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REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE  
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 17, 2011  
6:00 P.M.  
FIU COLLEGE OF LAW  
SOUTH MIAMI, 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: My name is  
3 Will Weatherford, and I have the honor of  
4 chairing today's hearing, and this is a Joint  
5 Senate/House Redistricting Hearing, and we are  
6 now calling it to order.

7 We are pleased to be joined today by  
8 several members of the Florida House and  
9 Senate, and I would like to ask each one of  
10 them to briefly introduce themselves and tell  
11 you who they are and where they are from.

12 But first, because we are in her district,  
13 I would like to turn it over to State  
14 Representative Ana Rivas Logan to welcome  
15 everyone to Miami and let her kick us off.

16 So, Representative, you are recognized.

17 REPRESENTATIVE LOGAN: Thank you,  
18 Chairman. I would like to welcome everybody to  
19 the redistricting meeting, and thank you for  
20 being part of the process. It is wonderful  
21 looking out in the audience and seeing so many  
22 community activists out there coming to give us  
23 your input.

24 We will be taking notes and we will be  
25 listening and we will be following up on your

1 input and it will be taken seriously, and thank  
2 you once again for being with us today.

3 REPRESENTATIVE SCHENCK: Rob Schenck.

4 REPRESENTATIVE JULIEN: Good evening,  
5 everyone. My name is John Patrick Julien,  
6 representing House District 104, which  
7 encompasses North Miami Beach, North Miami,  
8 Miami Gardens, Opa-Locka, unincorporated  
9 Miami-Dade, the City of Miami. I'm glad to see  
10 so many friendly faces, and looking forward to  
11 hearing from you all.

12 REPRESENTATIVE ARTILES: Good afternoon,  
13 Frank Artiles, District 119, Sweetwater,  
14 Redlands, West Kendall and down to the City of  
15 Homestead.

16 REPRESENTATIVE HORNER: Good evening, Mike  
17 Horner, District 79, Osceola County.

18 REPRESENTATIVE STARGEL: Hello, Kelli  
19 Stargel, District 64, north Polk County, which  
20 is Lakeland, Polk City, Kathleen and Davenport.

21 SENATOR NEGRON: Good evening, Joe Negron,  
22 Senate District 28, which is the Treasure Coast  
23 and northern Palm Beach County.

24 REPRESENTATIVE TAYLOR: Good evening, my  
25 name is Dwayne Taylor. I represent House

1 District 27. That is Volusia County.

2 REPRESENTATIVE BRODEUR: Good evening,  
3 State Representative Jason Brodeur,  
4 representing parts of Orange, Volusia and  
5 Seminole Counties, District 33.

6 REPRESENTATIVE BOYD: Hi, Jim Boyd,  
7 Florida House District 68, which is Manatee  
8 County, just below Tampa Bay on the other side  
9 of the state.

10 REPRESENTATIVE GOODSON: Good evening, Tom  
11 Goodson, representing District 29 from Mims,  
12 Florida, to the St. Lucie County line and  
13 Indian River County. Thank you.

14 REPRESENTATIVE OLIVA: Good evening, Jose  
15 Oliva, District 110, representing Hialeah,  
16 Miami Lakes and part of unincorporated Dade.

17 REPRESENTATIVE NUNEZ: Good evening,  
18 Jeanette Nuñez, State Representative for House  
19 District 112, which consists of portions of  
20 Miami-Dade County, Broward and Collier County.  
21 Happy to be here at FIU, and I am a proud alum,  
22 twice over. Thank you.

23 SENATOR GARCIA: You stole my line about  
24 proud alum. Out you on that one.

25 Rene Garcia, Senate District 40,

1 encompasses northwest Dade County area.

2 REPRESENTATIVE DIAZ: Hi, I am Jose Diaz,  
3 representing District 115, which encompasses  
4 much of Fountainbleau, Westchester, East  
5 Kendall, Pinecrest, Palmetto Bay and Cutler  
6 Bay.

7 I am not an FIU alum, I'll one you up. My  
8 wife is, so my better half, and my  
9 father-in-law taught here for 30 years. So I  
10 am very proud to be here. Thank you.

11 REPRESENTATIVE FORD: Clay Ford,  
12 Representative, District 3, Pensacola.

13 REPRESENTATIVE WORKMAN: Ritch Workman,  
14 District 30, Brevard County.

15 REPRESENTATIVE BERNARD: Mack Bernard,  
16 State Representative, District 84, West Palm  
17 Beach.

18 REPRESENTATIVE STEINBERG: Richard  
19 Steinberg, House District 106, Miami Beach,  
20 Surfside, North Bay Village, Indian Creek, Bal  
21 Harbor, Bay Harbor, Aventura, Sunny Isles  
22 Beach, Golden Beach, North Miami Beach, North  
23 Miami and a little bit of unincorporated Dade  
24 County.

25 REPRESENTATIVE TRUJILLO: Good evening, my

1 name is Carlos Trujillo. I represent Florida  
2 House District 116, which is the Balin High  
3 School area all the way down into the Hammocks.

4 SENATOR RICH: Good evening, I am Nan  
5 Rich, State Senator, District 34, representing  
6 nine municipalities in southwestern Broward  
7 County, and then coming down all the way to the  
8 southern end of Dade County, all unincorporated  
9 areas, quite a gerrymandered district, and I  
10 also serve as the Senate Minority Leader for  
11 this two-year period.

12 SENATOR BRAYNON: Good evening, State  
13 Senator Oscar Braynon. I represent Senate  
14 District 33, which is Miami Gardens, Opa-Locka,  
15 North Miami, North Miami Beach -- a piece of  
16 North Miami Beach, Biscayne Gardens -- I never  
17 did this listing. It is north central  
18 Miami-Dade.

19 So from the county line to the Miami  
20 River, from Biscayne all the way to the edge of  
21 Hialeah.

22 SENATOR SACHS: Good evening. My name is  
23 Maria Sachs. I am a State Senator from Palm  
24 Beach County, beautiful Palm Beach County, and  
25 a little bit of Broward County up by the county

1 line. It is good to be here in Miami tonight.

2 SENATOR BOGDANOFF: Ellyn Bogdanoff, State  
3 Senate District 25, representing Broward and  
4 Palm Beach Counties' coastal communities.

5 REPRESENTATIVE PLAKON: Good evening, I am  
6 Scott Plakon, Florida House District 37, Orange  
7 and Seminole Counties.

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Okay, great.  
9 Obviously you can see that we have a lot of  
10 Legislators here from the House and Senate who  
11 took time to be here to listen to you.

12 More importantly, you are here, and we are  
13 very thankful that many of you took the time to  
14 be here as well.

15 We would like to put a special thank you  
16 to FIU, and more specifically the Law School,  
17 for opening up this beautiful facility. I see  
18 the President of Florida National. President  
19 Rosenberg, sir, thank you very much for opening  
20 up your house to us. It is a wonderful  
21 facility, you have a wonderful university here  
22 and we are all rooting for the Golden Panthers  
23 this football season, so good luck to you guys.

24 But we are very grateful for this  
25 opportunity to hear from you, and, again, my

1 name is Will Weatherford, and I along with my  
2 partner here, Senator Gaetz, who is the  
3 Co-Chair of this Committee, we will -- I will  
4 be chairing this Committee today with him,  
5 which is going to be webcast live on the  
6 Florida Channel over the Internet.

7 Our sole purpose today is to hear from  
8 you, as I said before. We want to hear from  
9 you about what you think about the legal  
10 standards that guide us for redistricting and  
11 how they should be applied to the community  
12 that you live in.

13 We want to make sure that you are  
14 represented both in Tallahassee and in  
15 Washington, D.C., fairly, equitably and  
16 sensibly.

17 Our procedures today are going to be  
18 pretty simple, but they are very important, and  
19 it is important that you sign in so that we  
20 create an accurate public record of all the  
21 attendees and speakers.

22 Also, you may opt to join our e-mail list  
23 so that we can keep you informed about how the  
24 redistricting process is progressing over the  
25 next few months.



1           If you have not signed in, please raise  
2 your hand, and a staff member will give you an  
3 attendance card.

4           If you wish to speak today and you have  
5 not filed out an attendance card, please raise  
6 your hand as well, and we will get you a card  
7 so that you can be called on and that we won't  
8 miss your testimony.

9           It is the same attendance card whether you  
10 wish to speak or if you just wish to sit and  
11 listen.

12           Before we begin, I would like to turn it  
13 over to the Co-Chair, Senator Gaetz, to walk us  
14 through a little bit about -- give us a  
15 historical perspective of redistricting and  
16 maybe walk us through the process of what we  
17 are here to do today and perhaps provide some  
18 insight to the Committee and also to the  
19 members of the audience.

20           Chairman, you are recognized.

21           SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much. Is  
22 this on? Not so much. Now it is. You bang  
23 it, it works.

24           Well, that is what you need to know about  
25 redistricting. Every ten years, the Florida

1           Legislature, just like all Legislatures in  
2           America, is required by our Constitution to  
3           redistrict the state, and we redistrict based  
4           on increases, decreases and movements of  
5           population within the state.

6           Now, Florida has grown more than other  
7           states in the last ten years, so just as New  
8           York lost two members of the U.S. Congress, we  
9           picked up two members of the U.S. Congress.

10           So we go from 25 to 27 U.S. Congressmen,  
11           and from 27 to 29 electoral votes.

12           Because some parts of our state have  
13           increased or decreased disproportionately to  
14           other parts of the state in population, many  
15           Senate and House districts will change either  
16           by adding or losing population.

17           When redistricting is completed,  
18           Congressional Districts, U.S. Congressional  
19           Districts, must be equal in population, and the  
20           magic number is 696,345 people, no more, no  
21           less.

22           There have been court cases where if you  
23           have 11 more people in the next Congressional  
24           District, the federal courts have thrown it  
25           out. So it is 696,345 people. The 40 State

1 Senate Districts must be nearly equal at about  
2 470,000 people.

3 There are 120 members of the House of  
4 Representatives, and each of their districts  
5 must be nearly equal at about 156,700 people.

6 Now, we have displays that are over here  
7 that you -- many of you I saw were looking at  
8 as you came in, displays as well as you came in  
9 through the lobby, showing the current  
10 boundaries of districts in this area of the  
11 state, and also the number of persons which  
12 must be added to or subtracted from current  
13 districts to achieve equal representation.

14 Equality of representation is important,  
15 but it is not the only legal requirement  
16 redistricting plans must meet. There are other  
17 requirements, and the laws and the important  
18 federal court cases governing redistricting are  
19 explained in detail on the House and Senate  
20 websites.

21 You can get to those websites by looking  
22 at the website information listed on the  
23 "Redistricting 2012" brochure that was  
24 available when you came in. The "Redistricting  
25 2012" brochure summarizes state and federal

1 laws, and outlines topics that we really need  
2 your advice on at today's hearing.

3 If you did not get a copy of the  
4 "Redistricting 2012" brochure when you came in,  
5 they are available on tables when you leave, or  
6 if during the hearing you would like to get a  
7 copy, just raise your hand, and a member of our  
8 staff will make sure that you do get a copy.

9 The brochure lists the House and Senate  
10 websites, and these websites are important  
11 because they are packed with information about  
12 redistricting in Florida, including explanation  
13 of the laws and court cases that govern  
14 redistricting.

15 It isn't just one section of the law. It  
16 is many sections of many laws and many court  
17 cases that have to be all applied and knitted  
18 together to develop our redistricting plan.

19 The two websites, the Senate and House  
20 websites, are complementary and are updated  
21 frequently. We hope you will visit them and  
22 check back often.

23 The websites are a great way to stay  
24 current about how new Congressional Senate and  
25 House districts are taking shape.

1           The websites also deliver to your  
2           fingertips all of the demographic information  
3           supplied to Florida by the U.S. Bureau of the  
4           Census that describe the people of Florida,  
5           that give all of the information that we will  
6           use in determining where district lines ought  
7           to be, and that information was supplied to us  
8           by the Bureau of the Census.

9           We were one of the -- not the last state,  
10          but one of the last states to get the  
11          information, and we put it on the Web as  
12          quickly as possible.

13          And also you will find on the Senate and  
14          House websites the precise computer programs  
15          that will be used by policy-makers and probably  
16          also by the courts to evaluate and draw various  
17          districts and options for districts.

18          Any member of the public can participate  
19          in building plans or seeing maps submitted by  
20          Legislators or by other citizens. I am fairly  
21          techno stupid. It took about 15 minutes for  
22          the staff to show me how to use the websites to  
23          understand the plans that have been submitted,  
24          and I am sure it would take you even less time.

25          I know a number of people in the audience

1 here have already begun to use the websites.  
2 Before, during and after the hearing, Senate  
3 and House professional staff are available to  
4 show anybody the simple steps to getting  
5 on-line, to building or evaluating the district  
6 maps that are already there, and submitting a  
7 plan, if you would like, of your own now or in  
8 the weeks to come.

9 Recommendations from citizens and groups  
10 of citizens will all be made publicly  
11 available. So if you give us your ideas, we  
12 want to make sure your ideas are also available  
13 to everybody in Florida so that this is a  
14 completely open and transparent process.

15 In fact, as of today, 32 maps are on the  
16 website for you to review. These maps take  
17 different points of view, you will see  
18 different philosophies represented, but there  
19 are 32 maps for you to review now.

20 There are approximately 110 written ideas  
21 for maps that have been submitted by interest  
22 groups or individuals, and those are on the web  
23 as well. And after this week, I am sure those  
24 numbers will probably increase.

25 In fact, in the last couple of days,

1 attendees at meetings just like this have drawn  
2 districts for submission with the help of our  
3 staff and they have drawn the districts at the  
4 display tables here at the hearing.

5 So it is a fairly simple process if you  
6 would like to share your ideas about your  
7 neighborhood or your community. If you don't  
8 want to share your ideas, that is fine, too.  
9 But the submission of proposed maps that makes  
10 sense for your community is the single most  
11 effective form of public participation in the  
12 redistricting process.

13 Now, the redistricting schedule, the  
14 timeline under which we are operating, is  
15 imposed by the State Constitution. It is not  
16 something that we can make up or change. It is  
17 imposed by the Constitution.

18 The State Constitution does not permit the  
19 Legislature to act on state legislative maps  
20 before the second year after the census. In  
21 other words, the census was in 2010. The  
22 Constitution says we can't vote on maps until  
23 2012.

24 But we have accelerated this process as  
25 much as we legally can by moving up the 2012

1 legislative session from March, when we usually  
2 begin, to January, so that we can begin  
3 deliberating and voting as soon as legally  
4 possible.

5 And we began our statewide hearings five  
6 months in advance of the 2012 session, and  
7 Committee meetings, which usually start in  
8 December, are starting in September; again,  
9 allowing an acceleration of the schedule.

10 Now, it's been suggested by some that the  
11 Legislature should draw maps first, and then  
12 present those maps as a take-it-or-leave-it for  
13 the public to comment. But we believe that  
14 this puts the answer ahead of the question.

15 There should be no preconceptions created  
16 by politicians, but, rather, public testimony  
17 ought to be free and unrestricted. In fact,  
18 the author -- the principal author of Florida's  
19 new redistricting standards and the Chair  
20 person for Fair Districts are both on record in  
21 testimony before the Senate and House stating  
22 that no maps should or could be drawn until the  
23 public has had an opportunity to comment  
24 through public hearings.

25 Our intent is to use the recommendations



1           made at these 26 hearings and recommendations  
2           that come to us through the Internet, through  
3           regular mail, through your conversations and  
4           input to your Representatives and Senators as  
5           the basis for developing options for district  
6           maps.

7                     We will discuss those options in open  
8           public meetings before any votes are taken even  
9           in Committee. In other words, what we are  
10          saying is if you look at the maps that are  
11          available to you today here at this hearing and  
12          the maps that you can look at on-line, these  
13          maps submitted to the Legislature by Florida  
14          residents and interest groups are the starting  
15          point in the legislative process.

16                    So if you want to know where we will begin  
17          our deliberations, if you want to see where the  
18          maps are now, it is with those public  
19          submissions, as well as testimony from the  
20          meeting tonight and other public input that we  
21          will receive.

22                    Throughout the process, we will solicit  
23          additional public comment so that proposed maps  
24          can mature, can change, with public criticism  
25          and public involvement, all before the

1           Legislature votes or approves any final maps.

2                   But we are not the ones who actually get  
3           to decide what the maps ought to be. The final  
4           decision is left with the judiciary. Whatever  
5           the Legislature passes based on input from the  
6           public is then submitted for judicial review to  
7           the State Supreme Court and for federal  
8           judicial review to ensure that the final plans  
9           meet all the legal requirements, state and  
10          federal.

11                   Because our purpose today is to hear from  
12          you, all the time between now and the time we  
13          adjourn at 9:00 will be used to ensure that  
14          every member of the public who is here and  
15          wishes to speak will have time to present  
16          testimony and be listened to respectfully.

17                   Now, after every citizen has had her or  
18          his say, if there is time remaining, and we  
19          hope there will be, before our scheduled  
20          adjournment, then any member of the Committee,  
21          Democrat or Republican, House member or  
22          Senator, may make any statement, offer any  
23          observation, answer any question or make any  
24          proposal.

25                   And, of course, any member of the

1           Legislature may yesterday, today or tomorrow,  
2           propose a map or a plan, and we will  
3           immediately make those proposals available to  
4           the public.

5           Mr. Chairman, I hope this description of  
6           our schedule and the process that we will use  
7           helps set the stage for a successful hearing  
8           tonight.

9           REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you  
10          very much, Senator Gaetz. We appreciate your  
11          words. And as the Senator said, we will  
12          adjourn promptly at 9:00, and there are a few  
13          dozen individuals who have signed up to speak  
14          so far, and if there is anyone else who wishes  
15          to speak, please ensure that you get a card,  
16          and we will make sure and get you to sign that.

17          Because we are limited in time, we are  
18          going to try to divide the time evenly and to  
19          ask each testifier to limit their remarks to  
20          about three minutes, and we will try to be  
21          liberal with that, but as more people sign up,  
22          we may have to be a little bit tighter.

23          Our first speaker this evening is going to  
24          be Celestino Palomo, and she will be followed  
25          by Jesus Medina, and then Jean Newland.

1           What we will do is call three names at a  
2 time and try to -- we have seats that are  
3 prepared in the back for those who are on deck.  
4 So if you could kind of be prepared to speak.

5           And without further ado, we would like to  
6 recognize Celestino Palomo to speak. Yes, sir,  
7 you are recognized, sir. I hope I said your  
8 name right. I was asking Ana Rivas Logan to  
9 help me.

10           You are recognized, sir, correct. We are  
11 going to turn that mike on for you.

12           MR. PALOMO: Good evening, members of the  
13 panel, ladies and gentlemen. My name is  
14 Celestino Palomo, and I have been living in  
15 Miami permanently since I was discharged from  
16 the U.S. Army in the year 1970.

17           I have been compelled to participate in  
18 this public hearing, my first ever, because I  
19 think this is a historic moment in the state of  
20 Florida.

21           This is about implementation of Amendments  
22 5 and 6 and their redistricting procedures  
23 taking place. Those amendments prohibit the  
24 Legislature to favor incumbents or political  
25 parties or to deny racial minorities their

1 right to participate in our electoral process.

2 If you accomplish this, we will see voters  
3 participate in greater numbers in our  
4 elections, and we will also see how communities  
5 from different backgrounds or races will be  
6 coming together to find solutions for common  
7 problems.

8 If you don't, it will be politics as  
9 usual. We have all witnessed in the past few  
10 months partisan politics at its worst all of  
11 the way from Washington, D.C., to communities  
12 in our neighborhood.

13 Please do the right thing for the good of  
14 all our citizens. Thank you very much. God  
15 bless America.

16 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you  
17 very much, sir. We appreciate those comments.

18 Next up we have Jesus Medina. Following  
19 Jesus will be Jean or Jean Newland, and then  
20 Annie Betancourt. Jesus is -- no? Okay. All  
21 right, does not want to speak. Thank you for  
22 being here though, sir.

23 Next up we have Jean Newland, followed by  
24 Annie Betancourt, and then after that we have  
25 David Crespo.

1           Jean is with the ACLU, or is affiliated  
2 with the ACLU. Thank you very much for being  
3 here, ma'am. We are honored, and you have the  
4 floor.

5           MS. NEWLAND: Well, thank you very much,  
6 and I would just like to say thank you for your  
7 good description of how redistricting works,  
8 because that was one of the things I was going  
9 to say.

10           The one thing I would like to ask is why  
11 the geospatial analysis and the compactness  
12 were deleted from the computer system that you  
13 have engaged to help with the redistricting.

14           I would like to also know why Senator Alan  
15 Hays was so disingenuous when he said that the  
16 State of Florida did not file a suit against  
17 the Amendment 5 and 6.

18           Actually, the suit was filed by Corrine  
19 Brown and Mario Diaz-Balart, members of the  
20 Florida Congressional Delegation. The State of  
21 Florida merely joined the suit as  
22 Plaintiff/Intervenor.

23           This they thought would give them good  
24 deniability. That means that if Mr. Balart  
25 backs off, we can just step right in as the

1 state.

2 The Legislature is fighting to have  
3 Amendment 5 and 6, and they are spending  
4 taxpayers' money to do it. The Legislature so  
5 far has spent \$700,000 in legal fees associated  
6 with redistricting, half of which has been  
7 delegated against Amendment 6.

8 And to add to an even more bazaar twist,  
9 an almost Orwell-ian twist, the Secretary of  
10 State is charging \$60,000 to the taxpayer to  
11 defend the amendment.

12 So one hand, the State is trying to  
13 invalidate it, and on the other hand, is going  
14 to defend it, and we are paying for both sides.

15 I know that you have a big job to do in  
16 Tallahassee, but please don't forget that you  
17 represent us, and you represent all of us, and  
18 it is important not only to the ACLU, but all  
19 of us to protect our Constitution. Thank you.

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you  
21 very much. And, Ms. Newland, I will tell you,  
22 what we will do is at the end of the hearing,  
23 we will make sure -- if you can stick around  
24 long enough, we will turn it over to the  
25 members to respond to some of the comments, and

1 specifically the questions you raised.

2 Senator Gaetz will make an attempt to try  
3 to answer them for you today. We want to make  
4 sure that we give everyone an opportunity to  
5 speak first, but after that, there will be a  
6 moment where the Senator will be able to  
7 address some of those questions.

8 So thank you for your questions, and with  
9 that, we will move forward to Ms. Betancourt  
10 with the League of Women Voters of Florida.  
11 You are recognized.

12 MS. BETANCOURT: Thank you. Good evening.  
13 Representative Weatherford, Senator Gaetz,  
14 members, thank you for coming down to our  
15 community. I am delighted to appear before  
16 you.

17 Redistricting and reapportionment, it is  
18 one of the most political of all political  
19 sports, and it occurs every ten years. I  
20 should simply say and equate it to the Olympic  
21 games. There are winners and there are losers.

22 I have been following this process since  
23 1982, when legendary Senator Dempsey Barron  
24 chaired the Committee. I know you, Senator  
25 Gaetz, now have the honor to sit in that



1 district and represent the people in the  
2 Panhandle.

3 But ever since that time, and again in  
4 1992, I followed the process. And then ten  
5 years ago, I sat on that other side of the  
6 table as a Representative for District 116  
7 where Representative Trujillo is. So I  
8 seriously take this exercise as a very, very  
9 serious.

10 Back in 1981, when Senator Barron chaired,  
11 it was a historic moment for Florida, because I  
12 was sitting in the audience and it was a  
13 turning point in the state where we had  
14 multiple districts.

15 And what happened was that by going into  
16 the single member, it opened the door, it  
17 really truly opened the floodgates for  
18 African-Americans, for Hispanic and for women  
19 to run for office.

20 I know that in addition, the issue of one  
21 person, one vote, and the principle for all  
22 citizens regardless of where they reside are  
23 entitled to equal representation.

24 And the point is that we, the people, pick  
25 the elected officials, not the elected official

1 pick the people on election day.

2 The concern that I have is it's a matter  
3 of timeline in terms of the way for getting the  
4 job done, so to speak, the district lines, the  
5 maps to be drawn, and clearly we know as a  
6 result of the census, Florida has 18,800,000  
7 people.

8 And thank you for making the clarification  
9 in terms of the number of residents per  
10 Congressional District. But you do have the  
11 ability to draw those districts anytime you  
12 have the information at your fingertips. The  
13 sophisticated technology is there.

14 So I don't see no reason why it is being  
15 delayed and delayed. Floridians spoke loud and  
16 clear when the Constitutional Amendments 5 and  
17 6 were passed with 63 percent of approval rate  
18 in our state.

19 So all I am here tonight asking you to  
20 please roll up your sleeves, do your job and  
21 get those maps out. Democracy, it is not a  
22 spectator sport, and voters should not be the  
23 loser in this Olympic game. Thank you so much.

24 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you  
25 very much. And thank you for your service to

1 the State of Florida. We are very grateful for  
2 that as well.

3 Next up we have Mr. David Crespo. Mr.  
4 Crespo. Following Mr. Crespo, we have Andrew  
5 Casademunt, and after Andrew, we after Angela  
6 Vazquez.

7 David, you are recognized, sir. Thanks  
8 for being here.

9 MR. CRESPO: Thank you. This will be  
10 probably the first time I will be speaking to a  
11 State Legislature. It feels like I'm speaking  
12 to lions and tigers.

13 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: It is okay,  
14 we don't bite.

15 MR. CRESPO: Well, I am glad that most of  
16 you are kittens.

17 I just wanted to bring up the issues on  
18 the Constitutional Amendments 5 and 6 that were  
19 passed last year. I was one of those  
20 individuals that originally signed the Petition  
21 to have those amendments on the ballot.

22 It turns out I was a pinhead, because I  
23 have learned from then that when -- as I did  
24 research on it, it was really -- it was  
25 really -- first of all, I was deceived.

1           It was made to look like a good idea, but  
2           I was maliciously deceived. It was designed by  
3           the secular progressives and the far left wings  
4           to have these redistricting decisions to be  
5           left up to the Florida Supreme Court, which is  
6           a court full of judicial activists.

7           And I am bringing this up because I know  
8           that you got a bunch of individuals and  
9           crybabies, with all due respect to the lady  
10          from the ACLU, a bunch of --

11          REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Sir, we want  
12          to keep the comments focused on redistricting,  
13          we don't want to talk about anybody else, just  
14          talk directly to us, that's it.

15          MR. CRESPO: To you?

16          REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Just us.

17          MR. CRESPO: Sorry, sir.

18          REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: You can call  
19          me a crybaby, but nobody else in the room,  
20          okay?

21          MR. CRESPO: Understood.

22          REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: All right.

23          MR. CRESPO: Understood.

24          It was really designed to intimidate you  
25          guys, to intimidate you to come -- to

1           redistrict according to the image of the  
2           secular progressives.

3                   And so I would like to offer you guys some  
4           encouragement. Those list of people, those  
5           secular progressives that I just mentioned,  
6           don't fear them. The one who -- the one who  
7           all of us should fear is God himself. He is  
8           one that put you guys in the position you are  
9           in now, and he is the one who can take it away  
10          from you guys.

11                   I trust that you guys will do the right  
12          thing with fair -- with no prejudice. I trust  
13          that you guys will make the right decisions  
14          and with God as your counselor.

15                   And if any of those people that I just  
16          mentioned try to threaten you with lawsuits,  
17          disregard them. Keep your -- just do the right  
18          thing and rely on God within the meetings that  
19          you guys have as your counselor, and do the  
20          right thing. And even if they do bring you to  
21          court, God looks within your hearts and he  
22          knows your right intentions, and if you have  
23          done this with the right intentions, I  
24          guarantee you, through God himself, even though  
25          you won't see him, will defend you in court.

1           And I would like to close with this last  
2 statement from the book of Psalms, in chapter  
3 1, the last verse: "The Lord watches over the  
4 ways of the righteous, but the ways of the  
5 fools will lead to destruction." I yield the  
6 floor.

7           REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you  
8 very much, Mr. Crespo.

9           Next up we have Mr. Andrew Casademunt. I  
10 apologize if I am not saying that right, sir.  
11 Following Andrew, we have Angela Vazquez, and  
12 then Edith Owens.

13           Andrew, you are recognized, sir.

14           MR. CASADEMUNT: Thank you, sir.

15           Today I am here to talk about the  
16 redistricting. I want to start with the  
17 federal Congressional Districts.

18           I have a big thing with District 20, how  
19 it is right now. I think it is one of the  
20 worst gerrymandered districts in the country.  
21 I currently see it going from west and all the  
22 way down to Aventura into Sunny Isles Beach and  
23 Bay Harbor Island.

24           I think that District 20, which has  
25 lost -- which has lost 4,000 people, should go

1 more into Broward. I currently think that  
2 District 17 should take over those  
3 municipalities.

4 I also think that District 18, how it is  
5 right now, should stay how it is, because it  
6 covers coastal communities from Miami Beach  
7 down into the Keys.

8 I also want to speak about District 25.  
9 Right now, there is a big problem with people  
10 in Collier County. Collier County has grown in  
11 population, and I think that the State of  
12 Florida, since it's received two new  
13 Congressional Districts, should get a new  
14 Congressional District for southwest Florida.

15 I also think that District 21 should --  
16 has lost a little bit of population, should  
17 move up, you know, and get more of the areas.  
18 But the problem is with Amendment 5 and 6, I  
19 see that the Voting Rights Act law is the law  
20 of the land, and these districts have a lot of  
21 minorities, Cubans, African-Americans,  
22 Hispanics, and I think that we need to protect  
23 that, then what Amendment 5 and 6 has done.

24 I am currently seeing here in the Florida  
25 House how there's been a lot of population loss

1 of 20,000, 17,000. And I think that even  
2 though there are a lot more minority districts,  
3 I think we need to keep those in place.  
4 There's a lot of communities in south Florida,  
5 which is a melting pot compared to different  
6 areas of Florida. So I strongly urge that you  
7 keep these districts how they are, but we need  
8 to do it in a way that, you know, voters can  
9 see what the districts are going to look like.

10 I want to speak quickly on 117, 101 and  
11 112. 112 and 101, they go from Collier County  
12 all the way down to the Florida Turnpike. I  
13 definitely think that we need to keep Collier  
14 County with Collier County, and Dade County  
15 with Dade county. And I think we need to  
16 combine 101 with 112 and make it a rural area,  
17 because there's a lot of farmers and a lot of  
18 rural communities that need a representative in  
19 the Florida House and the Florida Senate.

20 The other thing I want to talk about was  
21 that -- you know, how they are talking about  
22 voter precincts and all that, whether  
23 Republican or Democrat. I think we should go  
24 by ZIP code. I don't know if anybody said  
25 that, but I think ZIP codes is a good way to



1 make districts fairer, and city lines.

2 Like, for instance, District 117 and one  
3 -- 117 and 111, for instance, go through Coral  
4 Gables, and there's about two districts that --  
5 you know, why are you going to have two  
6 districts in Coral Gables when you can only do  
7 one district?

8 So I think that we really need to preserve  
9 the minority districts, but I think we should  
10 try to go ZIP code and use like state roads,  
11 interstates and county boundaries. Thank you.

12 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you  
13 very much, sir.

14 Next up we have Angela Vazquez, followed  
15 by Edith Owens and then Louella Grayson.

16 Ms. Vazquez, you are recognized. Thank  
17 you for being here.

18 COUNCILWOMAN VAZQUEZ: Thank you,  
19 Mr. Chairman, and thank you to all of you for  
20 coming down here. And some of you may already  
21 know, I have an issue that sometimes the state  
22 and federal government says they are going to  
23 come hear the people, and then they meet in  
24 south Broward and say that they were in  
25 Miami-Dade County. So thank you very, very

1           much for taking the time to venture in, I  
2           promise you will get out safe, into Miami-Dade  
3           County to hear -- I don't know why they don't  
4           want to come -- to hear what we have to say.

5                   I want to let you know I run five senior  
6           centers and a Meals On Wheels program for the  
7           -- through that and the fact that I am a  
8           community Councilwoman in our area, I do know  
9           several of our State Reps, and I know that  
10          Amendment 5 and 6 charges you with very  
11          specific things that you need to do, and that  
12          there are some funky-shaped districts out  
13          there, but I beg you to please remember -- and  
14          my county may not be a minority, but Hispanics  
15          in particular, the elderly. You can do the  
16          same thing and water down a minority, or you  
17          can keep a minority adrift and make sure their  
18          voice is heard. And I hope that you will make  
19          sure when you go in there and redraw what you  
20          are doing, that you remember the minorities and  
21          you remember the Hispanics and be careful on  
22          how you draw it.

23                   And specifically to me, those that  
24          represent my five senior centers, and I don't  
25          know them by memory, I know them by name, I can

1 tell you, the elderly are very important, they  
2 are very frail and they are usually overlooked.  
3 And from -- well, from most of the Miami-Dade  
4 delegation, they really, really went out of  
5 their way. I sit on a state board for the  
6 Florida Association of -- of FASP, and on a  
7 national board for the elderly, and many times  
8 they look at their Legislators with dismay,  
9 because they think that they are not thought  
10 of. Ours do.

11 And lastly, and my Representative in  
12 particular, who you are in her area today, very  
13 open, very outgoing. Actually, everybody, I  
14 think, in here that I do know can tell you they  
15 are doing a great job. And I know you can't  
16 protect the incumbents, but for the sake of my  
17 old people, for the sake of us women,  
18 Hispanics, et cetera, take care of the ones  
19 that take care of us, because to throw the baby  
20 out with the bath water just doesn't make any  
21 sense, and thank you.

22 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you  
23 very much.

24 Next up we have Edith Owens with the  
25 Democratic Executive Committee. Ms. Owens,

1           waiving your time? Okay. Thank you very much  
2           for being here.

3                    We also have -- I hope I am saying this  
4           right, Louella Grayson, also with the DEC.  
5           Waive your time, too, ma'am? Thank you very  
6           much.

7                    Augusto Luna is next. I'm sorry I didn't  
8           call your name earlier. After Augusto, we will  
9           have Artie Leichner, followed by Dorrit Marks.

10                   Augusto, you are recognized.

11                   MR. LUNA: Thank you. I just -- I wanted  
12           to be here in favor of the local business  
13           owners, small business owners, namely District  
14           119.

15                    I had a run-in with -- I was just trying  
16           to move my business recently, and I encountered  
17           some local government that wasn't supporting my  
18           move *per se*. I went through the proper  
19           channels to fix this, and I couldn't fix it.  
20           Thankfully, I was able to go into my State  
21           Reps, Frank Artiles, and he took a special  
22           interest in my case and basically promptly gave  
23           me a quick resolution to my problem, coming  
24           back in business. So I think it is important  
25           that, you know, in my district, which is mainly

1 -- I think it's 50 percent Hispanic or so, that  
2 we keep that representation close to the  
3 business owners, because that's what really  
4 moves the economy. So I just wanted to thank  
5 Frank personally, and just give him the support  
6 that we need for small business owners in my  
7 district at least. Thank you.

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you  
9 very much, Augusto, we appreciate that. And at  
10 the end of the hearing, we will make sure and  
11 give out Representative Artiles' cell phone  
12 number so he can help out everyone in the room  
13 who has any problems. If you please could do  
14 that for us later, sir, we would appreciate  
15 that.

16 Next up we have Artie Leicher, or  
17 Leichner. I apologize if I didn't say that  
18 right. After Artie, we've got Dorrit Marks,  
19 and then we have Ernesto Ackerman.

20 You are recognized.

21 MR. LEICHNER: Good grief.

22 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: I thought I  
23 had a booming voice. That's pretty strong  
24 there.

25 MR. LEICHNER: No, you got it right the

1 second time. Thank you very much.

2 I am Artie Leichner. I am First  
3 Vice-President of the United Teachers of Dade,  
4 and a member of the State Executive Board for  
5 the AFL-CIO.

6 I just want to tell you, I came here a lot  
7 more skeptical before I heard the opening  
8 statements about how the process is being done  
9 and why you are coming to us without maps, and  
10 that sort of made me a little less skeptical  
11 about that process, so thank you.

12 I do want you to just keep in mind that  
13 63 percent of the people of this state voted  
14 for this amendment, both of these amendments,  
15 and it is really a rare thing to get 63 percent  
16 to vote for anything. Our Governor was only  
17 elected with 49 percent. So it sort of makes a  
18 big statement about the desire of the people of  
19 the state to have fairness in representation.

20 Now, I guess I am one of those secular  
21 progressives that the gentleman was complaining  
22 about before, and I am not making a threat to  
23 have a lawsuit. I just want you to follow  
24 exactly what was prescribed in the amendments  
25 and do it with fairness, efficacy and

1 efficiency.

2 I would personally be faced with a  
3 dilemma, because the concept of Hispanic  
4 minority in south Florida is almost oxymoronic,  
5 considering there's such a Hispanic majority,  
6 and I don't know how that all plays into what  
7 you have to configure, but I am sure that does  
8 in some way make it a little bit more  
9 complicated. But if you follow the process,  
10 and we do have districts that don't look like  
11 snakes crawling up the side of a mountain, and  
12 if you follow the process and everything gets  
13 blocked off, some of you will keep your seats,  
14 some of you will lose your seats. That is just  
15 politics. I am not complaining about the  
16 politics. But at least the representation will  
17 be based on communities, geography and the way  
18 things need to be set up.

19 My biggest curiosity, though, is if  
20 someone wanted to run for one of the current  
21 seats, and they wanted to run by petition, how  
22 would they go about that, not knowing where the  
23 seats are drawn? And that -- I guess that is a  
24 question that maybe Senator Gaetz can answer at  
25 the end.

1           And thank you all for being here tonight,  
2           and I just hope it is not costing the citizens  
3           of the state a whole lot of money for you to  
4           make the traveling show. Thank you.

5           REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you  
6           very much. And you are correct, we will get  
7           the answer to that question. There is an  
8           answer to it, and Senator Gaetz will address it  
9           later.

10           Next up we have Ms. Dorrit Marks, who's  
11           already at the microphone, and following Dorrit  
12           will be Ernesto Ackerman, followed by Wilson  
13           Cristancho.

14           And Ms. Marks is with the League of Women  
15           Voters of Miami Dade County. Ms. Marks, thanks  
16           for being here, you are recognized.

17           MS. MARKS: Thank you both Senator Gaetz  
18           and Representative Weatherford. I think it is  
19           wonderful, so many of the Representatives and  
20           Senators here. Thank you, and welcome to our  
21           community.

22           My name is Dorrit Marks, and I am  
23           Vice-President of the League of Women Voters of  
24           Miami-Dade County, and a long-time resident of  
25           Pinecrest, which is in southwest Miami-Dade



1 County.

2 As members of the Florida Legislature, you  
3 have a most important task: Drawing and voting  
4 on congressional and legislative district  
5 boundaries. The Florida Constitution gives you  
6 the job to draw new district boundaries every  
7 ten years following the census.

8 In November 2010, the people of Florida  
9 voted in favor of standards to guide the  
10 redistricting process. The Florida  
11 Constitution requires that as you draw new  
12 districts, that you do not create districts  
13 with the intent to favor political parties or  
14 incumbents, and that you be mindful that the  
15 districts do not deny racial or language  
16 minorities the opportunity to elect  
17 representatives of their choice, and that  
18 district populations be nearly equal, that  
19 districts be geographically compact, using  
20 existing city and county boundaries where  
21 possible in joining communities.

22 But what, in fact, does the Constitution  
23 of Florida say? So this -- I am quoting really  
24 from the Constitution. This is Article III,  
25 "The Legislature," Section 20 and 21, that

1 provides standards for establishing  
2 Congressional District boundaries and standards  
3 of establishing legislative districts. So it  
4 says: "No apportionment plan or district shall  
5 be drawn with the intent to favor or disfavor a  
6 political party or an incumbent, and districts  
7 shall not be drawn with the intent or result of  
8 denying or abridging an equal opportunity of  
9 racial or language minorities to participate in  
10 the political process, or to diminish their  
11 ability to elect representatives of their  
12 choice, and districts shall consist of  
13 contiguous territory." And then it goes on  
14 further: "Unless compliance with the standards  
15 in this subsection conflicts with the standards  
16 in subsection a" -- which is what I just read  
17 -- "or with federal law, districts shall be as  
18 nearly equal in population as is practicable.  
19 Districts shall be compact and districts shall,  
20 where feasible, utilize existing political and  
21 geographical boundaries." So I just wanted to  
22 make clear to the Representatives, Senators and  
23 everyone in the audience what it actually says.

24 While it is positive for you to gather  
25 input from citizens, it would be better and

1 more efficient really to hold hearings after  
2 draft district maps have been proposed. Only  
3 then can the public really comment in an  
4 effective manner.

5 While I know you cannot vote on new  
6 district maps until the Legislature meets in  
7 early April -- or early January, I'm sorry --  
8 early January of next year, the League of Women  
9 Voters asks that Legislators file proposed  
10 redistricting plans in early October and that  
11 Committee meetings in the fall review such  
12 proposed maps and then have public hearings by  
13 December. Citizens need time to review and  
14 give input. And, further, the timeline should  
15 assure that maps be approved by the Legislature  
16 in January, as early as possible after the  
17 session --

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Ms. Marks, I  
19 don't want to rush you, but we are over the  
20 time limit.

21 MS. MARKS: I am almost finished, almost  
22 finished.

23 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Okay, good.

24 MS. MARKS: -- as early as possible after  
25 the session convenes. We are suggesting this

1 timeline so that there is time for review by  
2 the Florida court and the U.S. Department of  
3 Justice, and to respond to challenges from the  
4 government or the public, and that can be a two  
5 or three-month process. This timeline will let  
6 candidates know district boundaries and enable  
7 them to qualify. If you do not move up the  
8 timeline, decisions for candidates, for  
9 Supervisors of Elections and voters will be  
10 chaotic. Thank you.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,  
12 Ms. Marks. We appreciate your comments.

13 Next up, Ernesto Ackerman with Independent  
14 Venezuelan-American Citizens. You are  
15 recognized, sir.

16 Following Mr. Ackerman, we will have  
17 William Cristancho, followed by Gisela Gomar.

18 You are recognized, sir.

19 MR. ACKERMAN: Thank you, sir.

20 First of all, I would like to thank the  
21 members of the Legislature for listening to us  
22 and coming down all the way to Miami.

23 I am the President of the Independent  
24 Venezuelan-American Citizens, as you said. We  
25 have eight years only in -- involved in

1 politics, so we are kind of new in this field.  
2 We educate politically all the Venezuelan  
3 community to participate in local politics.

4 We also do the citizenship drive to help  
5 the legal residents become citizens. And we  
6 also bring students from Venezuela to see how  
7 the democracy works in this country.

8 We have learned in our small time in this  
9 area that before the '80s, there was no  
10 Hispanic representation in the local  
11 government. And that is why we would like to  
12 ask you to -- in the new maps, to really take  
13 care of all the Hispanic community that lives  
14 in this area. That is really important and  
15 big. And that is all.

16 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you  
17 very much, sir. We appreciate that.

18 Next up, William Cristancho.  
19 Mr. Cristancho, you are up, and then following  
20 Mr. Cristancho, we have Gisela Gomar and Joseph  
21 Salzverg.

22 You are recognized, sir.

23 MR. CRISTANCHO: Thank you. Thank you,  
24 Mr. Chairman, Senator Gaetz. Thanks for coming  
25 to south Florida, and thanks for coming to an

1 area where we all live and we want to share our  
2 thoughts with you.

3 I am a resident of Miami-Dade County. I  
4 am a U.S. citizen for 23 years and counting. I  
5 was born in Columbia and I am very active in  
6 the Colombian community. And I am also a  
7 professional IT consultant in  
8 telecommunications and I travel quite a bit.  
9 And I have taken the time today, because this  
10 is a historic moment, like many of those have  
11 mentioned.

12 I want to make sure the Hispanic community  
13 is actually identified, that there is no  
14 retrogression, which is something of grave  
15 concern for us, the Hispanic community, and to  
16 continue expanding and truly represent our  
17 Hispanic community in Miami-Dade County.

18 I am from the neighborhood of Kendall  
19 where many of our Colombians live there, and so  
20 I am representing them, and -- but most of all,  
21 I am here representing my son. My son is a  
22 child of nine years old. He has autism, and he  
23 is on a waiting list of many kids waiting to  
24 receive services. I want to make sure that  
25 this time around, there is an opportunity for

1 Hispanic kids with special needs, not only with  
2 autism, but with many other needs to get access  
3 to those services. Thank you very much.

4 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you  
5 very much, sir.

6 Next up we have Ms. Gomar, and following  
7 Ms. Gomar, we have Joseph Salzverg, followed by  
8 Tim Daubert.

9 You are recognized.

10 MS. GOMAR: Good evening. My name is  
11 Gisela Gomar, and I live in the Sunset/East  
12 Kendall area. And if you pardon me, I wrote  
13 everything down so I can make sure that I  
14 communicate everything that I want to to you  
15 today.

16 I wanted to take this moment to discuss  
17 our very unique south Florida community, a  
18 community that I have been part of for over 50  
19 years. I grew up here in the Westchester area.  
20 I think that it is fantastic that you are here  
21 today listening to us, the voters.

22 Our county might be the only one in the  
23 state that has the majority of the -- are  
24 minorities, so I believe that Amendments 5 and  
25 6 will allow us to preserve many of our current

1 district boundaries.

2 It is important to note that it is  
3 difficult, if not impossible, for the  
4 boundaries of our counties, almost 40  
5 municipalities, to be completely preserved. In  
6 fact, I think that certain areas like Palmetto  
7 Bay have been better served having two  
8 Representatives. Instead of having one person  
9 to call, some of these cities have the luxury  
10 of calling more than one Representative when  
11 they need help with a regional issue.

12 I also think that you should continue to  
13 have our districts in Dade run north to south  
14 instead of east to west. I believe that it is  
15 in the best way to truly capture and represent  
16 our local communities of similar interest.

17 Again, thank you for your time, and good  
18 luck.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you  
20 very much.

21 Joseph Salzverg, followed by Tim Daubert  
22 and then Pablo -- I hope I am saying this  
23 right -- Lead or Led. Leal, I apologize. You  
24 are recognized, sir.

25 MR. SALZVERG: Good evening. First of



1 all, I want to thank you guys for having this  
2 forum. It definitely cements the fact that you  
3 guys are interested in what we have to say  
4 before these districts are drawn. I just want  
5 to thank you guys.

6 I wanted to speak with you a little bit.  
7 I am a life-long Miami-Dade County resident,  
8 born and raised in Miami, attend the University  
9 of Miami. Now I live in the East  
10 Kendall/Sunset area. I currently live in  
11 District 115, which is pretty well-drawn. It  
12 is a north/south district, with the eastern  
13 border being the Palmetto and then going west  
14 to 97th Avenue, very like communities with  
15 Kendall, with Westchester. A lot of the  
16 opportunities and a lot of the troubles that I  
17 face either with transportation, traffic,  
18 services are very common in Kendall which to  
19 what they are in Westchester, you know, single  
20 family homes and -- and it dramatically changes  
21 once you go west of the Turnpike.

22 So the biggest thing that I would like to  
23 recommend and really cement with you guys is  
24 what she said, let's have these districts  
25 north/south, especially in the southwest

1 Miami-Dade County area. Let's take into  
2 account the U.S. 1 corridor, which separates  
3 communities, affluent communities like  
4 Pinecrest and Palmetto Bay, so that they're  
5 maybe not in the same district as an area as  
6 Fountainbleau, which is, you know, dramatically  
7 different. Let's take into account the  
8 Palmetto Expressway as well. Let's take into  
9 account the Turnpike, because once you cross  
10 the Turnpike and go west, you have a lot of  
11 multi-family housing, you have a lot of cluster  
12 homes, you have a lot of new development, new  
13 roads.

14 The biggest thing I would like to cement  
15 is, you know, let's keep like communities in  
16 the same districts and let's make sure that  
17 these run at least north/south in our area,  
18 because, you know, that's really helped us in  
19 the long run and that's helped us get proper  
20 representation and knowing where we sit. Thank  
21 you for your time.

22 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

23 Next up, Mr. Tim Daubert, followed by  
24 Pablo Leal and then Thomas Comerford. I hope I  
25 am saying that right. I apologize if I am not,

1 but you are recognized, sir.

2 COUNCILMAN TIM DAUBERT: Good evening,  
3 Councilman Tim Daubert from the Town of Miami  
4 Lakes. Representatives and Senators, I want to  
5 thank you very much for being here. I want to  
6 thank FIU for hosting this. And Representative  
7 Logan, it is a great area that you have in your  
8 area here. I personally want to thank  
9 Representative Oliva and Senator Garcia, my two  
10 representatives in Miami Lakes.

11 I urge you as you sit there and listen to  
12 the constituents -- I also want to say thank  
13 you to each and every one of you, the public  
14 that is here. It is very impressive and very,  
15 very important for you to get your voices out.  
16 One of the things that I ran on when I ran for  
17 office only in October was getting the word out  
18 to the public. And I urge you as you sit  
19 there, please listen to the public. Do the  
20 right thing, and that is it. Thank you very  
21 much.

22 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,  
23 Councilman, and thank you for your service to  
24 our state.

25 We have Pablo next, and following Pablo,

1 we have Thomas and then Barbara Schwartz.

2 Pablo, you are recognized, sir.

3 MR. LEAL: Good evening. I am here  
4 representing the student body of FIU, I guess.  
5 I may -- I guess three-fourths of my life is  
6 spent here. The other fourth is spent at home  
7 and at work, which is represented in District  
8 114.

9 I just want to thank the Legislator for  
10 coming out here and doing this for us. I  
11 didn't have talking points already made, but I  
12 want to support you guys in this troubling time  
13 that you guys are going to go through, and I  
14 hope that you guys can figure out the lines for  
15 us, and don't forget about us students, because  
16 we are your future.

17 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you  
18 very much. Go Panthers.

19 Next up, Mr. Thomas, and I hope I can say  
20 your last name right, Comerford.

21 MR. COMERFORD: Comerford.

22 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Comerford,  
23 okay. And then after Mr. Comerford, we've got  
24 Barbara Schwartz and then Orlando Gutierrez  
25 Boronat. I may have messed that one up, too,

1 but you are recognized.

2 MR. COMERFORD: Good evening. Thank you  
3 very much for holding this meeting.

4 I am in Senator Ana Rivas Logan's district  
5 and also Senator Flores' district. I live in  
6 the Kendall area, but I am also the co-founder  
7 of the Sacred Heart Outreach Center in  
8 Homestead, and so I want to support the people  
9 down there, that most of the people we work  
10 with are the poor, and many of them are also  
11 the undocumented, and so those are the people  
12 that are picking our food, and we don't want to  
13 forget those people. There's a lot of bills  
14 that they are going to be coming up and did  
15 come up that are important in that area, so I  
16 wanted to call that to your attention.

17 But there is a great book by Bill Bishop  
18 called *Sorting*, and it is about how people in  
19 the United States are grouping, mainly by  
20 lifestyles. And that is what we see here in  
21 Dade County with all these communities. And so  
22 please keep that in mind as you are drawing  
23 these districts, so that people of like  
24 backgrounds and like characteristics are  
25 considered. And don't overlook the poor people

1 throughout Dade County.

2 And I want to welcome all those people  
3 from central and northern Florida. I go to  
4 Tallahassee every year for Catholic Days at the  
5 Capitol. It takes us about eight hours to  
6 drive up there, so we know it is a long trip  
7 down here, but we welcome you down here. Thank  
8 you.

9 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,  
10 sir.

11 Next up we have Ms. Barbara Schwartz,  
12 followed by Orlando Gutierrez Boronat, and then  
13 Alexandra Bassil.

14 Ms. Schwartz.

15 MS. SCHWARTZ: Representatives and  
16 Senators, not you guys, I just want to  
17 apologize for those people who do not know how  
18 to address you properly.

19 I am a long-time resident of Miami-Dade, I  
20 am an activist, and I believe that people voted  
21 for 5 and 6 because they were tired of looking  
22 at some of the districts in Florida that go  
23 through three, four and five counties, who do  
24 not represent similar people of the same  
25 interest.

1           Example: I am in District 25, and that  
2 goes from Kendall Lakes all the way over to  
3 Naples. I guarantee you I have no relationship  
4 with the crocodiles -- with the alligators, I  
5 have no -- I really do not have the similar  
6 backgrounds of the people of Naples, and I  
7 think that has to be taken into consideration.

8           We have a lot of very good and a lot of  
9 very not so good Representatives, but we have  
10 to remember that this is basically a majority  
11 Hispanic community. We have many different  
12 nationalities. And when you say Hispanics, I  
13 don't think you can group them as one people.  
14 I think they have their own individuals, rights  
15 and ideas, and I think this is a melting pot,  
16 or a salad, whichever you wish to call it, but  
17 we have mixtures, and you are going to have the  
18 responsibility of blending them into unique  
19 areas of common interest, and it is not right  
20 for a Representative in 25 to have to go all  
21 the way over to Naples. They don't represent  
22 the same people, and you've got to be able to  
23 talk to your Senators, your Representatives.  
24 And so I think you've got a very tough job  
25 ahead, but let us help you. Thank you.

1           REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you  
2 very much.

3           Next up we have Orlando Gutierrez Boronat,  
4 followed by Alexandra Bassil and then Dario  
5 Moreno.

6           You are recognized, sir.

7           MR. BORONAT: Thank you. Firstly, I would  
8 like to thank the members of the Legislature  
9 for listening to my testimony and that of other  
10 citizens. My name is Orlando Gutierrez  
11 Boronat, and I have been a resident of  
12 Westchester for 30 years. I teach social  
13 sciences.

14           I respect the task that you have before  
15 you as our elected representatives of drawing  
16 legislative and Congressional Districts, which  
17 is not an easy one. Through our votes, we  
18 citizens require that these districts be drawn  
19 in a way that does not favor or disfavor any  
20 incumbent, candidate or party. This period of  
21 fairness is important for the integrity of our  
22 political decision-making process.

23           I would like to remind the members of the  
24 Legislature to take into account the nature of  
25 the communities involved. I came to the United



1 States at a very young age with my family,  
2 Cuban exiles who came to this country so we  
3 could live in freedom. I live in a majority  
4 Hispanic community. My neighbors came to the  
5 United States, which was also a beacon of  
6 opportunity and offered freedom for them as  
7 well.

8 Constitutional Amendments 5 and 6, which  
9 we citizens passed recently, respects the right  
10 of my community and similar ones to elect  
11 representatives of our choice, specifically  
12 prohibiting any drawing of district lines that  
13 would diminish the ability of minorities to  
14 elect representatives of our choice. When it  
15 comes to choosing Legislators who will  
16 represent us in Tallahassee and Washington, DC,  
17 we are counting on this constitutional  
18 protection to ensure that our concerns and  
19 interests get a fair hearing in the law-making  
20 process. Therefore, an unacceptable result  
21 would be retrogression of Hispanic voting  
22 rights, especially at a time when the Hispanic  
23 population continues to grow. In fact, the  
24 Hispanic voting population has grown to the  
25 point that it merits an additional Senate seat.

1           In conclusion, I would like to once again  
2 state my gratitude to the Legislature for  
3 giving this matter the consideration it  
4 deserves, and I exhort the members to keep in  
5 mind their constitutional duty to draw  
6 districts that will neither play political  
7 favorites nor diminish the ability of  
8 minorities to elect representatives of our  
9 choice. Thank you.

10           REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,  
11 Orlando.

12           We have Alexandra Bassil with the ACLU of  
13 Florida, followed by Dario Moreno and then Evan  
14 Ross.

15           You are recognized.

16           MS. BASSIL: Hi, good evening, welcome to  
17 south Florida. My name is Alexandra Bassil. I  
18 am a Greater Miami Chapter member of the ACLU  
19 of Florida, and I am a second-generation native  
20 Miamian. I live in District 109 for the House  
21 and 35 for the Senate.

22           I just was here today because I really  
23 wanted to impart that the Fair District  
24 standards does protect minority districts, and  
25 remember that most of the people in Florida

1 voted for amendments, almost 63 percent of the  
2 voters, so they are not really amendments that  
3 were Democratic or Republican, and I really  
4 believe that linking the Fair Districts  
5 amendments to minority districts is a  
6 distraction.

7 Attorney General Eric Holder and the U.S.  
8 Justice Department have already approved or  
9 pre-cleared the amendments, finding that they  
10 do not violate the 1965 Voting Rights Act and  
11 do not dilute or have a retrogressive effect on  
12 minority voting strength in Florida. It is  
13 important that everyone, especially people of  
14 color, have equal access to impact and election  
15 and run for and have a fair opportunity to  
16 compete for elective office. Thank you.

17 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

18 Okay. Dario Moreno, good to see you  
19 again, sir, and then after Mr. Moreno, we've  
20 got Evan Ross and then I believe it is Joshua  
21 Eisenstein.

22 MR. MORENO: I am Dario Moreno. I teach  
23 political science at Florida International  
24 University. Welcome, and I am glad you are  
25 beginning the process early.

1           I just want to remind the Legislature that  
2 really the headline news of the 2010 census was  
3 the continuing growth of the Hispanic  
4 population. In 1990, 10 percent of Florida  
5 residents were Hispanic. Today it is  
6 22 percent. By the next census, it will  
7 probably be in the 30s. So it is incredibly  
8 important for the political legitimacy of this  
9 process that Hispanic and African-American  
10 representation is not diluted, and this you  
11 face a very, very difficult calculus, because  
12 the Hispanic population, about 48 percent of  
13 it, is concentrated in Miami-Dade County, and  
14 Miami-Dade County, because its population  
15 growth is less than in the rest of the state,  
16 is actually going to lose representation, or  
17 its Senate and State House seats will be  
18 larger. At the same time, because the state  
19 has gained in population, its congressional  
20 seats will be smaller.

21           So the challenge you have before you is to  
22 protect Hispanic and African-American  
23 representation, and in order to do that, I  
24 don't see any other way than to go over the  
25 boundaries in many of the districts into

1 Broward County.

2 And if worrying about community of  
3 interest, for example, I see very similar  
4 communities in Miami Gardens and the eastern  
5 side of Miramar, so -- as an example. So it is  
6 very important as you go through this process  
7 is to realize that the Hispanic population is  
8 rising and it is going to be more difficult to  
9 draw Hispanics districts in central Florida  
10 than in south Florida. Thank you for your  
11 time.

12 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,  
13 Dario, always good to see you. Thank you.

14 Next up we have Evan Ross, followed by  
15 Joshua Eisenstein and then Lois Kahn.

16 Good to see you again.

17 MR. ROSS: Good to see you again. Good  
18 evening. Having had the privilege of speaking  
19 in front of you this morning, I am pleased to  
20 be able to do so once again.

21 Unlike this morning, I won't be asking any  
22 questions here this evening for any of you to  
23 answer. Instead, I will be making a demand on  
24 behalf of 3,155,149 people, though I won't be  
25 requesting use of all of their time. Those

1 people are you all of those across the state of  
2 Florida who voted for Amendment 5. Lead by  
3 Speaker Dean Cannon, the Florida House of  
4 Representatives has filed suit against over 3.1  
5 million people I am representing here today,  
6 not against them personally, but against their  
7 will.

8 Coming from a Legislature that has  
9 preached low taxes and less wasteful spending,  
10 I can't help but find these actions of our  
11 House hypocritical, and for lack of a more  
12 appropriate word, deplorable. Each and every  
13 one of you that does not stand up and fight  
14 against our tax dollars being used against us  
15 is responsible for some of the most wasteful  
16 spending in the history of our great state.

17 So I have to ask the question, could our  
18 tax dollars be better spent? At a time when  
19 you passed a budget that cut \$542 per student  
20 in education spending, I can't help but ask,  
21 could our tax dollars be better spent? At a  
22 time when we have made massive cuts to  
23 veterans' benefits, those people who have  
24 risked their lives to protect and serve this  
25 country, I have to ask, could our tax dollars

1           be better spent? At a time when you all felt  
2           the need to cut unemployment benefits when so  
3           many Floridians are in such dire straits due to  
4           lack of employment opportunities, I can't help  
5           but know the answer to my question. Our tax  
6           dollars could be much better spent.

7           I fully expect that when you leave here  
8           today, though my words will be in your memory,  
9           they won't be used to create any real progress.  
10          I fear that you will continue to play party  
11          politics and work to continue gerrymandering  
12          districts that benefit you rather than the  
13          people that you are supposed to be  
14          representing. If you care about the will of  
15          the voters of Florida, if you care about  
16          honoring the oath you gave to defend and uphold  
17          the Constitution when you took office, prove me  
18          wrong.

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

21                 Moving on, we've got Joshua Eisenstein,  
22                 followed by Lois Kahn and then Congressman  
23                 Mario Diaz-Balart.

24                 MR. EISENSTEIN: Hello, Senators and  
25                 Representatives. My name is Joshua Eisenstein.

1 I am a social studies teacher in Miami-Dade  
2 County Public Schools. And with due respect to  
3 the other social studies teachers in the room,  
4 I think that drawing a district really isn't  
5 all that difficult.

6           Granted, the Fair Districts Amendments 5  
7 and 6 are the law, and you have to follow the  
8 law, but one of the things it says is you don't  
9 have to consider one part over all the other  
10 parts. And I -- every fall, I teach a lesson  
11 to my seventh graders on how to draw a  
12 district, and I think they do an okay job of  
13 it. And I think when you look at a district, I  
14 think really you shouldn't really over-think it  
15 that much. My advice is don't think about it  
16 that much. Just make it look basically like a  
17 rectangle. It is the kind of thing where you  
18 know what a fair district looks like when you  
19 see one, that is what I think. And if by any  
20 chance you should need any help this fall  
21 drawing the districts, I volunteer my seventh  
22 grade class. They can help. Thank you.

23           REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you  
24 very much, and don't think we won't take you up  
25 on that. So we appreciate those comments.



1           Next up we've got our -- I think Lois Kahn  
2           is not going to speak. We thank you for being  
3           here though. Next up we've got our  
4           Congressman, Mario Diaz-Balart.

5           Congressman, thank you for being here,  
6           sir. Thank you for your public service to the  
7           State of Florida and our country. Welcome.

8           CONGRESSMAN DIAZ-BALART: Chairman, good  
9           to see you, gentlemen, distinguished members,  
10          honorable distinguished members of this  
11          Committee. I will be brief.

12          First, welcome to this, a great part of  
13          the state of Florida, the great state of  
14          Florida. Yes, I am a little biased, I admit  
15          it, but it is great. It is a privilege and an  
16          honor to have you here.

17          I want to thank all of you for doing what  
18          you are doing, for traveling the state before  
19          you draw the plan, to -- listening to the  
20          people before you draw the plan. I know that  
21          you have traveled and have heard from a number  
22          of Floridians about their requests to consider,  
23          for example, and it has probably gotten some  
24          say, too, parts of Amendments 5 and 6 that  
25          speak about contiguous districts and -- but as

1 the Committee considers what you are going to  
2 have to be doing, and it is a very difficult  
3 task, I would like to draw your attention, all  
4 of you, to another part of the amendment that  
5 requires the Committee to consider racial or  
6 language minorities in the process.

7 The relevant part of the amendment reads,  
8 if I may quote, "Districts shall not be drawn  
9 with the intent or result of denying or  
10 abridging the equal opportunity of racial or  
11 language minorities to participate in the  
12 political process," end of quote.

13 And I respectfully request from all of you  
14 that the Committee pay special attention to  
15 this essential requirement and the text of the  
16 amendments, because for way too long, the  
17 redistricting process was really used as a way  
18 to really disenfranchise minorities, racial and  
19 language minorities, really take away their  
20 ability to elect candidates of their choice.

21 You know, I worked -- as some of you may  
22 know, I worked when I was in the State  
23 Legislature in a bipartisan way, on a  
24 bipartisan level, with members of both parties,  
25 including some that I see here and that I have

1       seen in this process and I have run into and  
2       that I run into all the time, including the  
3       State Representative, now I guess State  
4       Senator, Chairman Smith, and many others, to  
5       make sure that we did -- had some fair plans  
6       for the State of Florida. I am proud of the  
7       way that we worked together, and those efforts  
8       lead to what? Go back to -- think about  
9       pre-1992. There was one district where an  
10      African-American -- I'm sorry, there were no  
11      African-Americans representing on the  
12      congressional level, no African-Americans  
13      representing the State of Florida. Can you  
14      believe that? I mean, I am not talking about a  
15      million years ago. This is 1991. And one  
16      Hispanic. But because of the efforts -- the  
17      bipartisan efforts that I worked on with a  
18      number of many people, many other people, we  
19      were able to -- right after that redistricting  
20      process that you are now involved with, then,  
21      we went from zero African-Americans to three  
22      members of Congress, three African-American --  
23      districts where African-Americans could elect  
24      candidates of their choice, and we went to two  
25      Hispanics. Fast-forward ten years, three and

1 three.

2 And I mention that because I think it is  
3 very key that we do not retrogress, that we do  
4 not go backwards and go back to the years where  
5 minorities were used as pawns in the  
6 redistricting process.

7 So, again, I know you have a very  
8 difficult task, and I wanted to be brief. I  
9 want to again thank you for the fact that you  
10 are listening to everybody in the state of  
11 Florida before drawing. Novel concept, elected  
12 officials listening, you are doing it, thank  
13 you. And number two is, please pay special  
14 attention, don't retrogress. Remember that  
15 part in the Constitution that says that you  
16 shouldn't. And, again, I commend you. It is a  
17 privilege and an honor to have all of you here  
18 in this great community. Thank you for what  
19 you are doing. You are doing the people's  
20 work, and we are grateful for it. Thank you  
21 very much.

22 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,  
23 Congressman. And thank you for your service to  
24 our country, sir. It is good to see you.  
25 Thank you very much.

1           Next up we have Tim Hyman, and after  
2 Tim -- I'm sorry, Tim, I didn't give you very  
3 much heads-up there. After Tim, we have Gisela  
4 Gomar-Salzverg, although I think we may have  
5 heard from her already, and then after that, we  
6 have Jeanne Baker, or Jeanne Baker, Jeanne  
7 Baker.

8           Tim, you are recognized, sir.

9           MR. HYMAN: Good evening, sir. Thank you  
10 for the opportunity to speak. That is a tough  
11 act to follow.

12           I am here tonight as a member of the  
13 community of West Kendall. I had the  
14 opportunity to run ten years ago when the last  
15 redistricting process took place. As my wife  
16 says, I was very fortunate to lose in that  
17 process. And I have stayed active in the  
18 community, because it is important that we all  
19 stay active.

20           As a member of the community that would I  
21 guess be considered a minority now, not being  
22 Hispanic, I think it is interesting that the  
23 focus seems to be whether it is Hispanic or  
24 non-Hispanic. What I say is the people need to  
25 vote for the person they believe in, not

1           whether they are Hispanic, whether they are  
2           Anglo, whether they are black, white, yellow,  
3           brown, it doesn't really matter. You need to  
4           have a person representing you that believes in  
5           what is best for the community.

6           So what I am here to say is, please, if it  
7           is not broken, don't fix it. If the districts  
8           haven't changed, if the community hasn't  
9           changed, leave it alone.

10           I am represented by a Hispanic that I  
11           believe in. I don't think it matters if he is  
12           black, white, Republican or Democrat. I vote  
13           for the person who is going to take care of our  
14           community.

15           So please keep a simple process -- the  
16           process simple, and I agree with don't  
17           over-think it. If you remember that we are  
18           here to elect you and it is our job to do so,  
19           then I think that's what's most important. So  
20           I would ask the voters to remember to go out  
21           and vote. That is what is going to make the  
22           difference, not where you draw the line. Go  
23           out and vote. Thank you.

24           REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

25           Next up we have Gisela Gomar-Salzverg,

1           although I think we heard from her earlier. Is  
2           she here? Okay, no.

3           Then we have Jeannie Baker.

4           MS. BAKER: Jeanne Baker.

5           REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Jeanne Baker,  
6           I'm sorry. And, Ms. Baker, after you, we have  
7           Maria Wadsworth.

8           You are recognized.

9           MS. BAKER: Good evening, Senators,  
10          Representatives, fellow citizens and voters. I  
11          am another person from the ACLU. We are all  
12          over the place tonight, because we were all  
13          over the effort to get 5 and 6 as part of our  
14          Constitution. It was an effort that was  
15          rewarded by a non-partisan 63 percent super  
16          majority of Floridians. And, yes, we applaud  
17          ourselves. And the ACLU is here in a very  
18          non-partisan position.

19          I have heard so many speakers share their  
20          delight in this process tonight, and I am very  
21          impressed with it. It is wonderful to have our  
22          Senators and Representatives come to us and  
23          give us an opportunity to speak, and hopefully  
24          listen. But we in the ACLU are a little bit  
25          concerned that there might be more of an

1 appearance than substance in these hearings.

2 I will tell you why we are concerned. It  
3 was really pinpointed by the two excellent  
4 speakers from the League of Women Voters. We  
5 can speak tonight in generalities, in  
6 platitudes. Occasionally a speaker has said,  
7 "I live in such-and-such a district, and it is  
8 really weird that I am joined with somebody in  
9 Naples when I live, you know, somewhere in  
10 Miami-Dade." So we have had -- we have heard  
11 some specifics, but for the most part, and for  
12 the most part probably what you will hear from  
13 me, have to be classified as generalities and  
14 platitudes. And what I am concerned about,  
15 what the ACLU is concerned about, is that until  
16 we see what the Legislature is proposing, we  
17 cannot make meaningful comments, we cannot  
18 point out -- we cannot until we see what your  
19 proposed map looks like. We cannot point out  
20 how it doesn't look like that rectangle that  
21 the seventh graders apparently know what a  
22 district looks like. We can't point out that  
23 it still looks like a salamander sliding up the  
24 state coastline. We cannot point out that  
25 there are still communities thrown together who



1 have nothing in common, either economically or  
2 geographically. We can't point those things  
3 out.

4 And we, on behalf of the ACLU, urge that  
5 you change your own timeline to reflect the  
6 timeline proposed by the League of Women  
7 Voters, and that you have real maps to -- a  
8 real map, perhaps two real maps from each  
9 chamber, to show us at the very beginning of  
10 2012, which is the time when you can undertake  
11 to vote. And if we can see real maps then,  
12 then you can get not just the appearance of  
13 citizen participation in the process, but the  
14 reality of citizen participation in the  
15 process. So I leave you with that request.  
16 Thank you very much.

17 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

18 Next up we have Maria Wadsworth, and  
19 following Maria is Kathy Charles and then  
20 Denise White.

21 MS. WADSWORTH: Good evening, my name is  
22 Maria Wadsworth. I live in the Palmetto Bay  
23 area. I decided to come to this hearing  
24 because I believe that this is very important.  
25 We do this every ten years, so it will effect

1 us for many elections.

2 Our districts are whole, together  
3 communities with similar concerns and  
4 interests, and I encourage you to keep these  
5 districts in a way that matters to us and that  
6 it means something to us.

7 So just a short request, and I thank you  
8 very much for holding these meetings. Take  
9 care. Thank you very much.

10 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

11 Ms. Kathy Charles, and following Kathy, we  
12 have Denise White and -- I am going to have to  
13 get back to everybody on that one. I need a  
14 minute to read it.

15 MS. CHARLES: Good evening.

16 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: You are  
17 recognized, Kathy.

18 MS. CHARLES: Good evening,  
19 Representatives and Senators. My name is Kathy  
20 Charles, and I live in the south Dade area;  
21 actually, specifically in the area represented  
22 by Representative Artiles. As a --

23 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: If you could  
24 speak a little closer to the mike.

25 MS. CHARLES: As a citizen by way of the

1 Caribbean, I want to let you know that this  
2 community means a lot to me. I went to high  
3 school here, went on to University of Miami,  
4 got married here, am raising a five-year-old  
5 daughter, and look forward to being actively  
6 involved in my community. Therefore, I think  
7 that our government and our community benefits  
8 directly from the level of involvement of its  
9 residents. So I am happy to have this  
10 opportunity to provide input and what those  
11 priorities should be and how we want our  
12 districts to look and how we want to be  
13 represented. Happy to have this opportunity on  
14 the front end, but I must say I would agree  
15 with some of the previous comments regarding an  
16 opportunity on the back end to provide input.

17 So we are looking forward to you actively  
18 taking the information from the community and  
19 giving us another opportunity to participate  
20 and partner with you in how the community  
21 looks.

22 So welcome to the south Dade area, and I  
23 invite you back.

24 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

25 Next up we have Denise White, and I

1 believe the name after it -- the only part I  
2 can make out is Reyes. I know it is probably  
3 my reading and my eyes. Reyes, okay, we've got  
4 you next, sir, and then Peter Nefsky.

5 You are recognized, ma'am.

6 MS. WHITE: Good evening, Representatives  
7 and Senators. My name is Denise White. I am a  
8 concerned voter, and I appreciate your being  
9 here listening, and I pray what you are hearing  
10 is not falling on deaf ears.

11 I am not versed in mapping districts yet.  
12 However, I feel the State of Florida should  
13 ensure transparency, fairness and compliance  
14 with the Voting Rights Act and with equal  
15 protection. You should assure one person, one  
16 vote. You should redistrict in a way that  
17 avoids minority vote dilution. You should  
18 avoid drawing district lines so that the  
19 minority population is over-concentrated or  
20 packed in election districts.

21 You should always be careful to avoid  
22 cracking, drawing district lines so that an  
23 area of concentrated minority population is  
24 divided and spread among several districts that  
25 are predominantly white. You should be careful

1 to avoid drawing district lines so that a large  
2 minority population concentration is included  
3 with a larger white population with the purpose  
4 of or effect of depriving minority voters of a  
5 voting majority, and that would fall in the  
6 stack -- that would -- to avoid stacking.

7 I would respectfully request that you  
8 avoid drawing plans that erode minority rights  
9 relative to the status quo, that is, you avoid  
10 creating retrogressive redistricting plans. I  
11 pray you are fair in your challenges, and I  
12 thank you very much.

13 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

14 Reyes, you are recognized next, sir, and  
15 following Reyes, we have Peter Nefsky and then  
16 Frank Pena.

17 If you could identify your last name for  
18 the record, too, I apologize. I know it is my  
19 eyes.

20 MR. REYES: My name is Jaime Reyes. I am  
21 from the Town of Cutler Bay. I am going to  
22 give you all the benefit, Mr. Chairman and  
23 Senator Gaetz and the rest of you Legislators,  
24 the benefit, and believe that you are going to  
25 go back and you are going to take some of these

1 ideas and actually implement them.

2 I don't see a lot of folks writing, and I  
3 am the kind of person if I don't see anybody  
4 writing or taking notes, I kind of wonder  
5 whether they are really listening. I do see  
6 you, by the way, you are one of the few.  
7 Representative Horner I have seen writing, and  
8 the Chair and Senator Gaetz. Everyone else  
9 seems to be listening, so I hope you have a  
10 good memory.

11 The Town of Cutler Bay -- you could easily  
12 say that all lines go through the Town of  
13 Cutler Bay, because that is the way that it was  
14 done ten years ago. District 117, 118, 119 and  
15 120 literally split our community apart. Okay.

16 The Town of Cutler Bay is about 40,000  
17 citizens. It is contiguous, it is a very mixed  
18 town.

19 I would like for you Legislators to go  
20 back. I have seen some of the maps that are  
21 drawn, and it looks like they are heading in  
22 the right direction to keep the Town of Cutler  
23 Bay -- so remember the name, the Town of Cutler  
24 Bay would like to remain contiguous.

25 The Congressional Districts, also in

1 the state -- the state Senate, we have three  
2 Senate lines or Senate seats that come through  
3 Cutler Bay, so we have three different  
4 representatives. That is nuts, really.  
5 Congressional, we have also three. It is hard  
6 to believe, but if you look down at that end of  
7 the map, which is in southern south Dade, you  
8 will wonder how that ever happened. And I  
9 think that is what lead a lot of the citizens  
10 to Amendment 5 and 6, a lot of our folks in our  
11 community were very angry about that.

12 So I would like to go on the next -- would  
13 like to believe the next ten years that we have  
14 one representative, either it's a state  
15 Senator, Representative, congressional, what  
16 have you, that represents our entire Town of  
17 Cutler Bay. That is what I want to see, and I  
18 hope that is what you remember.

19 That is really all I have, you know. I  
20 don't want to talk about Amendment 5 or 6. I  
21 just want you to remember what I said, and when  
22 you go back to your staff say, "Listen, I  
23 talked -- I listened to the guy from the Town  
24 of Cutler Bay, and he wants it changed."

25 Thank you.

1           REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,  
2           Jaime.

3           Next up, Peter Nefsky, followed by Frank  
4           Pena and then Joe Miller.

5           MR. NEFSKY: Honorable Chairman and  
6           distinguished members of the political  
7           community and members all, I have been involved  
8           in politics since 1960. I am only 73 years  
9           old, but I always have belonged to a political  
10          clubhouse in New York City, and about  
11          95 percent of the people that I work with have  
12          been in office. I came down here because I  
13          think I would love not only to be a person from  
14          New York to just visit, but to live. And I  
15          have been here since '95.

16          I am -- when I went for my program of a  
17          Master's degree in political science and  
18          international politics in Staten Island  
19          University, I thought that I would be able to  
20          see things differently, and, sure enough, when  
21          I came down here, I saw this redistricting, and  
22          I never thought in my life that I would see  
23          something so terrible. I was appalled at what  
24          transpired, and I am sure that many of you did  
25          not agree with this. I don't know why you



1 voted for it, but you have cut the community in  
2 half.

3 I have seen communities in black  
4 communities that were divided. I have seen --  
5 where I live in Kendall, off Bird and 127, I  
6 have seen where we have two different  
7 districts. We have in Kendall, I think, a big  
8 enough community to have its own congressional  
9 district, but in Richmond Heights, I have  
10 seen -- and not only do I work with the crime  
11 watch, but I have seen people who say, you  
12 know, "I have a different district." Kendall  
13 has two different districts, if not more, and I  
14 think that you should keep the community  
15 together. We have Chinese community in  
16 Kendall, Asian community, Hispanics, Jewish  
17 people in Kendall. I think that Kendall should  
18 remain as is. I think that other communities  
19 who have been there for many, many years should  
20 exist in its entirety.

21 Can you imagine having two different  
22 Congressional Districts, one gets funded, the  
23 other don't? In other areas, one side gets  
24 funded, the other don't? Every Congressman is  
25 entitled to vote for his community, but what a

1           shame that across the street, something is  
2           happening; in my community, nothing is  
3           happening.

4                    So am I involved in politics in this  
5           Florida? Yes. I am a precinct captain and I  
6           am area coordinator for the 116. So I have  
7           seen things and I feel and I work with  
8           communities whereby I volunteer my services  
9           other than the community that I live, and my  
10          party will tell you that.

11                   So all I am saying is that when you make a  
12          redistricting, put into consideration that you  
13          keep the community, you know, together, not to  
14          divide it, please. Thank you very much.

15                   REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,  
16          sir.

17                   Next up we have Frank Pena, followed by  
18          Joe Miller and then Vivian Navarro.

19                   Frank? Is Frank here? We are missing  
20          Frank, so we will keep moving forward to Joe  
21          Miller. Is Joe here?

22                   Mr. Miller, thank you for being here, and  
23          then we've got Vivian Navarro, followed by  
24          Efran Montero. I hope I've said that right.

25                   One thing I would like to point out, when

1 we first started, we had about 30 people who  
2 had signed up to speak, and so we said we would  
3 keep it at three minutes and be a little  
4 liberal. We are now over 60 people who signed  
5 up to speak because we keep getting them as  
6 they come in. So we would like to try to keep  
7 our time limit to about two and a half minutes,  
8 and I am going to try to keep it tight, so I  
9 don't want to be rude to anybody, I want to  
10 make sure you get all of your comments in, but  
11 if you could, we give bonus points for brevity,  
12 and we want to make sure that everyone gets an  
13 opportunity to speak here this evening.

14 So with that, you are recognized to speak,  
15 sir.

16 MR. MILLER: Good evening, Representatives  
17 and Senators. I apologize for my attire. My  
18 physical therapist said one more round today.

19 I am here as a Representative from  
20 Democracy for America Miami-Dade. We are a  
21 non-partisan progressive organization. We are  
22 very concerned about the implementations of 5  
23 and 6.

24 With a State Legislature with their  
25 first -- one of their first actions was to cut

1 services for severely disabled kids and  
2 autistic children, they -- and also to override  
3 the citizens' amendment to --

4 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Sir, I would  
5 like to keep the comments focused on  
6 redistricting.

7 MR. MILLER: -- for high speed rail --

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Plenty of  
9 Town Hall meetings to have that conversation.

10 MR. MILLER: Okay. We are concerned that  
11 the State Legislature is going to just ram down  
12 this proposed maps that they are going to come  
13 out with at the last minute. With the track  
14 history of the State Legislature on these other  
15 issues, we are very skeptical if the State  
16 Legislature is even going to have enough time  
17 for hearings and if there is going to be anyway  
18 for public input for 5 and 6 into the maps. We  
19 are very skeptical about the implementation  
20 process. I hope that you guys prove us wrong,  
21 but, sadly, I don't think so.

22 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

23 Next up we have Vivian Navarro, followed  
24 by Efran Montero and then Julie Simon.

25 Ms. Vivian? She is waiving her time. Okay,

1           thank you.

2                   Efran Montero, I hope I am saying that  
3           right. I see him coming. Efran, thank you for  
4           being here.

5                   Next after Efran, you have Julie Simon and  
6           then Milton Todd.

7                   MR. MONTANO: It is Efran Montano, but  
8           that is all right. I understand.

9                   I would like to take this time to thank  
10          all of you for your effort and your service,  
11          your public service. Thank you for the time  
12          you have taken to listen to our concerns. And  
13          I am here as a citizen, a proud public service  
14          employee and a proud Union member for AFSCME.  
15          And I am proud to have said that I voted for  
16          Amendment 5 and 6, because I believe this  
17          finally gives us, the voters, a voice to choose  
18          our representatives, and not for our  
19          representatives to choose us through  
20          gerrymandering.

21                   Once again, I would like to thank you for  
22          your time and your efforts.

23                   REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.  
24          Bonus points for Efran. Thank you, sir.

25                   Next up we have Julie Simon. Following

1 Julie, we have Milton Todd and Gary Simon.

2 MS. SIMON: Hi. Thank you for letting me  
3 speak, and thank you for visiting us in south  
4 Florida.

5 Just a little background: I live in  
6 Pinecrest. I was born at Jackson Memorial  
7 Hospital. My parents moved here in the  
8 mid-'30s. My mom is 96, still living here, and  
9 my son is a U.S. Marine.

10 So with that being said, I just wanted to  
11 say I am very, very concerned about the timing  
12 of the amendments and the drawing of the maps.  
13 People have already addressed the fact that  
14 there are no maps for us to comment on, but I  
15 am concerned that they are not going to be  
16 finished in time for the June 12th filing  
17 deadline. And how will people know what  
18 district they are filing for if they -- if  
19 there are no redistricting maps, number one.

20 And also, number two, I am really  
21 concerned with the state of our state, and  
22 again, I would like to ask -- I guess I have  
23 more questions than comments, but the question  
24 is the money that is being spent to fight the  
25 redistricting that 63 percent of us voted for

1 is coming out of the State Legislature, and we  
2 are basically paying for it as state taxpayers,  
3 and that is really inappropriate since  
4 63 percent of us have already approved this  
5 amendment. Thank you.

6 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

7 Next up is Mr. Milton Todd. He says he is  
8 a voter. Thank you very much. We are glad  
9 that you are voting, Mr. Todd, thanks for being  
10 here, and you are recognized to have the floor.

11 MR. TODD: Thank you for providing these  
12 hearings and giving us the opportunity to  
13 express our views.

14 I have been working on my maps, and I will  
15 be submitting them when they are completed. It  
16 is a tedious process, but it is completely  
17 doable. I am a little disappointed here that  
18 folks prefer you to do these maps first.

19 "Gerrymandering" is the buzz word, and it  
20 is what we have now because there was  
21 insufficient input from the people. This  
22 process right here is the fix. Thank you for  
23 the fix.

24 The new amendments have some language that  
25 is ripe for interpretation. The last thing I

1 want is the Legislature to do the interpreting  
2 for me. I want you to represent my  
3 interpretations. That is what our government  
4 is all about.

5 First, the big word in there, "fair." I  
6 submit that only -- the only concept of fair  
7 that will work is blindness. The districts  
8 must be drawn with no consideration to what  
9 type of voter resides in what area, just to how  
10 many voters reside there. Every person in this  
11 room will have a different definition of  
12 "fair." Therefore, no solution will be viewed  
13 as fair by everyone. Some will want focus on  
14 community interest, others on economic  
15 similarity, others on ethnic similarity.  
16 Massaging districts to accommodate any of this  
17 is just another form of gerrymandering.

18 Next phrase in there is "make use of  
19 existing city, county and geographical  
20 boundaries." I submit roads are some of the  
21 best boundaries. They tend to be generally  
22 straight, and are also inherently understood by  
23 people. The larger the road, the better.  
24 Rivers, canals, shorelines are also easily  
25 understood. Current city and county boundaries



1 can sometimes look as ridiculous as some of the  
2 Congressional Districts we are trying to fix.  
3 So to strictly follow those is going in the  
4 wrong direction.

5 The word "compact" comes up. That  
6 essentially means minimizing the perimeter for  
7 maximizing the area. Circle is the most  
8 compact, that is not going to work. So the  
9 most compact shape that is practical is a  
10 square. So while impossible to achieve, each  
11 district should attempt to be as square-like as  
12 possible.

13 And finally, "contiguous" should simply  
14 mean there are no islands of districts, there  
15 should be no pocket of District X completely  
16 detached from the rest of District X.

17 These are the guidelines I am using for my  
18 maps, and I want them to be your guidelines,  
19 too. I will submit them when I'm complete.  
20 Thank you again for having this available.

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you  
22 very much, and thank you for taking the time to  
23 work on maps and submit them. We really  
24 appreciate that.

25 Next up we have Gary Simon. After Gary,

1 we have Lida Mari and then Lisa Lorenzo.

2 MR. SIMON: Good afternoon. Thank you for  
3 being here, Senators and Representatives.

4 I found this brochure very informative,  
5 because I had no idea you were actually asking  
6 us for some input about certain areas and  
7 interpretations. Not only am I concerned about  
8 the timing of everything, because the timing is  
9 really important for other people who want to  
10 seek election, and you can stymie that or you  
11 can favor that. I am hopeful that you are  
12 going to favor that and you are going to work  
13 on getting these maps so we can reflect on them  
14 after you have created them.

15 I am hopeful that in your Committee  
16 meetings, that they are going to be open so  
17 that we can see what you are thinking about and  
18 how you arrived at the different dimensions and  
19 sizes and locations of each of these different  
20 districts.

21 I do not think that "compactness" means  
22 taking into account commerce, transportation or  
23 communication. When this -- when these  
24 amendments were proposed, the word  
25 "compactness" always had a geographical

1 analysis, not commerce, transportation and  
2 communication. To try and broaden it and  
3 liberal it so you -- liberalize it so you can  
4 make your own ideas about where you want things  
5 to be and say, "Well, it is now compact," I  
6 don't agree with that.

7 I know it is important from your  
8 perspective to preserve the core of existing  
9 districts. I realize this is your job, this is  
10 what you do a lot, you spent a lot of time, a  
11 lot of energy, but that is not and should not  
12 be why we draw districts. It could be  
13 pie-in-the-sky thinking, but I am hopeful that  
14 you will create a blind eye, you will forget  
15 where the existing districts are, you will  
16 forget your own district, and you will draw  
17 districts that we, the voters, voted in in 5  
18 and 6. Thank you.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

20 Next up we have Lida Mari, followed by  
21 Lisa Lorenzo, and then Gerry Tiziani.

22 Lida? You are recognized, thank you.

23 And if we could, we've got a couple of  
24 seats up front for those of you, if you are on  
25 deck, if you want to sit in those seats, it

1 will make the process go quicker, so thank you  
2 very much.

3 You are recognized. Good to see you.

4 MS. MARI: Thank you. Good to see you  
5 again. I want to thank you again all for being  
6 here and allowing us the opportunity to come  
7 before you.

8 I want to continue where I left off this  
9 morning. I wanted to address the issue of  
10 defining the words as a speech pathologist.  
11 Words mean a lot, and I want to particularly  
12 express to you that I would like for you to  
13 represent what I have in mind when I read the  
14 amendments.

15 There is particular concern among citizens  
16 with the words "compactness," "contiguous" and  
17 "fairness." "Compactness," it can be defined  
18 as having the smallest perimeter around an area  
19 of a population. Now, we cannot have districts  
20 that are round, but the next best ratio of  
21 perimeter area is a square. So our districts  
22 should be as square as possible, like building  
23 blocks or train cars connected to each other.

24 "Contiguous" is to have no islands. No  
25 piece of district should be trapped inside of

1 another district. We don't want  
2 representatives to have to cross another  
3 district just to get to the rest of his or  
4 hers, and I certainly wouldn't want people to  
5 have to travel long distances to go and meet  
6 their representatives.

7 "Fairness." It can be defined as  
8 providing citizens with the opportunity to have  
9 access to our elected representatives to be as  
10 close and as easy as possible.

11 It is also our responsibility as citizens  
12 of a republic to participate in drawing the  
13 maps. Yes, they are tedious, time-consuming to  
14 draw, but it is not like mapping the human  
15 genome. We want representative government?  
16 Well, it takes work to participate, it takes  
17 our time and it takes your effort to make it  
18 work for you. You can then come here and argue  
19 your case clearly on how you want the districts  
20 drawn. They can -- our Representatives and  
21 Senators can then represent your interests,  
22 because they know what you want.

23 Having said that, I acknowledge that you  
24 have all been here and have gone to a lot of  
25 meetings, but I wish to respectfully request

1           that you give us another opportunity to present  
2           our maps to you and to explain them in detail  
3           so that you may represent our interests as  
4           effectively as possible. We are working on  
5           them, I am, but I don't have them available  
6           today.

7                     Thank you very much for being here, and I  
8           sincerely appreciate it.

9                     REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

10                    Next up is Lisa Lorenzo, followed by Gerry  
11           Tiziani and then Marcia -- Marcia Reisman.

12                    You are recognized.

13                    MS. LORENZO: Hello, Representatives and  
14           Senators. I hope you don't mind, I am a little  
15           nervous, I am going to read from my notes.

16                    First of all, I am a mom from -- Dade  
17           County resident, and I would never tell my  
18           child, "Do your homework and then read the  
19           instructions." So I am glad that you are here  
20           listening first and then going on to do your  
21           job.

22                    As you guys know, Miami-Dade County is a  
23           unique community defined by its diversity, as  
24           we see here today, and is unlike any county in  
25           Dade County -- in the state of Florida. So I

1 ask that you make -- make every attempt not to  
2 split our districts into multiple counties.

3 Furthermore, Dade County is over  
4 65 percent Hispanics, as we have heard. To me,  
5 what does that mean? That means that my  
6 daughter gets to look at our State  
7 Representative, Jeanette Nuñez, and see a  
8 Hispanic woman, and know that she can grow up  
9 to be anything she wants to be, and it is all  
10 possible because of where she lives and where  
11 she is able to go to the voters and have people  
12 like her vote her in for her beliefs and what  
13 she stands for. And she is doing a great job.  
14 Thank you, Representative Nuñez.

15 Lastly, I just want to say that we must  
16 keep our districts compact, our key word today,  
17 so that we can allow additional Hispanic access  
18 representation in the House and the Senate.  
19 And I am going to take my bonus points for  
20 being brief, and thank you very much.

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Take them and  
22 run with them. Thank you.

23 Okay. Next up we have Gerry. Gerry here?  
24 You are passing, okay. Major bonus points.

25 Thank you very much, ma'am, but we do

1 appreciate you being here, I can tell you.

2 Okay, you are thinking, good.

3 After that, we have Marcia Reisman. Did  
4 she leave? Okay.

5 After that we have Claudio Perez from The  
6 Agape Network. Raise your hand if you are  
7 here. Yes, okay, I'm sorry if I said your name  
8 wrong there. Mr. Perez, you are next up, sir,  
9 and then we have Patrick O'Keefe, followed by  
10 Dexter Baldan.

11 You are recognized.

12 MR. PEREZ: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I  
13 represent The Agape Network, and what we do is  
14 we are a substance abuse and mental health  
15 treatment facility for women. These are women  
16 that have been abandoned, abused, and the  
17 reason I am talking about that is because they  
18 have a faint voice, and as we do the  
19 redistricting, in looking at all the different  
20 representation, they usually with that  
21 population need the representation that a  
22 specific, small redistricting process would  
23 give to recognize their needs.

24 So I appreciate your servanthood for our  
25 great state. God bless you.



1           REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,  
2           sir, and thank you for your service.

3           Next up we have Patrick O'Keefe, who is,  
4           it looks like, a student at FIU. Is Patrick  
5           here? Great, Patrick, thanks for being here.

6           And then I believe we have -- I believe it  
7           is Dexter Baldan, and after Dexter, we will  
8           have Milagro Ruiz.

9           You are recognized, sir.

10          MR. O'KEEFE: Chairman, Senators,  
11          Representatives, I would like to thank you to  
12          coming to my school, Florida International  
13          University. I am currently the student body  
14          President here at FIU, and I am also the  
15          Legislative Chairman of the Florida Student  
16          Association, representing over 300,000 public  
17          university students here in the state.

18          I also represent two communities. I  
19          currently reside in Hernando County, but my  
20          current community is obviously Miami-Dade.  
21          Seeing the differences between rural Florida  
22          and urban or Hispanic, a very more diverse  
23          Florida, it really has given me a lot of views  
24          that would be different than a lot of other  
25          citizens in this state. In this area, I have

1           seen explosive growth. It is very impressive  
2           to see the differences in communities, and I  
3           think this area could really benefit from an  
4           extra Senate seat.

5                     Another thing to remember, and there  
6           really are some very commonalities between this  
7           area and rural Florida, if you look at the --  
8           not only the -- I would say the racial  
9           diversity, but also the economic diversity, if  
10          you go and you look at rural Florida, you will  
11          see -- especially in my county, Hernando  
12          County, you will see that Brooksville, Florida,  
13          out in eastern Hernando County, and Citrus  
14          County have a lot of very common interests, and  
15          you will see that Springhill and Port Richey,  
16          New Port Richey and those areas have common  
17          interests. Yet they're really -- the districts  
18          are really generated without that in mind. I  
19          mean, I think when you are looking at the  
20          districts, you have to remember that I am  
21          trying to elect somebody to represent me, and  
22          if you draw up the districts just in giant  
23          blocks, you are not going to have the person  
24          that represents you, because it is tough. You  
25          can't have a district that both represents

1 the -- just the county when you are looking at  
2 it and you are seeing that this person is so  
3 conflicted because they have so different group  
4 of people that they are trying to represent.  
5 So I just ask you to try to create the  
6 districts to best represent the people as a  
7 whole, and I thank you for your time. I look  
8 forward to seeing more of you in the spring in  
9 Tallahassee.

10 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

11 Next up, Dexter Baldan. Do we have Dexter  
12 here, did he leave maybe? I will put him over  
13 here. I believe it is Baldan, B-a- -- Beatriz,  
14 I'm sorry, that's my eyes. Ms. Beatriz Baldan,  
15 thank you very much, I'm sorry that I butchered  
16 that so badly, but we do want to hear from you,  
17 and so after Ms. Beatriz, we will hear from  
18 Milagro Ruiz and then Frank Irizarry.

19 MS. BALDAN: Hi. Thank you for being  
20 here, and I will just be extremely brief,  
21 because there were a lot of people here that  
22 spoke with the same willingness that I have.  
23 But I want you -- to remind you that people who  
24 voted for 5 and 6 voted because they didn't  
25 like what they saw. So basically is when you

1 are going to do the districting now, remember  
2 that. That is your mandate. Thank you.

3 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,  
4 Beatriz.

5 Okay, Milagro Ruiz? Is Mr. Ruiz here,  
6 Milagro?

7 Okay. Frank Irizarry? Frank, thank you,  
8 Frank. After Frank, we have the Mayor of  
9 Pinecrest, Cindy Lerner, and after Cindy, we  
10 have -- I believe is Winnie Tary, but we will  
11 get back to that.

12 Frank Irizarry, thank you very much for  
13 being here, sir. You are recognized.

14 MR. IRIZARRY: Thank you very much for  
15 being in our community. My name is Frank  
16 Irizarry. I am the Chairman of the West  
17 Kendall Business Association, and I have to say  
18 that I can get very used to having you all  
19 here. I really don't want to wait another ten  
20 years to have you all here, but I would very  
21 much like to have you back on a regular basis.  
22 This expression of democracy is wonderful, and  
23 I think I speak for everyone here that we want  
24 to have you back.

25 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

1           MR. IRIZARRY: You have set this up very  
2 well. Everyone is very well-informed. I think  
3 it is great.

4           Shared constituencies, that seems to be  
5 the new word in our dictionary. I think that  
6 we all can agree that there are some issues  
7 with regard to the way our representatives are  
8 set about in our community.

9           I am from New York, and none of you know  
10 -- you may have heard of the Finger Lakes. And  
11 I look at our congressional and representative  
12 maps, and I am reminded of the Finger Lakes,  
13 and I am reminded of the Finger Lakes because  
14 of the fact that way up in the northern part of  
15 the Finger Lakes, they would know nothing about  
16 what is going on in the southern part of the  
17 Finger Lakes, and to a very great degree, I  
18 think that is what happening here. Shared  
19 constituencies.

20           I have wonderful representatives that deal  
21 with the West Kendall Business Association,  
22 starting with Ana Rivas Logan, who is a member  
23 of the West Kendall Business Association,  
24 Carlos Trujillo back there, he is a member of  
25 the West Kendall Business Association, Frank

1           Artiles, who has also been very, very involved  
2           in the West Kendall Business Association,  
3           Anitere Flores, wherever she went, is also a  
4           member of the West Kendall Business  
5           Association. Our representatives are very in  
6           tune with the business of being successful here  
7           in Kendall.

8                     But I think that we -- like any business,  
9           we like to know where we are at. We like to  
10          know -- we don't like surprises, we like to  
11          have consistency. And I think that having  
12          these tentacles that we have is very -- does  
13          not accomplish what we want to do.

14                    I have two representatives in our area  
15          that -- and I feel bad because I am a Democrat  
16          and I would love to have more input from them,  
17          but they are not around. And I can understand  
18          that, because their constituency is further  
19          south or further north. I am talking about  
20          Senator Rich and Representative Saunders. I  
21          understand, Representative Saunders is down in  
22          Key West, Senator Rich is up north, I  
23          understand that. But, unfortunately, she  
24          represents some people that are across the  
25          street from me, but then I don't see her that

1 often. I would very much like to see her  
2 often, believe me, as a Democrat in this area,  
3 I would love to see her more often. But,  
4 however, I understand that her values are a  
5 little bit further north, as it is  
6 Mr. Saunders. But the representatives that we  
7 have here that I spoke about earlier are very  
8 dutiful, they're representative, but, however,  
9 I think it would help them better if we have a  
10 bit more of a shared constituency and not  
11 having all of these Finger Lakes type of  
12 districts that we have now. Thank you very  
13 much.

14 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Next up we  
15 have the Mayor of Pinecrest, Ms. Cindy Lerner.  
16 Mayor, thank you very much for being here, and  
17 after the Mayor, we have Winnie -- I believe it  
18 is Tary, or Tang, and then Maria Barbaran.

19 Mayor, thank you so much. You are  
20 recognized.

21 MAYOR LERNER: Good evening. I was  
22 elected to the Florida Legislature in the year  
23 2000, representing the old District 119.  
24 District 119 had been drawn in 1992 after the  
25 census of 1990, and it was a perfect House

1 district. It represented a community of  
2 interest. It was everything from Kendall Drive  
3 south to Homestead and east of U.S. 1. So that  
4 old district contained all of Pinecrest, what  
5 is now Palmetto Bay, what is now Cutler Bay.  
6 And I am the victim of the very ugly side of  
7 redistricting, the very partisan side of  
8 redistricting, because my district was wiped  
9 off the map in 2002, literally gone. It was  
10 chopped into thirds, given over to neighboring  
11 districts. Some of my colleagues that were  
12 elected with me in the year 2000 sit up on the  
13 dais now and very capably and well represent us  
14 in the state of Florida still in different  
15 positions in the Legislature were not the  
16 victims, but know full well exactly what I  
17 experienced. It was quite brutal and quite  
18 disappointing.

19 I can't complain, because I would have  
20 never imagined I would be Mayor of Pinecrest  
21 now. It is much better than being in the  
22 Legislature ever was, and I have power to do  
23 things in my community now, which I didn't  
24 have. I can see immediate results and I can  
25 well represent my community, not only within my



1 own village, but in my county and my state and  
2 throughout the country. So I appreciate that I  
3 ended up in a better place.

4 But I say all that because I am very  
5 concerned about the districts we ended up with.  
6 We have no voice. Pinecrest has no voice in  
7 the Legislature anymore, based on those  
8 districts.

9 I brought my props just to show you the  
10 old District 19 that was compact, it was  
11 contiguous, it had a community of interest, and  
12 based on what is going on now in Pinecrest,  
13 Palmetto Bay, Cutler Bay, South Miami, we are a  
14 very dedicated, very well-organized and  
15 collaborative set of municipalities that are  
16 working for the entire region of south Dade  
17 County, and we need a voice that represents all  
18 of us in that regard. What happened to  
19 District --

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Mayor, I am  
21 going to have to ask you to -- we've got a lot  
22 of speakers to get to.

23 MAYOR LERNER: Okay. I just want to show  
24 you, because it is very important that you see  
25 what happened to that and the other districts,

1 and that we do have no voice. One way I can  
2 tell you I am very disappointed in what's  
3 happened to the district and that we have no  
4 voice -- you see this?

5 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Actually,  
6 Mayor, we actually all have copies of the maps  
7 right here in front of us.

8 MAYOR LERNER: Yes, but it is much clearer  
9 -- look at this 117 --

10 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Ma'am,  
11 please.

12 MAYOR LERNER: You see the tentacles? My  
13 voice and my constituents' voice in 117 are not  
14 heard at all. I have not --

15 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you  
16 very much. You are a minute over, and I'm --

17 MAYOR LERNER: I just want to make one  
18 last sentence.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Okay, last  
20 thing.

21 MAYOR LERNER: I have not seen or heard  
22 from either of our State Representatives, and  
23 when I was a State Representative, I made damn  
24 sure I got myself out there to represent the  
25 people that I cared about. We haven't seen

1           them.

2                   REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD:  Thanks,  
3           Mayor.

4                   MAYOR LERNER:  Thank you.  One more prop  
5           --

6                   REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD:  Next up we  
7           have Winnie Tang.

8                   MAYOR LERNER:  One more quick --

9                   REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD:  No, I'm  
10          sorry, ma'am, we are out -- we are out of time.  
11          Mayor, we are out of time.  Thank you very much  
12          for being here.  Thanks for your service to  
13          your community.

14                   Next up we have Winnie Tang.  Ms. Tang,  
15          thank you very much for being here.  Following  
16          Ms. Tang, we have Maria Barbaran, and then Mark  
17          Gotz.

18                   You are recognized.

19                   MS. TANG:  Thank you, Chairman, Honorable  
20          Chairman, Representative and Senators.  And  
21          based on the census 2010, the Asian population  
22          have increased 70 percent, and which is almost  
23          equal one -- one seat for the Senators as of  
24          the redistricting.

25                   So you leave it all in one community, it

1 looks really well, we have one State Senator  
2 representing us and three House representing --  
3 representing us, but reality, we are not. We  
4 are spread out in the entire state of Florida.  
5 And many of you may miss some of them for  
6 across the state, and not like a lot of people,  
7 you heard earlier, the Hispanic interest, the  
8 African-American interest, and right now I am  
9 here to voice that you also listen to the  
10 Asian-American interest. And we are  
11 fast-growing communities, and we don't really  
12 ask too much, we work very hard, and in our  
13 organization as for the Asian community, we do  
14 the citizenry drive, voter registration drive,  
15 to also allot education for our community to be  
16 productive citizens.

17           However, as Asian community, we are over  
18 100 different languages, so it is a challenge  
19 for us to really get everybody together to say  
20 one language. And, fortunately, we got English  
21 right now in the United States and -- but  
22 there's a lot of concern and issues, and I'd  
23 really like to thank you for you all coming  
24 back to the legislation to really listen to the  
25 Asian community to help us also serve our

1 community as the way it is.

2 So for the redistricting, we look -- we're  
3 looking at it, no matter how you draw the map,  
4 but we like as square as possible, it doesn't  
5 matter how you draw it, we are all over the  
6 whole Florida state. And then -- but we also  
7 really want to make sure that when you do the  
8 map, and also a lot of people have really  
9 expressed an interest that not too much  
10 divided, and that we should have one  
11 Representative to serve to voice the community.  
12 So in that way, just think about the Asian  
13 community also be here and then we work among  
14 the whole community, across the whole state.  
15 So we look forward that we are going to see a  
16 fair and then well-represented communities for  
17 redistricting to serve us. And just remember,  
18 2012, when you come back to the session,  
19 there's a lot of issues for the Asian community  
20 to really come forward to you, but hope that  
21 time you also listen to us as to really support  
22 our issue, which is the one issue I want to  
23 take this minute to say it, and not many people  
24 knows about it. There's alien land law, and  
25 state of Florida is the only state have this

1 old discriminating language in our state to  
2 really prohibit and the Asian to purchase and  
3 lease any property.

4 So we want your support in coming up with  
5 legislation to help us to remove that language  
6 off to the --

7 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank your,  
8 Ms. Tag.

9 MS. TANG: -- our state.

10 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Yes, ma'am,  
11 thank you very much. Thanks for your comments.

12 Next up we have Maria Barbaran with the  
13 Miami-Dade Florida College Democrats, and then  
14 Mark Gotz. Following Mark, we have Ana  
15 Navarro.

16 MS. BARBARAN: Hello, respectable Senators  
17 and Representatives. I am glad to see  
18 Representative Clarke-Reed and Representative  
19 Nuñez, I went over there in Tallahassee in  
20 around April to fight for women's health rally,  
21 nice to see you guys. Thank you for coming  
22 down here.

23 Basically, I am 23, I am a senior at FIU,  
24 I am a homeowner. I just bought my first house  
25 here at FIU, in front of FIU, and I am really

1 excited to be getting into this political  
2 realm, because this is insane. I think that we  
3 need more information out there for students,  
4 for people that don't speak English, to come  
5 over here in these meetings, because these are  
6 very great and informative.

7 Okay, so my point is, thanks for coming at  
8 FIU. As an FIU -- as a Florida voter, I would  
9 like to see Florida Legislature honor the wish  
10 of constituents who voted for Fair District  
11 standards. Sixty-three percent of Floridians  
12 expressed that they wanted fair districts, but  
13 the Legislature has spent well over a million  
14 dollars on taxpayer money to fight them. All  
15 this money has been spent while teachers are  
16 being fired, social services are being cut out,  
17 and not a single job has been created. The  
18 House and Senate have set aside upwards of \$30  
19 million to avoid the Fair District standards  
20 and promote the version of a redistricting  
21 plan.

22 The Legislature's timeline for drawing the  
23 districts is unfair to Florida voters. It  
24 makes no sense that the hearings that are being  
25 held now today around the state have been held

1 around the state, but there has been no maps  
2 provided for citizens to comment on. Citizens  
3 are completely left out of the process.

4 I am asking you today to honor the  
5 standards of Fair Districts that 63 percent of  
6 the Floridians voted for, finish the maps and  
7 stop wasting taxpayer money. Thank you, and  
8 listen, I want to commend the Mayor of  
9 Pinecrest. I know that it was so much of her  
10 bringing an extra map out, but, come on, you  
11 know, we need to get things going, like Rick  
12 Scott says, we need to get to work, and no  
13 matter what Representative -- Republicans or  
14 Democrats, who cares, let's make this happen.  
15 We can do it. I will do it, I will help you  
16 for free, I'm here.

17 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you  
18 very much.

19 Next up we have Mark Gotz. After Mark, we  
20 have Ana Navarro and then Alex Cruzet. Is Mark  
21 here? I don't see Mark, so we are going to put  
22 him to the side. I don't see Ana Navarro, she  
23 was here earlier, so we will put here to the  
24 side as well. Alex Cruzet? Sorry I didn't  
25 give you more heads-up there. We've got Alex,



1 and then we've got Dudley Philistin, and then  
2 after Dudley, we have Fran Cobo.

3 Alex is with the Democratic Party. Alex,  
4 thanks for being here, and you are recognized  
5 to speak, sir.

6 MR. CRUZET: Good evening, Senators and  
7 Representatives. I thank each and every one of  
8 you for making it out here. My name is Alex  
9 Cruzet. I am a member of the Democratic Party,  
10 and I was a candidate to the State House of  
11 Representatives in 2010 in District 113.

12 I think that what is going on today in  
13 Tallahassee is unbelievable, and I think that  
14 some of the people that are making these  
15 decisions really need to rethink what they are  
16 doing. The fact that \$30 million are being  
17 spent at a time when we have an employment  
18 problem in this state and no jobs are being  
19 created is shameful.

20 When I was in -- a candidate for House of  
21 Representatives and I took on an incumbent, it  
22 was hard, especially working at the Public  
23 Defender's office representing people of low  
24 income who are charged with sometimes absurd  
25 crimes. I think that before -- I think that

1 before you guys make a decision, you should  
2 really consider the interests of the state, and  
3 in the spirit of democracy, allow people who  
4 want to get involved in the democratic process,  
5 the time to even prepare, because if by August  
6 is when we are -- as new people who want to  
7 join the House of Representatives, okay, if by  
8 August is when we even have a chance to  
9 prepare, there's really no way that we can be  
10 ready to take on an incumbent.

11 So as a challenger and as somebody who  
12 wants to be involved in the democratic process,  
13 I urge you, if you truly believe in democracy  
14 to take that into consideration. Thank you.

15 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,  
16 Alex.

17 Next up, Dudley Philistin. Dudley? Does  
18 she? Okay, thank you very much, Representative  
19 Julien. Okay, having waived, Fran Cobo, is  
20 Frank here? Okay. Next up we have Jorge  
21 Navarro. Is Jorge here? All right, thank you,  
22 sir. Sorry we didn't give you more time there.  
23 After Jorge, we have Jenny Levin and then  
24 Thomas Lander.

25 Jorge, thanks for being here.

1           MR. NAVARRO: Thank you so much. Good  
2 evening, Senators, Representatives. My name is  
3 Jorge Navarro, and I just would like to say  
4 that what makes this county great is its  
5 diversity. Miami-Dade County is a melting pot  
6 of different Hispanic cultures.

7           I come from a Hispanic family that left  
8 Cuba because of a lack of political  
9 representation, so I know how important this  
10 process is.

11           I believe that we need to keep our  
12 districts compact in order to allow for  
13 additional Hispanic access to the Legislature.  
14 This is the only way that we can ensure that  
15 our cultural and our local interests are  
16 represented at the state level. And I thank  
17 you so much for all of your hard work.

18           REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,  
19 Jorge.

20           Next up we have Jenny -- I think it is  
21 Levin, I hope. I am not sure if I said that  
22 right, but after Jenny, we have Thomas Lander  
23 and then Janice Coakley.

24           Jenny, you are recognized.

25           MS. LEVIN: Good evening, my name is Jenny

1           Levin, and I want to thank each and every one  
2           of you for taking the time to come out here,  
3           but also to listen to our concerns.

4           Miami-Dade is very unique, and it is  
5           unique because of its diversity for Hispanics  
6           and different diversities alike. Miami-Dade  
7           has over 65 percent Hispanic, but yet less than  
8           50 percent are actually represented in both the  
9           House and the Senate.

10          My only concern is that if we do all this  
11          redistricting, we must make sure at all costs  
12          that Hispanics are represented in both the  
13          House and the Senate. Thank you.

14          REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

15          Next up, I skipped Ana Navarro, but I know  
16          she is here, so why don't we go to Ana first,  
17          and then we will come back to Thomas.

18          Ana, good to see you again. Thank you for  
19          being here, and the floor is yours.

20          MS. NAVARRO: Well, I love having you all  
21          here. I think it is good for our economy, so I  
22          think we need to have more of these hearings.  
23          And my friend Mario Diaz-Balart said he was  
24          going to be brief. I am actually going to be  
25          brief.

1           It is so very important for you all to  
2 recognize that Miami-Dade is unique. You all  
3 know it, we know it, it is no big secret.  
4 There's 67 counties. There's 66 counties and  
5 Miami-Dade.

6           I am here because I am from Nicaragua  
7 originally. I am a naturalized citizen, and  
8 when you are a naturalized citizen, voting,  
9 representation, means so much, particularly  
10 when, like so many of us here, you have had to  
11 leave your homeland because of lack of  
12 representation, because of oppression. So I  
13 commend you guys for taking this process so  
14 seriously. It is very important that we have  
15 adequate Hispanic and minority representation  
16 in Florida, especially for counties like  
17 Miami-Dade.

18           Miami-Dade is unique, so to the extent  
19 possible, if you can keep the districts within  
20 the counties. People in Broward will tell you  
21 that they think they need visas to come here,  
22 and some of us think we need visas to go there.  
23 We are different. It is different  
24 constituencies, different needs. So I urge you  
25 to take a look at keeping the districts as

1 compact as possible. And I think we need a new  
2 Senate seat in Miami-Dade. I would like you  
3 guys to consider that. And other than that, I  
4 am going to be brief.

5 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.  
6 You certainly beat the Congressman, there is no  
7 doubt about that. Thank you, Ana.

8 Next up --

9 MR. LANDER: I like Ana's juice.

10 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Next up we  
11 have Mr. Lander.

12 MR. LANDER: How are you doing? I am  
13 Thomas Lander.

14 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: One second,  
15 Mr. Lander. After Mr. Lander, we have Janice  
16 Coakley, and after that, we have Alejandro  
17 Almirola.

18 MR. LANDER: I am a teacher at Miami-Dade  
19 County Public Schools, a public servant, paid  
20 for by the taxpayers, and on behalf of all  
21 public servants, I want to apologize that we  
22 caused the economic downturn in America.

23 I am a history teacher. I am a great  
24 history teacher. I love teaching social  
25 studies. And I think of the words that we, the

1 people of the United States, in order to form a  
2 more perfect union, not an AFL-CIO, although I  
3 wish it was, but a union that is united, and so  
4 many times we are talking past each other when  
5 we create the districts that represent us. We  
6 have people today that are choosing the voters,  
7 rather than the voters choosing the candidates.  
8 We build our districts for political power of  
9 ideology that divides us and doesn't get us to  
10 discuss the important issues. And we are  
11 becoming more and more balkanized as a society,  
12 and we see it where we can't solve our  
13 problems. We voted for Fair Districts so that  
14 we can come together and reach consensus and  
15 not go to the opposite poles of our society.  
16 We have serious problems affecting Florida and  
17 this nation, and unless we bring the reds and  
18 blues together in the districts, we will not  
19 find solutions, but we will continue to raise  
20 the rancor, and that can bring terrible  
21 consequences to our country.

22 Please make these districts fair. Look  
23 back to our founding fathers to create a more  
24 perfect union. God bless you in your work.

25 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,

1 Mr. Lander.

2 Our next speaker is Janice Coakley.

3 Janice is followed by Alejandro and then Millie  
4 Herrera.

5 MS. COAKLEY: Good evening, Senators,  
6 Representatives and guests. Janice Coakley,  
7 President of AFSCME local 3293 and trustee on  
8 the AFL-CIO board.

9 A key traditional redistricting principle  
10 is respect for communities of interest. These  
11 are defined by three: One, the extent to which  
12 non-members identify members as a distant  
13 community; two, the extent to which members  
14 identify themselves as a distant community;  
15 three, and the extent to which members are  
16 similarly affected by government actions.

17 African-American citizens form one of the  
18 strongest communities of interest in the state,  
19 and the redistricting plan should have as  
20 priority the district that accord  
21 representation to communities of interest.

22 We are aware and request redistricting  
23 principle outlined in Section 20 and 21 of the  
24 Florida Constitution: "Districts shall not be  
25 drawn with the intent or result of denying or



1 abridging the equal opportunity of racial or  
2 language minorities to participate in the  
3 political process or the ability to elect  
4 representatives of their choice." In addition,  
5 districts should be compact and be fair to all.

6 Thank you.

7 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

8 Next up we have Alejandro Almirola,  
9 Alejandro? After Alejandro, we have Millie  
10 Herrera, followed by Robert Sarhack.

11 Thank you, Alejandro, you have the floor.

12 MR. ALMIROLA: Hello, my name is Alejandro  
13 Almirola, and I just wanted to state my huge  
14 disappointment with the Legislature wasting  
15 millions of dollars fighting its people. Why  
16 don't you just put a sign up that says, "Screw  
17 the people over"? That is what you have been  
18 doing, and I feel very disappointed with your  
19 actions.

20 And I really hope that the districts are  
21 drawn fair, because I would hate for the state  
22 to waste millions of dollars to defend against  
23 a lawsuit by the ACLU or any -- or citizens  
24 because the lines aren't drawn fairly, and it  
25 should be very shameful for all -- for all

1 those who are supporting that lawsuit, who are  
2 supporting the Governor from not getting it  
3 cleared from you trying -- the Legislature  
4 trying to fight it. It just -- why are you  
5 trying to fight it? I would hope for a good  
6 explanation and a refund check in the mail for  
7 all that waste of money and time for such a  
8 stupid thing.

9 So I hope -- and I am very disappointed  
10 with also on -- tagging along with that with  
11 the recent Voter Suppression Act. So what is  
12 the signal you are sending? You are sending a  
13 signal of we are going to trick our voters, and  
14 we don't -- and we're going to say no to the  
15 voters that don't agree with us. I think you  
16 want a dictatorship, not a democracy. So it is  
17 a huge insult for us.

18 So Representatives and Senators who  
19 support these lawsuits, they should do us all a  
20 favor and resign from office, because they have  
21 done a huge disservice to this office.

22 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Sir, I will  
23 allow you to speak, but I will just ask this:  
24 The committee is being very respectful to  
25 listen to you. I would only ask that you be

1 respectful to the Committee who's listening.

2 MR. ALMIROLA: Be respectful to the  
3 people. Don't waste our money. I would agree,  
4 yes, don't waste our money either. I would  
5 really hope you don't waste our money anymore,  
6 and I really want the refund and an explanation  
7 of why you have to waste our money. Thank you.

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.  
9 Thank you very much.

10 Next up we have Millie Herrera, followed  
11 by Robert Sarhack.

12 MS. HERERRA: Good evening to everyone.  
13 My name is Millie Herrera. I am a Cuban-born  
14 Hispanic, proud to be a U.S. citizen since 1975  
15 and a resident of Kendall for the past 24  
16 years. Thank you very much for the opportunity  
17 to express my thoughts on the redistricting  
18 process.

19 I am here as a member and representing  
20 LULAC Florida, the oldest Hispanic civil rights  
21 organization in the United States.

22 We want to urge you to adopt a timeline  
23 for redistricting that ensures an early final  
24 approval of the new maps and districts in  
25 January of 2012. This will allow county

1 Supervisors of Elections to properly prepare  
2 for the municipal, primary and general  
3 elections, and inform the public of new  
4 districts and voting places. It will prevent  
5 much of the voter confusion that ensued in 2002  
6 when the process took us down to only weeks  
7 before the August election.

8 Excuse me, my voice, I have a cold.

9 We suggest finalizing the proposed  
10 redistricting plans by October the 3rd,  
11 complete all Committee reviews of the maps in  
12 December of 2011, and require that amendments  
13 are filed with sufficient notice so that  
14 citizens can review, testify before any  
15 Committee before they vote, and vote on the  
16 final plans no later than the first week of  
17 session in January 2012. This timeline is  
18 going to allow the U.S. Justice Department  
19 plenty of time to review and approve Florida's  
20 redistricting plans and certify compliance with  
21 the 1965 Voting Rights Act.

22 We also ask that you keep to the letter of  
23 the Amendments 5 and 6, and where feasible,  
24 follow the existing city, county and  
25 geographical boundaries, not gerrymander across

1 the counties, nor across communities with  
2 little in common with each other.

3 You must also please resist the urge to  
4 sequester minority voters into only a few  
5 districts in order to protect incumbents and  
6 the continued majority of one party over  
7 another.

8 Miami-Dade County is a very diverse  
9 county, as diverse as can be. We have  
10 65 percent Hispanics. Over 49 percent of  
11 Miami-Dade residents were born in a foreign  
12 country. This is why it is important to have  
13 this information early, so that everybody gets  
14 access in their own language to where they are  
15 going to be voting.

16 I also ask that you keep in mind that over  
17 19 Latin American countries are represented,  
18 now less than 40 -- 50 percent of Cuban decent  
19 and the majority from Columbia, Nicaragua,  
20 Honduras, Venezuela, Peru, Mexico, Dominican  
21 Republic, Puerto Rico and the rest of south and  
22 Central American countries. It is very  
23 important to -- that this fact be kept in mind  
24 when districts are drawn so that we also create  
25 opportunities for all these other populations

1 to elect representatives of their choice, and  
2 more than one group is represented in our  
3 elected leadership.

4 Lastly, I urge you to please require  
5 Governor Rick Scott to reintroduce Amendments 5  
6 and 6 to the U.S. Justice Department for  
7 approval as required under the Voting Rights  
8 Act of 1965. The people of Florida spoke  
9 loudly and clearly. Sixty-three percent of us  
10 voted for these reforms to the Florida  
11 Constitution, and it is your -- it is your  
12 obligation to please keep the letter of the law  
13 and draw districts fairly following the new  
14 dictates of the law, without partisan or  
15 incumbency considerations, in a timely manner  
16 to ensure that we have smooth elections in  
17 2012. Thank you very much.

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

19 Last we have Robert Sarhack. While Robert  
20 is coming up, there's a couple of people we  
21 skipped. Frank Pena earlier, I don't know,  
22 Frank, if you ever came back, but if you are  
23 here, we would love to get to you. Milagro  
24 Ruiz, Mark Gotz or Frank Cobo, if any of you  
25 are here, please step forward. If not, you are

1 recognized, sir, and don't worry, we saved the  
2 best for last. So, Robert, please wow us with  
3 your words, sir.

4 MR. SARHACK: I don't about that, I have  
5 nothing prepared, but I would like to say thank  
6 you for coming out. I hope you are listening.  
7 I am a little disappointed that more people  
8 haven't come out. It may be indicative of how  
9 disenfranchised people are feeling about this,  
10 that maybe you aren't going to listen. This is  
11 the first time I have done this, but I am  
12 hoping that you all listen to what the people  
13 are requesting.

14 Compact districts. When I went on the  
15 website the other night and I looked at the  
16 districts, I thought my monitor had gone whack.  
17 I could not believe the way some of the  
18 districts were set up. It's like who is doing  
19 this? What drugs are they taking? It  
20 shouldn't be hard. Compact districts is all it  
21 takes. And it is really indicative of how  
22 disenfranchised people are feeling when they  
23 don't come out to this forum to -- for all you  
24 all to listen to us. And I just hope you  
25 listen and appreciate to get the people

1 involved again, give us districts that work.

2 Thank you.

3 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

4 Okay. We are told that we missed someone  
5 that is back in the room, Dudley Philistin.  
6 Dudley? You don't have to, but if you want to,  
7 we will wait for you. You are last, this is  
8 it. All right. One point for democracy.

9 After Ms. Dudley, I will go ahead and --  
10 we're going to -- for those of you who had  
11 comments or questions that maybe were seeking  
12 clarification, if you will stick around for a  
13 moment, Senator Gaetz will spend some time  
14 after we allow other members for comment to  
15 maybe try to answer some of those questions for  
16 everyone.

17 So with that, Ms. Dudley, thank you for  
18 being here, and you are recognized.

19 MS. PHILISTIN: Hello. My name is Dudley  
20 Philistin. I would like to say that this is my  
21 first time, and I have never been introduced to  
22 this until today. I would like to thank you  
23 guys for coming to hear our concerns, and as a  
24 college student, I am here to represent the  
25 immigrant students. And on the behalf of the



1 Haitian community, I am asking how will the re-  
2 --

3 A VOICE: Redistricting.

4 MS. PHILISTIN: Yes -- benefit us as  
5 Haitians who are trying to better our lives,  
6 and will it bring healthcare to the seniors,  
7 will it bring better opportunities and will it  
8 bring more funds to us as different  
9 communities. That's it.

10 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.  
11 You did a great job, Ms. Dudley. Great job.

12 Okay. We have one more who showed up just  
13 now who wants to speak, Ralph Rosado. Ralph?  
14 You are last, my friend, but they say that the  
15 last will be first and the first will be last,  
16 so feel free to come up and give us your  
17 thoughts. Thanks for being here.

18 MR. ROSADO: Thank you. Yes, I am Ralph  
19 Rosado, private citizen. I want to tell you a  
20 quick story about something that happened to me  
21 last week which had never happened to me  
22 before. I went to Chicago for an academic  
23 conference. Usually when I fly, I like to  
24 travel comfortably, sneakers, jeans, flannel  
25 shirt. I showed up at the building where I

1 would be making a presentation. This was a  
2 doctoral conference. I am walking around, I'm  
3 just -- you know, I am thinking, it is Chicago,  
4 I want to sightsee. I see two gentlemen in  
5 uniforms walk by me.

6 I see Gonzalez and Guzman. They asked me,  
7 limpia la oficina?" "Did you clean the  
8 offices?" So in Miami, I am a businessman, I  
9 am a professional. In Chicago, perhaps in  
10 L.A., in New York, in a number of cities, I am  
11 probably the janitor.

12 Miami, Miami-Dade, Florida, we are light  
13 years ahead of a lot of those places, and we  
14 need to make sure that we maintain that  
15 standing. So I would urge you, in a county  
16 that is two-thirds Hispanic, we not lose any  
17 Hispanic representation. In our Senate, which  
18 I know has done in many ways a wonderful job,  
19 we are represented by fewer than a 50 percent  
20 Hispanic delegation. In the State House,  
21 certainly we are always at risk of losing that.  
22 I urge you, if we are going to be the Hispanic  
23 leaders of the country, we not lose that  
24 representation at our state level ever. So  
25 thank you very much.

1           REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,  
2           Ralph.

3           Okay. I think what we are going to do at  
4           this time, historically what we have done at  
5           this time is we have allowed members on the  
6           Committee, if they have any comments or  
7           questions or suggestions or would like to offer  
8           any suggestions, this is the time to do it. So  
9           if there are any members here, we will pass the  
10          mike around.

11          Senator Rich, would you like to start us  
12          off?

13          SENATOR RICH: Thank you. I wanted to  
14          make a comment tonight about the issue of the  
15          lawsuit. Many, many people at these hearings  
16          have expressed their disapproval that the House  
17          has gone to court to have Amendment 6 thrown  
18          out, despite the fact that 63 percent of the  
19          people voted in favor of the Fair Districts  
20          standards. And some of my colleagues, this  
21          morning in particular, responded that they were  
22          not trying to have the amendment invalidated,  
23          that they were only seeking clarification, and  
24          now --

25          REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Senator --

1           now, I know that we live -- I know that people  
2           accuse us of partisan politics, but I swear  
3           that was not part of it. Senator, we are very  
4           sorry about that, but it woke everybody up for  
5           those who may have been sleeping. So please  
6           continue.

7                    SENATOR RICH: So now in the last few  
8           days, we have heard a number of Legislators say  
9           that they felt that it was the duty of the  
10          House to uphold both of the Florida and the  
11          Federal Constitutions, and that Amendment 6  
12          might create some conflict between the two.

13                    Actually, I checked this out today, the  
14          court papers filed on behalf of the House do  
15          not ask for clarification, nor do they ask for  
16          the court to resolve any conflict. The court  
17          papers specifically ask the court to hold  
18          Amendment 6 unconstitutional so that, in  
19          reality, the people who have been saying that  
20          taxpayer money is being spent to invalidate the  
21          amendment are actually correct.

22                    I also would just like to say, and I think  
23          it is important for the people who came here,  
24          and I very much, all of us, appreciate our  
25          constituents and voters coming here to share

1           their points of view, it is extremely  
2           important, but I do want to say that all of us  
3           are not of the same mind here. Your concerns,  
4           especially about the timeline, have been voiced  
5           not only by voters, constituents, but by  
6           Supervisors of Elections across the state,  
7           particularly in the large counties, and they  
8           have indicated that it would be -- they would  
9           be unable to prepare for the elections on this  
10          timeline. So I have spoken at several of these  
11          meetings and asked that our Chairs take a look  
12          at this and listen to the voters and to the  
13          people across this state who would like this to  
14          be done, the timeline to be accelerated to some  
15          degree, so that we can make sure that we have a  
16          good and effective process in place so that we  
17          can have an election of which we can all be  
18          proud.

19                 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,  
20                 Senator Rich. That is right, it is bipartisan  
21                 now, it's happened to both sides. Good point.

22                 Okay. I don't see -- are there any other  
23                 members who wish to speak? I didn't see  
24                 anybody else raise their hand. Okay, yes,  
25                 Representative Steinberg, you are recognized,

1           sir, if we can get him a microphone.

2           REPRESENTATIVE STEINBERG: Thank you,  
3           Mr. Chair. I sat through the meeting earlier  
4           today and this, and I think that what we heard  
5           in Miami-Dade is consistent with what was voted  
6           on here. And while we heard that 63 percent of  
7           Floridians voted for 5 and 6, the reality is,  
8           in Dade County, it was even higher.  
9           Sixty-seven percent of the voters here in Dade  
10          County supported 5 and 6. And so we heard  
11          overwhelmingly, and what I took out of these  
12          meetings was a call on us to respect the  
13          language and the intent of 5 and 6, not to try  
14          to find ways to circumvent it, overturn it, get  
15          around it, but to respect the will of those of  
16          us that elect here, especially those in the  
17          Dade delegation, and support 5 and 6 and make  
18          sure that the maps that we come up with are  
19          consistent with 5 and 6.

20          So I will hold that to heart and hope that  
21          all the members here do so as well, and that  
22          the maps that we do comply with 5 and 6, not  
23          only to the letter, but to the intent of 5 and  
24          6 and create the fair districts that Floridians  
25          have demanded.

1           REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,  
2 Representative.

3           Okay. Anybody else wish to speak? Alex,  
4 do you see anybody else with their hand raised?

5           Okay. We are going to turn it over to our  
6 Senator, or my co-Chair, Senator Gaetz, to try  
7 to leave us with a few comments and maybe some  
8 clarification and some data points to make sure  
9 we all walk out of here with the same facts,  
10 and, again, want to thank everyone for being  
11 here, and Senator Gaetz, you are recognized to  
12 finish us off here.

13           SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, and  
14 I want to associate myself with Representative  
15 Steinberg's comments. Each of us has taken an  
16 oath when we are sworn into the Senate or the  
17 House to preserve, protect and defend the  
18 Constitution of the United States and of the  
19 State of Florida, and I believe that every  
20 single one of us, whether we are House members  
21 or Senators, regardless of political persuasion  
22 or where we come from in the state, intend to  
23 fulfill that oath, and intend to fulfill it  
24 with respect to all the provisions of the  
25 Florida and United States Constitution. So

1 Representative Steinberg's comments were  
2 comments that I think that we could all  
3 associate ourselves with.

4 One of the interesting things that I have  
5 observed tonight, and I have taken my usual  
6 large set of notes, is that while almost  
7 everybody, not everybody, but almost everybody  
8 said that 5 and 6 ought to be implemented -- in  
9 fact, there's one individual who said it ought  
10 to be followed exactly as it was prescribed --  
11 that there were a number of differences as to  
12 what the meanings of various words were and  
13 various concepts. For example, we heard a lot  
14 of testimony today in the earlier hearing and  
15 tonight about ensuring that districts be drawn  
16 in order to preserve certain racial or ethnic  
17 groups, making sure that there is no  
18 retrogression, and, in fact, even a call for  
19 additional districts for Hispanics, which is  
20 certainly a legitimate point of view. But, on  
21 the other hand, there were those who said, you  
22 know, really what you need to do is pay  
23 attention to the literal words of 5 and 6,  
24 which talk about, for example, compactness.

25 The interesting point here is that there



1           could be, in many people's minds, some tension  
2           between these two values. So I believe that  
3           Representative Steinberg's words could be  
4           associated with all of us, but at the same  
5           time, that one of the great values of these  
6           hearings is to hear your view about how you  
7           think these values that some people believe  
8           might be in conflict, that some people believe  
9           might have some tension between them, could  
10          actually be applied in a fair and equitable  
11          fashion.

12                 Mr. Chairman, let me go down some of the  
13           other questions that were asked. There was a  
14           question asked, "Why was the geospacial  
15           analysis deleted from the House website?" To  
16           clarify, there was never such a tool in the My  
17           District Builder House website; therefore, it  
18           was never removed. Unfortunately, there is  
19           some confusion because there was an opinion  
20           column that was published in *The Sun Sentinel*,  
21           and later *The Sentinel* ran a correction because  
22           the information was inaccurate. The author of  
23           the opinion column, unfortunately, confused My  
24           District Builder with a private vendor's  
25           application, and that application had a similar

1 name. So it was a case of mistaken identity,  
2 and the notion that there was a spacial feature  
3 that was deleted from the House website or the  
4 House computer program was simply not true, and  
5 *The Sun Sentinel* has printed a retraction, but  
6 once you get something in the bloodstream,  
7 sometimes it stays there, and so I think that  
8 is important for us to know. And I appreciate  
9 the question being asked so it could be  
10 clarified.

11 A number of folks talked about the  
12 timeline, and our Democratic Leader, Senator  
13 Rich, eloquently spoke of the timeline. Let me  
14 mention a couple of facts that have to do with  
15 the timeline, and then indicate how Chairman  
16 Weatherford and I plan to go forward.

17 First, it is true that Florida is among  
18 the last states to complete its redistricting.  
19 But part of the reason for that is because  
20 Florida was not the last state, but was one of  
21 the last states to receive the census  
22 information from the Bureau of the Census, the  
23 demographic information that by law we must  
24 rely upon. That shows the movement of  
25 populations back and forth, and the character

1 and description of those populations. As soon  
2 as we received the census information, we put  
3 it on the website and began to use it, but we  
4 were in -- not the last state, but one of the  
5 last states to receive it.

6 Secondly, it is true, and a couple of  
7 people mentioned it, that there were some  
8 states that got their job done earlier.  
9 Illinois, I think, was mentioned. Well, the  
10 fact is that Illinois is a one-party state, and  
11 the Legislature there, I think it is fair to  
12 say, went into the proverbial back room, came  
13 out with a take-it-or-leave-it set of maps, did  
14 a fairly quick vote, a snap vote in the  
15 Legislature, it was over and they went home.  
16 Now, that is one way to do it, but our  
17 presiding officers chose to do it very  
18 differently, and their direction to us was that  
19 even though this is maybe sometimes a difficult  
20 or even contentious process, that we needed to  
21 make sure that we heard people's opinions and  
22 their input before we went forward.

23 The -- another individual mentioned, in  
24 listing states that had gone before Florida,  
25 Louisiana. Well, the reason Louisiana got its

1           job done earlier is because it holds its  
2           elections on odd years, not even years, so it  
3           is required by law to get its redistricting  
4           done sooner, and it's provided the information  
5           by the Census Bureau to do so.

6           Florida did accelerate the process. As we  
7           indicated at the beginning of the hearing, and  
8           I know some of you were not here, typically the  
9           Legislature goes into session in January -- or,  
10          rather, in March. We moved up the session to  
11          January, the Legislature voted, Republicans and  
12          Democrats, to move the session up to January so  
13          that we could begin voting as soon as we  
14          constitutionally could. And then, in order to  
15          begin discussing -- producing and discussing  
16          and debating maps earlier, we moved up  
17          Committee meetings from when they would usually  
18          begin in December to September. And Leader  
19          Rich has asked that we take this matter up as  
20          quickly as possible, and I have given her my  
21          commitment that at the very first meeting of  
22          the Senate Reapportionment Committee in  
23          September, the second item on the agenda after  
24          the call to order will be a discussion of  
25          Senator Rich's proposed maps, and we will

1           invite any member of the Legislature,  
2           Republican or Democrat, to bring their maps  
3           that day.

4                     Sometimes there is a confusion and people  
5           think that there's going to be a set of maps.  
6           The fact is that there will be multiple sets of  
7           maps that will be debated and discussed. They  
8           can be produced today by any member of the  
9           Legislature, and we will call for those maps on  
10          the very first day that we have the first  
11          legally-allowed committee meeting.

12                    Then, Mr. Chairman, there was a question  
13          about using city and county boundaries, but yet  
14          somebody else testified, quote, "It is  
15          difficult, if not impossible, to draw districts  
16          around the boundaries of 40 municipalities in  
17          south Florida." There is a city to the north  
18          of Miami-Dade County that has three  
19          non-contiguous areas in its city; in other  
20          words, the person who testified earlier about  
21          this said that the city boundaries were sort of  
22          like throwing some mud against the wall, and  
23          part of it is over here, part of it is here and  
24          part of it is here, the city is actually in  
25          three different non-contiguous places. So you

1 can't always use city boundaries, and that,  
2 again, indicates the potential tension there  
3 may be between a literal interpretation of  
4 Amendments 5 and 6, and a practical application  
5 of it, and it is why it is so important to get  
6 the information we have gotten from these  
7 hearings. And there are some city boundaries,  
8 if you look at them, that look like Rorschach  
9 tests, the city boundaries are splattered, and  
10 they're certainly not perfect squares or  
11 perfect rectangles, to get to you, the social  
12 studies teacher.

13 And then there was a comment made that if  
14 someone wanted to run, how could they get  
15 petitions? That was a really good question,  
16 how could you get petitions. Well, I happen to  
17 be a candidate for the Senate in District 4,  
18 and the way that the law works is that in a  
19 redistricting year, when district lines haven't  
20 been drawn, that petitions -- you simply sign  
21 up with your address as it is now, and you can  
22 get petitions from any registered voter in  
23 Florida. So it is really easy. If you want to  
24 run for office in a redistricting year, it is  
25 actually easier to be a challenger and get

1           petitions signed than in any other year,  
2           because you can get any registered Florida  
3           voter to sign the petition. So we are glad to  
4           provide that information.

5           Then, Mr. Chairman, a member of the public  
6           said tonight that the league asks that  
7           Legislators file redistricting plans by early  
8           October. Let me emphasize again, it is not  
9           going to be a plan. There will be multiple  
10          plans that will be advanced by Legislators who  
11          don't necessarily agree with each other. We'd  
12          all have one opinion. Even within the  
13          Democratic caucus and within the Republican  
14          caucus, there are differences of opinions. So  
15          let me emphasize, any Democratic member of this  
16          Committee, any Republican member of this  
17          Committee, can submit a map today, they can  
18          file a map today. There is not a requirement  
19          that you wait till September or wait till  
20          October, as the league has suggested, it can be  
21          filed today.

22          And then, Mr. Chairman, there were several  
23          individuals who said that many current  
24          districts are drawn oddly, improperly and with  
25          all kinds of odd geometry. A point that I

1 think is important to make is that nearly all  
2 of us who are here -- not all of us, but nearly  
3 all of us are representing districts whose  
4 boundaries we didn't draw. I -- I am a Senator  
5 from the Fourth Senate District, and the Fourth  
6 Senate District wasn't drawn by me, it was  
7 drawn by people who were in the Legislature in  
8 2002, and I wasn't in the Legislature in 2002.  
9 So I am living with the consequences of  
10 somebody else's decision, and most of us are.  
11 So there is no pride of authorship. We are in  
12 it with you. We would like to see many of the  
13 oddities associated with these districts  
14 resolved.

15 I will tell you personally, I live in what  
16 is called a rattail of a Congressional  
17 District. We are in a rattail at the end of a  
18 Congressional District that really has its  
19 center of gravity a long, long way away. And  
20 there are a lot of us who will associate with  
21 the belief that we ought to, as much as  
22 possible, try to deal with those oddities.

23 And then, Mr. Chairman, there were  
24 individuals who used the term "communities of  
25 interest," and one -- one testifier tonight



1           said that a community of interest is more  
2           practical than county lines. Well,  
3           "communities of interest," that is a good term,  
4           it is a useful term, but Representative  
5           Weatherford and I and others actually tried to  
6           get that term included in the amendments to the  
7           Constitution so that it could be used as a  
8           criterion, but the Supreme Court said no. So  
9           "communities of interest" is not a term that is  
10          in the Constitution, it is not in Amendments 5  
11          and 6, and, therefore, there again could be an  
12          apparent tension between those who very  
13          eloquently discussed using "communities of  
14          interest" as a way to define a district, and  
15          those who want a literal interpretation of  
16          Amendments 5 and 6.

17                 We had a very eloquent young man, a social  
18          studies teacher, who said that it is easy,  
19          because you just make districts look like  
20          rectangles, and he volunteered his seventh  
21          grade class to do that. I note that he  
22          disagreed with another social studies teacher,  
23          I guess social studies teachers don't always  
24          see it that way, but I would encourage you to  
25          check with the geography teachers. They will

1 tell you Florida is not a rectangle. So I have  
2 a deal for you. One of the great things that  
3 we have had in the Legislature over past years  
4 is students proposing legislation that gets  
5 seriously considered and even passed. Here is  
6 my offer: If -- and it's got to be student  
7 work now. If it is student work, if you can  
8 get your class to draw all the Congressional  
9 Districts, all the Senate districts and all the  
10 House districts to comply with all federal and  
11 state laws and court cases, including no  
12 retrogression of minorities, and all of them  
13 are perfect rectangles, I will personally pay  
14 for the bus to bring you and your class to  
15 Tallahassee and we will have you testify before  
16 the committee. How about that? Will you do  
17 that? Will you take me up on that? I hope you  
18 will.

19 Then one testifier said tonight that he  
20 didn't see everybody writing and taking notes.  
21 I take notes because I am an old newspaper  
22 reporter, and I just -- you know, I do that.  
23 But I would want you to know that all of the  
24 members here are furnished with transcripts and  
25 have access to video transcripts, as well as

1 written transcripts, of every one of these  
2 hearings. So oftentimes you will have  
3 Legislators who will study the transcripts  
4 later. I plan to do that. Others take notes.  
5 It just depends on your personal preference.  
6 But, believe me, everybody was listening and  
7 paying attention to your views.

8 Then a testifier suggested that there was  
9 a fear that the State Legislature would, by  
10 itself -- and these are his words -- "ram the  
11 maps down our throats without public  
12 testimony." Well, here are a couple of facts:  
13 First, no vote, no vote, even in Committee,  
14 will be taken without public testimony being  
15 taken first, no vote. Secondly, the  
16 Legislature doesn't have the final word. Even  
17 if we wanted to ram something down somebody  
18 somewhere, we couldn't do it, because the  
19 judicial review that is called for in the law  
20 and the Constitution means that whatever we  
21 come up with has to go to the Supreme Court of  
22 Florida and it has to go to federal judicial  
23 review. And already there have been  
24 individuals who are members of various public  
25 interest groups and personal special interest

1 groups who have indicated that they are  
2 threatening lawsuits even before the first map  
3 is presented by Senator Rich or whoever will  
4 present the first map. So I guarantee you,  
5 there won't be any ramming of anything.  
6 Instead, I think there will probably be a good  
7 year for lawyers.

8 Then, Mr. Chairman, an individual said,  
9 and I think with great sincerity, that you  
10 ought to forget where your districts are when  
11 you do this. I probably can't forget the five  
12 counties that I represent and the communities I  
13 represent. It is probably impossible to forget  
14 them. But let me tell you what Speaker  
15 Weatherford has said to the House of  
16 Representatives and to his staff. He has  
17 instructed them that he doesn't even want to  
18 know where incumbents live, so that when  
19 districts are drawn, they will be drawn without  
20 reference to even where incumbents live, let  
21 alone their preference.

22 And secondly, let me tell you what I have  
23 said as Chairman of the Senate Committee to our  
24 professional staff. I want any maps that are  
25 presented to the Senate Reapportionment

1           Committee to have no partisan data in them, so  
2           that the maps would not be able to be looked at  
3           by our Committee with people being able to say,  
4           "Well, here's how many Republicans there are  
5           here, and here's how many Democrats." So while  
6           we can't forget the people and the communities  
7           we represent, I think there is a real intent  
8           here to try to be fair and to be as unbiased as  
9           possible.

10                       Finally, Mr. Chairman, let me comment on  
11           the comments of the ACLU. First, there was an  
12           ACLU representative who said that certainly  
13           hope that the 5 and 6 would be pre-cleared and  
14           that we could get Governor Scott to submit them  
15           for pre-clearance.

16                       Here are the facts: The House and the  
17           Senate have submitted 5 and 6 for pre-clearance  
18           to the Justice Department, and our request that  
19           they be pre-cleared was honored, and they have  
20           been pre-cleared.

21                       And the ACLU Representative said that in  
22           her view, 5 and 6 do not conflict with minority  
23           rights. We agree, and we hope that that turns  
24           out to be the case. We requested  
25           pre-clearance, and we believe that 5 and 6

1           could strengthen the Voting Rights Act. We  
2           don't believe that there has to be a conflict,  
3           even though you have heard a lot of testimony  
4           today, and we have in all of these hearings,  
5           suggesting that, in some people's minds, there  
6           could well be tension.

7                        But then, finally, Mr. Chairman, there was  
8           an ACLU member who spoke -- let us see -- and  
9           said that, sadly, she could only speak in  
10          generalities and platitudes, and suggested that  
11          these hearings could only be about generalities  
12          and platitudes. Boy, I hope she was here to  
13          hear the Mayor of Pinecrest. I hope she was  
14          here to hear the representatives of the city  
15          governments of Kendall, the gentleman from  
16          Cutler Bay, the representatives from Miami  
17          Lakes and Miami Shores and El Portal and the  
18          other communities who spoke in tonight's  
19          hearing and this afternoon's hearings, because  
20          they didn't speak in platitudes and  
21          generalities. We have heard literally hundreds  
22          of people in these hearings who have talked  
23          about their neighborhoods and their communities  
24          and how current lines may be bisecting or  
25          trisecting those neighborhoods and need to be

1 fixed. We've gotten all kinds of specific,  
2 very specific data, that we never could have  
3 gotten in an echo chamber in Tallahassee, only  
4 could have gotten on the ground by listening to  
5 people who live in those communities and  
6 neighborhoods.

7 And I'm sorry that there might be some who  
8 believe that there is no value in proposals and  
9 maps submitted by grass roots organizations and  
10 by individuals and by special interest groups.  
11 We think there is. There are 21 maps that have  
12 been submitted, and, frankly, I believe that  
13 there's some real value in some of them. And I  
14 haven't drawn a map myself yet, don't plan to  
15 until I hear all the public testimony, but I  
16 can already tell you that there are some things  
17 about the maps we have received that I hope  
18 will be in the options that are presented to  
19 the House and the Senate Redistricting  
20 Committees.

21 The 31 -- the 21 -- actually, 31 maps are  
22 real maps, and they were developed by real  
23 people who were really sincere, and I would  
24 hope we would not denigrate their efforts by  
25 saying it was only generalities and platitudes.

1           These are people who take the process  
2           seriously.

3                   And, finally, Mr. Chairman, let me just  
4           say that we have learned an extraordinary  
5           amount about Miami-Dade County. I lived here  
6           for ten years, and I thought I knew something  
7           about this community. I can tell you that I  
8           learned a whole lot about what's happened since  
9           I left, and I am delighted that we were here, I  
10          think we have all gained a great deal and we  
11          thank everyone who has contributed value to  
12          these hearings.

13                   REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,  
14          and I think this has been mentioned before, but  
15          our great distinguished Senator who just spoke  
16          is also from Niceville, Florida. So thank you,  
17          Senator, for that very much.

18                   And I think everybody recognizes that we  
19          do take your comments seriously, we appreciate  
20          you being here this evening and we hope you  
21          continue to follow the process on our websites  
22          that you have on the brochure. And with that,  
23          Senator Gaetz moves that we rise.

24                   (Whereupon, the proceedings were  
25          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 152 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 10th day of November, 2011.

\_\_\_\_\_

CLARA C. ROTRUCK

Notary Public

State of Florida at Large

Commission Expires:

November 13, 2014