth in the future as a
9 way of articulating what kind of districts
10 there might be? Federal law doesn't let us do
11 that. The census is a federal function and
12 there is a snapshot taken, and it is who lives
13 where and how many people live there on that
14 first day in April when the census is taken.
15 That is the snapshot. So we can't -- we can't
16 count future growth. That is called rotten
17 boroughs. We can't say, "Well, some people
18 might live there, there are some chickens there
19 now, but some people might live there, let's
20 count the chickens." Federal law won't let us
21 do that. We can only count the people who are
22 there on April 1st, counted by the federal
23 government, they give us the numbers, those are
24 the numbers we live with.

25 And then, you know, we had a number of

1 folks who said it is good to have Pasco County
2 represented by several legislators, because
3 that gives us a stronger voice in Tallahassee,
4 and others said we want fewer legislators
5 representing us, because that will give us a
6 stronger voice. But you gave excellent reasons
7 for your points of view. I took notes, others
8 took notes. We want to take that information
9 and use it to try to not make everybody happy,
10 but try to make the wise decisions.

11 There are a couple of folks who said
12 tonight, "Where are the maps?" Well, the
13 answer is, there's a bunch of them in the back,
14 there's a bunch of them over there. If you go
15 to our website, you will see that there are 17
16 maps. Any Democrat, any Republican, any
17 Senator, any Representative, can propose any
18 map at any time. There seems to be some sense
19 that maybe there is a magic map that is going
20 to suddenly emerge fully grown, sprung from the
21 brow of Zeus, and that that is going to be the
22 map. Well, talk to these folks afterwards,
23 Democrats, Republicans, House members,
24 Senators, you are going to find that there are
25 many different opinions. I can tell you as

1 Chairman of the Senate committee, no Senate
2 maps have been drawn, but already I am starting
3 to like some of the maps that we are getting
4 from the general public, because members of the
5 general public are drawing maps without
6 necessarily having a dog in the fight. But it
7 is not as though there's suddenly going to be a
8 map that will emerge and everybody will agree.
9 There will be lively debate about all of these
10 issues.

11 Now, someone said, "Well, what will happen
12 if your -- will you be in the room, if any of
13 you are in the room when the maps are drawn?"
14 Well, the fact is, all of us are going to be in
15 the room, and the room is going to be on
16 television. So you are going to be able to see
17 the debates and you will be able to also see
18 Chairman Weatherford and me say, "Are there any
19 members of the public who want to testify? Did
20 we get any e-mails, did we get any information
21 that we can share with members of the
22 committee?" And there are 19 million auditors
23 to this process. All of you can see every
24 proposal before any votes are taken.

25 And then finally, Mr. Speaker, there was a

1 -- there was a suggestion that it is not us --
2 I'm sorry, let me hit one other thing. Someone
3 said -- I am glad to see the number keeps
4 moving around -- that there is \$30 million in
5 some special fund to fight lawsuits in the
6 House of Representatives. Well, by golly, when
7 I -- I am Chairman of the Appropriations
8 Committee in the Senate. When I was dealing
9 with some of these guys, they didn't tell me
10 they had \$30 million snuck away to fight
11 lawsuits. The fact is that that is an urban
12 legend. There is no \$30 million snuck away to
13 fight lawsuits. Instead, there is \$30 million
14 in reserves in the House of Representatives,
15 because we have a big state, we have a huge
16 budget and we have a lot of things that might
17 happen, the House has set aside money for
18 reserves. Now, some of those reserves will pay
19 for heat, lights and phone, some of them pay
20 for lawyers, some of them may pay for other
21 operational expenses, but it is absolutely an
22 urban legend that there is \$30 million that has
23 been designated to fight some sort of a
24 lawsuit.

25 And then, finally, Mr. Speaker and

1 members, I think there was -- there was an
2 eloquent point that was made by a gentleman who
3 wore a shirt that had a -- I think it had a
4 patriotic emblem on it, and he said, "It
5 shouldn't be us versus them, it should be we,"
6 and someone right behind him said that if you
7 drew an imaginary line and you had a theory of
8 justice on one side that could apply to people
9 that were invisible as to their race, creed,
10 color or political party on the other side, we
11 would do well, and then he used that term,
12 "communities of interest," which, sadly, is not
13 in the Constitution. I would just offer this
14 as a fact. There are Democrats and
15 Republicans, House members and Senators, who
16 will all have a role to play in creating the
17 "we," and then when we are done, it will be the
18 courts. So it will be the Legislature and the
19 courts. And we must all come together,
20 including the Federal Justice Department, in
21 order for a plan to actually be implemented.
22 So there are many, many checks and balances.

23 A gentleman said he hoped that we had
24 thick skin, that there wasn't six million
25 unhappy people and six million happy people,

1 though he thought it might happen. I used to
2 work for a guy named Everett McKinley Dirksen,
3 who was a Senator from Illinois. Dirksen said,
4 "When everyone is equally dissatisfied, justice
5 has been done." We hope we will do a little
6 bit better than that.

7 We thank you. I thank you as a Panhandle
8 Senator for making me aware of issues I never
9 would have learned about had I not come here
10 tonight.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
12 Senator, very timely. I think everybody in
13 Pasco now recognizes why you are going to be a
14 great Senate President. So tremendous job in
15 wrapping that up.

16 Ladies and gentlemen, thank you again for
17 tonight. We appreciate your input, continue to
18 work with us, and with that, Chairman Gaetz
19 moves we rise.

20 (Whereupon, the proceedings were
21 concluded.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF FLORIDA)

COUNTY OF LEON)

I hereby certify that the foregoing transcript is of a tape-recording taken down by the undersigned, and the contents thereof were reduced to typewriting under my direction;

That the foregoing pages 2 through 165 represent a true, correct, and complete transcript of the tape-recording;

And I further certify that I am not of kin or counsel to the parties in the case; am not in the regular employ of counsel for any of said parties; nor am I in anywise interested in the result of said case.

Dated this 20th day of November, 2011.

CLARA C. ROTRUCK

Notary Public

State of Florida at Large

Commission Expires:

November 13, 2014