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REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE

MONDAY, AUGUST 29, 2011

4:00 P.M.

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY COMMISSION

TAMPA, 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 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you all. The Joint
3 Senate/House Redistricting Hearing is called to
4 order. We are pleased to be joined today by a
5 number of members of the House of
6 Representatives and the Senate who serve on the
7 House Redistricting Committee and the Senate
8 Reapportionment Committee, and in a moment, I
9 will ask them to briefly give their name and
10 the part of the state that they represent so
11 that you will know who you are speaking to.

12 We want to thank Hillsborough County
13 Public Schools and particularly Jefferson High
14 School.

15 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Florida state
16 champs.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Yes, the last year
18 state -- state high school football champions.
19 And Speaker Weatherford just told me they beat
20 his brother's team, so you all can take great
21 pride in that.

22 We want to thank the Hillsborough County
23 Public Schools and Jefferson High School for
24 allowing us to be here today and to use their
25 facility.

1 Thank you all for coming here, especially
2 those of you who have come to share your
3 comments and your recommendations to help shape
4 congressional, Senate and House districts for
5 the next decade.

6 My name is Don Gaetz. I am a State
7 Senator. I represent northwest Florida's Gulf
8 Coast from Pensacola to Panama City, and along
9 with my colleague to my left, State
10 Representative Will Weatherford, who is the
11 Speaker Designate of the Florida House of
12 Representatives, I will be chairing today's
13 meeting, which is being webcast statewide by
14 the Florida Channel over the Internet.

15 And let's now go, if we can, to each
16 member and ask them to indicate their name and
17 indicate what part of the state they represent.
18 Why don't we begin with Senator Joyner.

19 SENATOR JOYNER: Thank you, Senator Gaetz.
20 My name is Arthenia Joyner, I am State Senator,
21 District 18, encompassing portions of
22 Hillsborough, Pinellas and Manatee Counties.

23 SENATOR LATVALA: Hi, I am Jack Latvala.
24 I represent Senate District 16, which is
25 Hillsborough and Pinellas.

1 REPRESENTATIVE BURGIN: Hello, I am State
2 Representative Rachel Burgin, representing the
3 City of Tampa and eastern Hillsborough County,
4 District 56.

5 SENATOR NORMAN: I am Senator Jim Norman,
6 I represent north Hillsborough County and about
7 two-thirds of Pasco County in Senate District
8 12.

9 SENATOR DETERT: Good afternoon. I am
10 Nancy Detert, State Senate District 23. I
11 represent a portion of Manatee, 70 percent of
12 Sarasota County and about 25 percent of
13 Charlotte County.

14 SENATOR STORMS: She is just trying to
15 impress you with math.

16 I am Senator Ronda Storms, and I represent
17 eastern Hillsborough County, I represent a
18 little bit of Polk County and a little bit of
19 Pasco County, Zephyrhills, and if you know
20 where Publix is in Polk County, Wabash, around
21 that area, a little bit around there, and then
22 most of eastern Hillsborough County.

23 SENATOR NEGRON: Joe Negron, I represent
24 the Treasure Coast on the east side of Florida,
25 Martin, St. Lucie, and Palm Beach Counties,

1 also a little bit of Okeechobee as well.

2 REPRESENTATIVE McKEEL: I am Seth McKeel.
3 I represent parts of Polk and Hillsborough
4 Counties. I am not on the redistricting
5 committee, but I Chair the Hillsborough
6 delegation and certainly am interested in the
7 conversation. Thank you.

8 REPRESENTATIVE ALBRITTON: Hi, my name is
9 Ben Albritton. I represent in the Florida
10 House southern Polk, all of Hardee County and
11 northwestern Highlands.

12 REPRESENTATIVE STARGEL: I am
13 Representative Kelli Stargel, I represent north
14 Polk County.

15 REPRESENTATIVE TAYLOR: Good afternoon, my
16 name is Dwayne Taylor. I serve in the House of
17 Representatives, House District 27, and that is
18 the other end of I-4 in Volusia County.

19 REPRESENTATIVE JULIEN: Good afternoon,
20 John Patrick Julien representing House District
21 104, which is in Miami-Dade County, encompasses
22 North Miami Beach, North Miami, Miami Gardens,
23 Opa-Locka, City of Miami, Hialeah and
24 unincorporated Miami-Dade. It is a pleasure to
25 be here.

1 REPRESENTATIVE BAXLEY: Thank you. I am
2 Dennis Baxley, serving the Florida House from
3 Ocala and Marion County, thank you.

4 REPRESENTATIVE HORNER: Mike Horner,
5 representing District 79 in central Florida.

6 REPRESENTATIVE ADKINS: Hi, I am Janet
7 Adkins, representing House District 12, which
8 is Nassau, Baker, Bradford, Clay, Union and
9 Duval Counties.

10 REPRESENTATIVE BERNARD: Mack Bernard,
11 State Representative, District 84, West Palm
12 Beach, Florida.

13 REPRESENTATIVE NEHR: Peter Nehr, State
14 Representative, north Pinellas County and Pasco
15 County.

16 REPRESENTATIVE CAMPBELL: Daphne Campbell,
17 District 108, Miami-Dade County.

18 REPRESENTATIVE ROGERS: Hazelle Rogers,
19 Representative from Broward County, one of the
20 most diverse counties in the state of Florida,
21 representing approximately 1.8 million people,
22 and it is good to be here, District 94.

23 REPRESENTATIVE WILLIAMS: Good afternoon.
24 My name is Representative Alan Williams. It is
25 great to be here with my good friend, Gershom

1 Faulkner, I see out there. And I represent the
2 Tallahassee and Gadsden County, and it is great
3 to be here in the birthplace of my father,
4 Leroy Williams, in Tampa.

5 REPRESENTATIVE CLARKE-REED: Good
6 afternoon. I am State Representative Gwyndolen
7 Clarke-Reed, representing House District 92,
8 northeast Broward County, representing seven
9 cities: Deerfield Beach, Pompano Beach,
10 Oakland Park, Wilton Manors, Ft. Lauderdale, a
11 little bit of Tamarac and a little bit of North
12 Lauderdale. Thank you.

13 REPRESENTATIVE KIAR: Hello, everybody.
14 My name is Martin Kiar, and I represent
15 District 97 in the Florida House, which is
16 located solely within Broward County. And I
17 have to tell you, this is my first time back to
18 Tampa after taking the Florida Bar exam, and
19 this is a much better experience, so I am
20 happier now. Thank you.

21 REPRESENTATIVE HOLDER: Good afternoon, I
22 am Doug Holder. I represent House District 70,
23 which is all within Sarasota County, south
24 Sarasota County.

25 REPRESENTATIVE HOOPER: Hello, I am Ed

1 Hooper, representing House District 50, which
2 is central Pinellas County.

3 REPRESENTATIVE CHESTNUT: Good afternoon,
4 I am Chuck Chestnut, House District 23, a
5 portion of Marion County and a portion of
6 Alachua County.

7 REPRESENTATIVE FRISHE: Good afternoon, I
8 am State Representative Jim Frishe from
9 Pinellas County. I represent the beaches on
10 the west edge.

11 REPRESENTATIVE PASSIDOMO: Kathleen
12 Passidomo, House District 76, which is Collier
13 County, City of Naples, Marco Island and
14 Everglades City. Thank you.

15 REPRESENTATIVE TRUJILLO: Good afternoon,
16 my name is Carlos Trujillo. I represent
17 District 116, which is West Kendall and
18 southwest Miami-Dade County.

19 REPRESENTATIVE FULLWOOD: Good afternoon,
20 Reggie Fullwood. I represent District 15,
21 Jacksonville, Florida.

22 REPRESENTATIVE HARRISON: Good afternoon,
23 welcome to Tampa. I am Shawn Harrison, I
24 represent northern Hillsborough County, the
25 City of Temple Terrace, Lutz and New Tampa.

1 REPRESENTATIVE SMITH: Hello, Jimmie
2 Smith. I represent District 43, Citrus, Levy
3 and Hernando County.

4 REPRESENTATIVE FORD: Representative Clay
5 Ford from Pensacola. Like Marty Kiar, I lived
6 here about a week while I was prepping for the
7 Florida Bar, and this is a way better
8 experience, I agree with Marty.

9 REPRESENTATIVE REED: Good afternoon, my
10 name is Betty Reed, and I represent the eastern
11 part of Hillsborough County. And I thank each
12 one of you for being here today.

13 REPRESENTATIVE CRUZ: Good afternoon, my
14 name is Janet Cruz, and I represent District
15 58, and I want to tell you welcome to District
16 58, because you are sitting in my district.
17 District 58 is here, West Tampa. This is
18 Lincoln Gardens, Carver City, West Tampa, the
19 eastern part of Town and Country and a little
20 piece that runs out into the Busch Gardens
21 area, but thanks for being here today.

22 REPRESENTATIVE BOYD: Good afternoon, I am
23 Jim Boyd, District 68, which is western Manatee
24 County and northwest Hillsborough County,
25 including the beautiful Egmont Key.

1 REPRESENTATIVE YOUNG: Hi, everyone, and
2 thanks for coming. I am State Representative
3 Dana Young, and I represent South Tampa all the
4 way up to Westchase. And looking out here, I
5 see many, many of my constituents, and I am so
6 grateful that you are here to share your views
7 with us, so thanks for coming.

8 SENATOR GAETZ: I thank that -- does that
9 take into account everybody who is here?
10 Representative Richard Corcoran is here.
11 Representative Corcoran, would you wave? We
12 are delighted to have you here as well.

13 Our purpose today, ladies and gentlemen,
14 is to hear from the public about how you
15 believe the legal standards governing
16 redistricting, the state, federal redistricting
17 standards, ought to be applied in your
18 community so that you are ably represented in
19 Washington and Tallahassee fairly, equitably
20 and sensibly.

21 Our procedures today are simple, but
22 important. It is important that you sign in so
23 that we can create an accurate public record of
24 all attendees and speakers, and also you may
25 opt to join our e-mail list so that we can keep

1 you informed about how the redistricting
2 process is proceeding. If you have not signed
3 in, please raise your hand, and a staff member
4 will give you an attendance card. It is the
5 same card if you wish to speak. If when you
6 came in you did not get a chance to sign a
7 card, and you wish to speak, raise your hand,
8 and we will get a card to you, because we don't
9 want to miss your testimony. There is a young
10 lady -- two young ladies up there, and a
11 gentleman in the center, another gentleman
12 about in the middle. If you will just keep
13 your hands up, we promise to get you a card.

14 Before we begin, the Chair recognizes the
15 Speaker Designate of the Florida House,
16 Representative Weatherford, to explain how
17 today's hearing fits into the redistricting
18 process and timeline.

19 Mr. Speaker.

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
21 very much, Chairman Gaetz, and we welcome all
22 the members. A great turnout today to hear
23 from folks from Tampa Bay.

24 I want to walk through really quickly,
25 Mr. Chairman, if I could, just the process that

1 we are here to do and what we hope to achieve
2 by the end of this evening.

3 Every ten years, it is required that the
4 Legislature, by our Constitution, to redistrict
5 the state based off of increases, decreases and
6 movements in population. Because Florida has
7 grown more than most states over the last ten
8 years, we have moved up from 25 congressional
9 seats to 27 congressional seats. Because some
10 parts of our state have increased or decreased
11 disproportionately in population, many Senate
12 and House districts will change, either adding
13 or losing in population.

14 When redistricting is completed,
15 congressional districts must equal in
16 population 696,345 people, the 40 Senate
17 districts must be nearly equal and have 470,000
18 people, and our 120 House seats around the
19 state must also be nearly equal at 156,700
20 people.

21 We have had displays up at the front
22 before you came in the room showing the current
23 boundaries -- I guess we have them at the front
24 of this room. We have displays on the front of
25 the room showing the current boundaries of the

1 districts in this part of the state and the
2 number of persons which must be added or
3 subtracted from each state. So feel free at
4 any point during the hearing to walk down there
5 and take a closer look.

6 Equality of representation is not the only
7 legal requirement that redistricting must meet,
8 and that is very important. The laws and the
9 important court cases governing redistricting
10 are explained in detail on the House and Senate
11 websites. Those websites are listed on the
12 "Redistricting 2012" brochure that was
13 available when you came in. Our "Redistricting
14 2012" brochure summarizes both federal and
15 state laws, and it outlines the topics that we
16 hope that you will share with us today. If you
17 did not get a copy of that brochure when you
18 came in, please raise your hand, and we will
19 make sure and get you a copy while you are
20 sitting here this evening. Keep your hand up
21 just like we did with the sign-in sheet,
22 there's a lot of folks, so we will get you that
23 brochure and I will just keep moving.

24 The brochure also lists the House and
25 Senate websites. The websites are packed with

1 information about redistricting in Florida,
2 including explanation of the laws and the
3 important court cases governing redistricting.
4 These two websites are complementary and
5 updated frequently. Visit them both and please
6 check back often as current and new maps come
7 into place and are submitted for your viewing
8 pleasure.

9 The websites also are delivered to your
10 fingertips all of the demographic information
11 that will be used in drawing the districts and
12 the exact same computer programs that
13 legislators and professional staff will use in
14 Tallahassee when we go to draw maps. Any
15 member of the public can participate in
16 building plans or seeing maps submitted by
17 legislators or other citizens.

18 Before, during and after this hearing,
19 Senate and House professional staff are
20 available to show anyone the simple steps in
21 going on-line, building districts and
22 submitting a plan. So when you walk out these
23 doors, we will have staff out there throughout
24 the entire meeting and even after the meeting
25 to help you, show you how to draw maps

1 yourselves.

2 Recommendations from citizens and groups
3 of citizens will be made publicly available
4 immediately, and, in fact, as of this morning,
5 we have had 48 public submissions of partial or
6 complete maps and many other written ideas for
7 maps available on the Web.

8 The submission of these proposed maps that
9 makes sense for your community is the single
10 most effective way for you to participate in
11 the redistricting process. I will say that
12 again. The submission of proposed maps that
13 makes sense for your community is the single
14 most effective way for you to participate in
15 the redistricting process.

16 The schedule under which we are operating
17 is imposed by the State Constitution, and I
18 want to be clear about that. The Constitution
19 does not permit us to act on legislative maps
20 before the second year after the census, and
21 what that means is before 2012. Now, we have
22 accelerated the process as much as we possibly
23 can by moving the session up, which is normally
24 in March, up until the first week of January in
25 2012.

1 It has also been suggested that the
2 Legislature should draw maps first and then ask
3 the public to comment. We believe that puts --
4 I am almost through, ladies and gentlemen. Let
5 me get through. We believe, both Chairman
6 Gaetz and I and many others believe that puts
7 the answer ahead of the question. In fact, a
8 principal author of the Florida's new
9 redistricting standards and the Chairperson for
10 Fair Districts campaign are both on record and
11 in agreement with us that the notion that they
12 would not even attempt to draw maps until they
13 heard from the public first. The lady who
14 actually said that was Ellen Freidin, who was
15 the Chairwoman of Florida districts --
16 Floridafairdistricts.org.

17 Our intent is to use the recommendations
18 made at these hearings today and many around
19 the state and through our Internet sites as the
20 basis for developing one or more options for
21 district maps. We will discuss those options
22 in open public meetings before any votes are
23 taken, even in committee. In other words, what
24 we are literally saying is if you look at those
25 maps outside the room and the 48 other maps

1 that have been submitted to the Legislature,
2 the ones that have actually been submitted by
3 citizens, Florida residents, we are literally
4 starting the legislative process with those
5 maps and other suggestions from the public. So
6 if you want to know where we begin our
7 deliberations tonight, it is with those public
8 submissions and the testimony from meetings
9 just like this. Throughout the process, we
10 will continue to solicit public comment so that
11 the proposed maps can mature with the public's
12 involvement. Whatever the Legislature passes,
13 it is then submitted for judicial review to
14 ensure that the final plans meet every single
15 legal requirement.

16 Because our purpose today is to hear from
17 you, all of the time between now and 8:00 p.m.
18 will be used to ensure that every member of the
19 public who is here and wishes to speak and
20 provide public testimony is given that
21 opportunity and is listened to both
22 respectfully and without interruption or
23 argument.

24 Note that I do anticipate that we will
25 likely take a short break sometime after two

1 hours. So sometime around 6:00 p.m., we will
2 probably break for a few minutes.

3 If after every citizen has had his or her
4 say, and there is time remaining before our
5 scheduled adjournment, any member of this
6 committee may make any statement or offer any
7 observation. Of course, any member of the
8 Legislature may today or at any time propose a
9 map or a plan, and we will make it available to
10 the public and to you immediately.

11 Mr. Chairman, thank you for allowing me to
12 take a few moments to walk us through the
13 process, and I look forward to hearing from our
14 citizens here in Tampa Bay tonight. Thank you.

15 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.
16 In order to facilitate as many people as
17 possible getting a chance to testify, let me
18 ask first, where is Laura Simpson? Laura,
19 where are you? Laura, I am an advocate for
20 you. Right now you are the last person signed
21 up to testify. There are probably going to be
22 some others, but right now you are the last
23 one. We have over 70 people signed up to
24 testify. So in order to make sure we hear from
25 Laura, everybody else needs to be respectful of

1 those behind you, your friends and neighbors
2 who have also come to testify, and so we ask
3 that your testimony be limited to three
4 minutes. If you have other testimony,
5 additional or extended testimony, we want it,
6 just give it to us in writing. If you brought
7 a script or something that you wish to read,
8 and if it can't be done in three minutes, give
9 it to us, and we will make it available to all
10 of the members of the committee.

11 If someone else has already made your
12 point, it is okay to say "I agree with them,"
13 and then sit down so that your friends and
14 neighbors behind you will have an opportunity
15 to speak. But even if somebody has already
16 made exactly the same point, and you want to
17 read off of exactly the same script and the
18 spirit moves you, we still want to hear from
19 you.

20 So with that, I am going to call three
21 people at a time so that we can -- we are going
22 to have an on deck circle right down here in
23 front of the podium, and we are going to call
24 three people at a time. If you would come
25 forward, that way we could use the time as

1 efficiently as possible.

2 Our first speaker tonight is going to be
3 Kenneth Johnson, followed by Jack Wolff,
4 followed by Anne Voss. So if those three
5 individuals will come forward, we would like to
6 begin. And, again, we are very, very grateful
7 that so many people have come out tonight. We
8 are anxious to hear your testimony.

9 And, Mr. Johnson, you are recognized to
10 begin our evening celebrations.

11 MR. JOHNSON: Thank you. Thank you for
12 welcoming us here. We welcome -- we would like
13 to welcome you also. I know that you all have
14 taken a lot of time to do this arduous task
15 that you have.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Mr. Johnson, the
17 Sergeant's office is going to help you here.
18 We want to make sure we get every word that
19 everybody has to say, and you are also on
20 statewide television, so -- there you go.
21 Check your hair, check your makeup, we want you
22 to look good, we want you to sound good.

23 Mr. Johnson, you are recognized.

24 MR. JOHNSON: My name is Ken Johnson. I
25 am a resident of District 9 -- Congressional

1 District 9 here in Tampa. I have lived here
2 for 16 years. I want to welcome you all to the
3 festivities here today. I know you have an
4 arduous task, and we appreciate the work that
5 you have to do.

6 I have a couple of points that I would
7 like to raise regarding the Fair District
8 amendments passed last year. One of the main
9 issues I have with these amendments is that
10 they treat Floridians unequally.

11 As I understand them, the amendments say
12 that districts must be compact, but this
13 standard only applies to non-minority seats.
14 Minority seats don't have to be compact. This
15 is going to mean that districts surrounding
16 minority seats will not be compact either since
17 they fill in around the borders of the
18 non-compact minority seats. The gerrymandering
19 of minority seats will also mean political
20 parties and incumbents will be favored since
21 minority voters tend to support one party over
22 another.

23 My other concern with these amendments is
24 that they are so loosely defined, I think
25 judges, rather than you legislators, will be

1 the people who ultimately end up drawing the
2 new districts. I don't want to see that
3 happen, but with so many ambiguous terms like
4 "compact," "practicable," "feasible" and
5 "existing political boundaries," how will you
6 be able to prevent a landslide of lawsuits from
7 falling on you once you pass a map? Are there
8 definitions for these words that you will be
9 going by when you draw the new maps? Without
10 firm definitions for these words, I don't see
11 how you will be able to satisfy all of the
12 requirements of the amendments, which means
13 millions of our tax dollars will be spent in
14 litigation over the maps that you pass this
15 year or next year.

16 You have a tough job ahead of you, and I
17 hope you will be able to juggle all of these
18 various requirements and end up with some good
19 maps. Thank you for your time.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
21 Mr. Johnson. And next we will hear from Jack
22 Wolff. Mr. Wolff, if you will pull the mike
23 down, we are delighted you are here and anxious
24 to have your testimony on the record.

25 MR. WOLFF: Thank you. Good afternoon.

1 My name is Jack Wolff, W-o-l-f-f. My address
2 is 2718 Laurel Oak Drive, Plant City, which is
3 in eastern Hillsborough County.

4 Now, the Florida Constitution now requires
5 compact legislative and congressional districts
6 to replace the gerrymandered districts that we
7 now have. In Hillsborough County, we have
8 three snake-like congressional districts
9 intertwined in the county and spinning out into
10 neighboring counties.

11 With the limited time that I have here to
12 speak today, I wish to give you my suggestion
13 as how we can instead have two compact
14 congressional districts in Hillsborough County.
15 The 2010 federal census is the basis for
16 redistricting. The population of Hillsborough
17 County in 2010 was a little over 1,200,000.
18 Dividing the 2010 Florida population of just
19 over 18,800,000 by the 27 congressional
20 districts allocated for Florida by the 2010
21 census, each Florida congressional district
22 will have a population total of just under
23 700,000.

24 Now, using these figures, I would like to
25 show you how Hillsborough County would best be

1 divided into two compact congressional
2 districts by a north/south line creating an
3 east Hillsborough County congressional district
4 and a west Hillsborough County congressional
5 district.

6 Now, with the help of the Hillsborough
7 County Planning Department, I was able to
8 determine by the population figures that the
9 north/south dividing line should be at or near
10 I-75 to the Bay. This would create a primarily
11 urban west Hillsborough County district with a
12 population of 697,371, the amount of population
13 needed for a congressional district, and which
14 is shown on this map in yellow. The remaining
15 portion of the county in green is east
16 Hillsborough County, a much larger area, but
17 more sparsely populated and primarily an area
18 of smaller communities, rural and farmland,
19 very different from west Hillsborough County,
20 with a different constituency.

21 Now, similar constituency within a
22 district is an important factor to consider
23 when drawing these district maps. The
24 population of the more sparsely green area is
25 531,855, or approximately 165,000 population

1 short of the needed population of a
2 congressional district. My suggestion for this
3 shortfall is to include the east portion of
4 Hillsborough County, a contiguous portion of
5 eastern Pasco County that is also east of I-75
6 to the north, for the additional 165,000
7 population. This makes sense, because this
8 portion of Pasco County also has small
9 communities, rural and farmland, with a similar
10 constituency of eastern Hillsborough County.
11 And I plan to e-mail each of you on the
12 committees -- the redistricting committees my
13 completed map of the two districts with the
14 exact population figures, which I hope can be
15 of help to you in drawing the congressional map
16 for our area and that you will give it your
17 consideration.

18 One final thing. These public hearings
19 are slated to be over later this week on
20 September 1st. Time now is of the essence for
21 you to complete your drawing of the legislative
22 congressional districts without delay. It is
23 critically important for you to --

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Speaking of time being of
25 the essence --

1 MR. WOLFF: Just one more sentence.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: All right.

3 MR. WOLFF: It is critically important for
4 you to have all of the Florida legislative and
5 congressional districts maps drawn and
6 completely approved well before the June 4th
7 day, 2012 date, the only dates candidates can
8 qualify to run for state and federal office in
9 Florida.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you. Thank you very
11 much and thank you for your maps that you drew,
12 and please turn them over to Mr. Guthrie and we
13 will be happy to include them with all the
14 other maps.

15 MR. WOLFF: I am going to e-mail a more
16 completed one.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Okay. Thank you very
18 much. Thank you, Mr. Wolff.

19 We will hear from Anne Voss, and after Ms.
20 Voss, Carol Carter, if you will come on deck,
21 please, and then Martha Hodge.

22 Ms. Voss, thank you for being here. We
23 are delighted to see you, and you are
24 recognized.

25 MS. VOSS: Thank you. I want to thank you

1 all for coming and listening to the citizens of
2 Hillsborough County before you redraw our
3 districts. I would also like to thank the
4 Legislature for an open and transparent process
5 that allows us, the citizens, to make
6 recommendations, draw our own maps and submit
7 them on-line for your consideration.

8 I want to now address Amendments 5 and 6,
9 which were added to the Florida Constitution
10 last year, because I feel without important
11 clarifications, you cannot reasonably begin
12 your task.

13 These amendments use the term "compact,"
14 but do not define it. So my first request is
15 that you please explain in layman's language
16 exactly what this important term means and how
17 it relates to the amendments' mandate to
18 respect existing city, county and geographical
19 boundaries.

20 In addition, Amendments 5 and 6 prescribe
21 very subjective standards; for example,
22 establishing criteria using the words that Ken
23 also mentioned, "practicable" and "feasible."
24 I would like to know how are we to judge that
25 these standards have been met. I might think

1 the lines you draw are practical and feasible,
2 while others may well in good faith not.
3 Unless these terms are clarified and subject to
4 be minimized, I don't understand how you can
5 reasonably begin. I am very concerned that
6 these vague terms will result in confusion,
7 consternation and lawsuits, which will deprive
8 us of our equal right to representation. I --
9 we don't want this to happen, and moreover, I
10 want the legislators to establish the new
11 districts, not the courts and unaccountable
12 judges.

13 I hope that you will clarify these points
14 for me and for all Floridians. I wish each and
15 every one of you the very best with this truly
16 difficult challenge. Thank you.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, Ms.
18 Voss, and a number of you have already been
19 begun to raise questions. There will be
20 questions raised during the hearing. Some will
21 be rhetorical questions, of course, some will
22 be questions of fact. The Speaker Designate is
23 making a list of those questions, and as he
24 indicated, when all public testimony is
25 concluded, then we are going to give members an

1 opportunity to answer any of the questions that
2 have been asked. The Speaker Designate will
3 bat cleanup, and he will try to get to any
4 factual questions that members have not gotten
5 to.

6 And so with that, Carol Carter is
7 recognized. Following Ms. Carter, Martha
8 Hodge, and then if Chris Hart will come on
9 deck.

10 Ms. Carter, thank you for coming, and we
11 look forward to your testimony.

12 MS. CARTER: Well, thank you all for being
13 here today to listen to us. My name is Carol
14 Carter, and I have been a resident of Tampa
15 since 1949. I have seen redistricting happen
16 every ten years since that time. It is always
17 tough, but I think you are unfortunately
18 operating under a difficult situation this year
19 with Amendments 5 and 6.

20 I think that we can all agree that we want
21 districts that are reasonable, but I do not
22 believe that Amendments 5 and 6 will lead to
23 that outcome, because they are so vague. Take,
24 for example, as someone else mentioned, the
25 requirement for districts to be compact. What

1 does that mean? Can all of you on this
2 committee agree and understand this term used
3 in Amendments 5 and 6?

4 Then we have the term "existing political
5 boundaries." What are those boundaries? Are
6 they city boundaries? People have spoken to
7 you before about not splitting up cities.

8 Here is a map of the City of Tampa. Once
9 it was compact, I would have said, but I would
10 not say that the City of Tampa is now compact.
11 Would you? So then how would you draw a
12 district that would use the boundaries of the
13 City of Tampa? And also you might note, this
14 is the City of Plant City. It is not very
15 compact either.

16 Under the amendments, I would say --
17 anyone here say that it would -- that Tampa
18 would qualify as a compact district, even under
19 Amendments 5 and 6? I don't think so. I would
20 describe the City of Tampa as sprawled out and
21 oddly shaped. Tampa is just one example of the
22 many that you will face as you redistrict the
23 state.

24 I believe that Amendments 5 and 6 are
25 filled with words and standards that don't mesh

1 with reality, words like "compact,"
2 "practicable" -- I don't even know what that
3 word is -- "feasible" and "existing political
4 boundaries," to list a few. With these
5 regulations, I don't see how you can draw a map
6 that will withstand legal challenge.

7 I wish you the best of luck with this
8 arduous task, and thank you for allowing me to
9 speak.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
11 Ms. Carter. We appreciate your testimony. And
12 Martha Hodge is next, then Chris Hart, and
13 following Chris Hart, Charles Mckenzie.

14 Ms. Hodge, did I get your name correctly,
15 ma'am?

16 MS. HODGE: You did.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Well, you are recognized,
18 and we look forward to your testimony.

19 MS. HODGE: Thank you. Good afternoon. I
20 am a voting Democrat in precinct 112 in Tampa,
21 and I take pretty much a totally different tack
22 from two of your previous speakers. I was one
23 of the original signers of the Amendments 5 and
24 6 because I believed in the necessity for some
25 more organization as regards that, and I have

1 been dismayed, I might as well be honest with
2 you, at the Legislature's, one, attempt to come
3 up with another amendment that would have
4 nullified 5 and 6, and secondly, to spend
5 taxpayers' dollars, that would be me for one,
6 to fight these amendments, and I think that you
7 certainly show your colors in those
8 circumstances.

9 But the -- my reason for speaking here
10 though is not to chastise you, but I am old
11 enough to be able to chastise most of you, so
12 keep that in mind. My reason for speaking here
13 is that I ask you to deal with these amendments
14 in the fairest way possible. That is why it
15 was called the Fair Districts amendment.

16 I studied gerrymandering in the eighth
17 grade. I don't think I ever really understood
18 it until I moved to Florida, and I have been
19 stunned. And I was a Georgian, we are not good
20 up there, but I was stunned when I came here.

21 The intent of Amendments 5 and 6 was
22 purely to ensure that all districts are redrawn
23 in a way so as that incumbents don't have a
24 totally open book to move and win another seat,
25 and to make sure that neither political party

1 gets any particular advantage. These were
2 necessary because Democrats and Republicans
3 alike in previous years have, in fact, used
4 their political prowess to district out what
5 would work for them.

6 I will say to each of you, you have not
7 been courageous enough to tell us what is on
8 your mind and what is in your heart and what
9 lines you have already drawn in your thinking.
10 I have no idea. I can look at your website
11 from now until next year, sir, and I see really
12 only one that even comes close, one map that
13 comes close, and I don't see your signature on
14 any of them. So I don't believe with these
15 particular hearings that you are really looking
16 at the legal intent of the laws.

17 I would say to you, show us or tell us
18 your thinking. Show us your map. I would say
19 most of the people in here would join me. Can
20 you join me and say that? Show us your map.
21 We have to have it. We really need it. Now, I
22 have used my minutes up and --

23 SENATOR GAETZ: Yes, ma'am, and we
24 appreciate your testimony and appreciate those
25 who came to support you tonight.

1 Our next speaker is Chris Hart, and
2 following Chris Hart, Charles Mckenzie, and
3 following Charles Mckenzie, Alan Peacock.

4 Chris Hart, thank you very much for being
5 here tonight. We are grateful.

6 MR. HART: Mr. Chairman, members of the
7 Legislature, thank you for joining us. It is
8 nice to see you here. I know some of you
9 traveled far, but also let me first, if I
10 might, thank Representative Cruz since this is
11 her district, but also for what I consider the
12 only priority ahead of this, and that was
13 creating jobs, and she just had a job fair here
14 recently we desperately needed.

15 When I talk about redistricting, I have
16 had a few opportunities to do this having been
17 a commissioner here over a 12-year period where
18 I represented 1.2 million people, and so we
19 have gone through this over -- a few times over
20 the years, and I've worked directly with some
21 of you here now as legislators.

22 But let me get a little bit toward this
23 Amendments 5 and 6, because I think they are
24 important. I know it is something that many
25 people have addressed for many years and

1 mentioned here, but when I look at some of
2 this, it talks about intent or result of
3 denying or abridging equal opportunity or
4 diminish somebody's ability to elect
5 Representatives of their choice. In many
6 cases, the words are intended only to apply to
7 minorities, but I would have you say -- or I
8 would certainly say I think they really apply
9 to us if you look at the broader intent of this
10 legislation.

11 When I get into some other things that we
12 all know, it talks about feasibility and
13 compact and practical, and then the closing
14 words in your documents to us said, "following
15 political and geographical boundaries." Well,
16 I am only going to use two districts as
17 examples to talk about here today. I wish one
18 of the Representatives were here, because it is
19 Florida Congressional District 11 and Senate
20 District 16, and I use them both as examples to
21 address my points, and it goes to one of the
22 other points that you know is that
23 congressional districts or Senate or House
24 districts make cross bodies of water. But I
25 will tell you, it doesn't set well here in

1 Tampa and Hillsborough County. What it does,
2 too, if you look at -- and I can just hold this
3 up, I know you've got this record, but if you
4 look at Hillsborough and Pinellas County,
5 District 11, you've got this area here of
6 Pinellas County. Who in hell living there
7 would actually believe that they are being
8 represented by somebody in Tampa and
9 Hillsborough County? Well, if you go down
10 to -- you go down to the county south of us, do
11 they -- who really believes and if you live
12 there or sit there, that those people have a
13 chance to elect a Representative that is really
14 going to represent their views and their
15 values?

16 Now, when I look at the Florida Senate
17 district, it crosses a body of water as well.
18 Where I live in this area, I know that no one
19 living in Tampa and Hillsborough County can
20 ever be elected to that Senate position. I
21 will tell you that has a chilling effect on
22 people going to the polls.

23 Where you have many House districts here,
24 for example, you may go up and touch lines and
25 cross lines, but it would be like starting the

1 state of Florida somewhere in the middle of
2 Florida instead of saying, "You know what, we
3 do have to start at Key West." You can't end
4 up there and find out you don't have enough
5 people. Surely you must have to do that.

6 Well, we are a peninsula. Hillsborough
7 County and Pinellas County are peninsulas, and
8 I would recommend to you, you start looking at
9 those political and geographic boundaries and
10 then move north.

11 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much.

12 MR. HART: Thank you very much.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Appreciate it. Next we
14 will hear from Charles Mckenzie with the
15 Rainbow-PUSH Coalition, then Alan Peacock with
16 the National Association of Letter Carriers,
17 and then Earl Lennard, the Supervisor of
18 Elections, the Honorable Earl Lennard.

19 MR. MCKENZIE: Good afternoon.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Mr. McKenzie, you are
21 recognized.

22 MR. MCKENZIE: I want to thank Senator
23 Gaetz and Representative Weatherford for this
24 opportunity to speak, and I am delighted to see
25 so many members of our august body of

1 legislators here today. And to this honorable
2 group of legislators, I ran for a congressional
3 seat that is highly gerrymandered, and I ran
4 for a House seat against a very capable
5 opponent. I wish I was sitting where he is
6 sitting today, but that was not the case. But
7 I know what it means, and I think --

8 SENATOR GAETZ: I think he might change
9 places with you today.

10 MR. MCKENZIE: I know what it means, and I
11 think he knows what it means to run for office
12 in a highly gerrymandered district. It is a
13 very cumbersome task.

14 But I wanted to say this, and then I will
15 take my seat: Amendments 5 and 6 were passed
16 by Florida voters in November, and they reveal
17 that the majority of Floridians are tired of
18 lopsided, partisan-driven politics and public
19 policy. They want political districts with
20 boundaries that are contiguous and genuinely
21 competitive. This is the leading rationale
22 that should guide any redistricting that takes
23 place. They are weary of politics by those who
24 are drunk with the arrogance of power and
25 inflicted with the recurring disease of

1 incumbenitis. And I believe that this is a
2 reasonable expectation that would only be a
3 anathema to those who intend to maintain power
4 at any cost and by any means in spite of the
5 legitimate will of the majority.

6 Because the Legislature, of course, is
7 controlled by honorable individuals who would
8 never engage in politics of pure self-interest,
9 we are also certain that there is no
10 undisclosed agenda unfolding here. We have not
11 gathered in this place to wag the dog and dance
12 the pony simply to avoid lawsuits and judicial
13 intervention if the real deal was on the table.

14 Surely there is no attempt here to prolong
15 the process, create mass confusion, let the
16 clock run down and chase challengers away.
17 This is undoubtedly a bona fide,
18 honest-to-goodness attempt to allow the people
19 to have a meaningful impact on the
20 redistricting process. After all, we know that
21 those we elect want to represent the will of
22 the people and operate with the consent of
23 those who are governing.

24 That having been said, I have but two
25 questions to direct to our distinguished panel,

1 the lawmakers: Why have you spent three
2 million dollars of taxpayers' money trying to
3 overturn the very amendments that we, the
4 people, passed in the last election cycle? And
5 then finally, we have listened intently to your
6 usage of terminological exactitudes and
7 polysyllabic vocables about time tables in
8 other states and the accelerated session and
9 that you are waiting to begin working on them,
10 but for some strange reason, hanging in our --

11 SENATOR GAETZ: Could I ask you to wrap up
12 soon just to -- with respect to all the people
13 behind you?

14 MR. MCKENZIE: Yes, absolutely. Hanging
15 in our mental skies is this hard to dismiss,
16 lingering question, where are your maps?

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.

18 Now, Alan Peacock, Mr. Peacock,
19 representing the National Association of Letter
20 Carriers. Then we will hear from the Honorable
21 Earl Lennard and then we will hear from Danny
22 Aprile, I believe it is Aprile.

23 MR. PEACOCK: That is a hard act to follow
24 right there --

25 SENATOR GAETZ: It is.

1 MR. PEACOCK: -- and to precede
2 Dr. Lennard, who I have known for a long time,
3 and his task is going to be one that is going
4 to be very difficult if some of these don't
5 come to fruition before too long, as all the
6 election supervisors in this state. If we
7 don't get the maps and we don't get the
8 confusion dismissed and everything, then it is
9 going to create quite a confusion when it comes
10 to election time.

11 Now, I have signed a resolution with my
12 organization that's going to go to Congress in
13 hopes that there will be a permanent absentee
14 ballot where you won't have to actually, you
15 know, reconfirm your absentee ballot request
16 every four years. Those are one of the things
17 that I am looking forward to.

18 I am hoping that in the near future there
19 will be voter mail, because I do represent the
20 Postal Service and letter carriers, all right.

21 I grew up in southeast Hillsborough
22 County, and I resided most of my life now in
23 northwest Hillsborough County, and I don't
24 think there is a great divide in constituency
25 between east and west, north and south. I

1 don't think that is the proper way of trying to
2 divide things to create the maps.

3 All right. None of the maps that are on
4 your website now are currently contiguous or
5 complete. When will the committee allow the
6 citizens of Florida to see one proposed by the
7 Legislature?

8 If the Libby map is the one that is being
9 considered, I want to record my objection to
10 that map, because it fails to comply with
11 Amendments 5 and 6.

12 There is no doubt about it, it is a
13 difficult task you have. The large population
14 shifts have taken place in over one-third of
15 all the current districts. So there is no
16 doubt it is a difficult thing that you've got
17 to deal with, but let's get with it. Let's get
18 her done. Thank you.

19 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much,
20 Mr. Peacock. And next we will hear from our
21 Supervisor of Elections, the Honorable Earl
22 Lennard, who has served this community in more
23 than one capacity, and all was honorably, and
24 we are delighted to hear you today,
25 Mr. Supervisor, Mr. Superintendent. It is good

1 to see you again.

2 MR. LENNARD: Also good to see you,
3 Mr. Superintendent.

4 Mr. Chairman, Mr. Chairman, members of the
5 Legislature, I want to thank you for being here
6 at beautiful Jefferson High School, one of the
7 finest high schools in the state of Florida and
8 the United States of America, as well as one of
9 the finest school districts and counties in the
10 state of Florida and the United States of
11 America.

12 I want to thank each of the people that
13 have come out, because this is a great audience
14 you have here, and I know you've got a tough
15 task ahead of you, and so I want to just
16 mention some of the things that's important to
17 the Supervisors of Elections and, of course, to
18 me in carrying out my responsibilities.

19 And while I am going to be redundant, I
20 would be remiss if I did not reiterate two very
21 important issues for the Supervisors of
22 Elections in getting the task done and setting
23 up for the 2012 election, and first of all, of
24 course, is the timeline. You are very much
25 aware of that, but I think I would be remiss if

1 I did not once again mention it to you. The
2 timeline is very important to us in order to
3 get all the ministerial work that goes into
4 getting everything set up prior to qualifying
5 and then moving forward with setting up the
6 election.

7 Also, I would like to mention that as you
8 go about drawing the districts and drawing the
9 lines within those districts, that you consider
10 the Voting Tabulation Districts. We furnished
11 that information to you some time ago at your
12 request, and I think it would be -- it would be
13 great if you were able to honor the work that
14 we have done as supervisors in providing and
15 utilizing that information.

16 Other than that, I want to say that the
17 issues are before you, you know them, and I
18 wish you very well. God speed and good luck in
19 this task ahead of you. Once again, it is very
20 good to see you, many of you old friends -- not
21 old -- former friends, and so it is good to see
22 you again, and take care and God speed.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, and
24 thank you for your service to the community.

25 Next we will hear from Danny Aprile, I

1 think, if I am pronouncing it correctly, then
2 Ted Campbell with the Florida Strawberry
3 Growers, and then Connie Johnson with the
4 Florida Realtors. Ms. Johnson, if you will be
5 on deck.

6 Danny, thanks for coming. We look forward
7 to your testimony.

8 MR. APRILE: Good evening. I am Danny
9 Aprile, Hillsborough County Farm Bureau
10 President.

11 As the redistricting process progresses,
12 we respectfully request that those involved in
13 this process recognize the unique heritage,
14 makeup and importance of the agricultural
15 industry in eastern Hillsborough County,
16 specifically in the area east of Interstate 75.
17 Residents of this area share long-term
18 agriculture interests and endeavors, enabling
19 them to contribute significantly to the
20 county's economy with over \$700 million in
21 annual sales and providing jobs for 20,000
22 people, with an annual income of over \$293
23 million.

24 We believe drawing the district boundaries
25 from I-75 east to the county boundary would

1 help to preserve the important way of life,
2 rural character and economic engine that this
3 area -- to benefit not only those who reside
4 there, but all residents of Hillsborough
5 County.

6 Thank you for your time and consideration.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.
8 We appreciate your testimony.

9 And next may we hear from Ted Campbell
10 with the Florida Strawberry Growers, then
11 Connie Johnson and Robin Lankford, if you would
12 please come on down.

13 Mr. Campbell, thanks for coming, and the
14 floor is yours.

15 MR. CAMPBELL: Good afternoon and thank
16 you for allowing me to speak and thank you all
17 for coming to this event. My name is Ted
18 Campbell, I am Executive Director of the
19 Florida Strawberry Growers Association in Plant
20 City.

21 Our farmers represent the largest segment
22 of agriculture production in Hillsborough
23 County, over 42 percent of the total farm gate
24 value on five percent of the land. Florida
25 produces about 20 percent of the domestic

1 strawberry crop, with over 90 percent of
2 Florida's commercial production in eastern
3 Hillsborough County. It is a very high-value
4 crop and obviously a very high-density crop.
5 So the Florida strawberries generate
6 approximately \$700 million in economic value to
7 Hillsborough County. We are responsible for
8 60,000 jobs and have an annual payroll of our
9 farm workers alone of \$165 million.

10 Our economic impact goes beyond jobs and
11 revenue, because agriculture in eastern
12 Hillsborough County provides desirable green
13 space, wildlife habitat, fresh water recharge,
14 areas of rural character, I want to echo what
15 Danny just said, it brings a high quality of
16 life to all of Hillsborough County. And we are
17 a tax park, and agriculture exerts
18 substantially less tax drain on public
19 resources. A Hillsborough County study showed
20 farms only required only 25 cents' worth of
21 services for every tax dollar they spend, as
22 opposed to urban residents that did a
23 hundred -- 129 in services for each dollar. So
24 we are revenue positive for the county.

25 But we are here to talk about

1 redistricting, so I will get more to the point.
2 To maintain the desirable agricultural
3 community and the continuity of eastern
4 Hillsborough County, we are suggesting the
5 state district lines would be drawn from I-75
6 east to the county boundaries. It is a very
7 contiguous region, and within that area it is
8 very simple to draw House districts in lateral
9 bands across that area based on the population
10 density in each of those sectors.

11 So thank you for your consideration.

12 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, Ted.
13 We appreciate your testimony.

14 And next, Connie Johnson with the Florida
15 Realtors, then Robin Lankford and then Willie
16 Lawson, please.

17 Ms. Johnson, thank you for coming, and we
18 are delighted to hear your testimony today.

19 MS. JOHNSON: Thank you. Yes, that is
20 great, thanks.

21 First of all, I would like to thank all of
22 you for giving your constituents the
23 opportunity to come and tell you what is very,
24 very important to them, because it truly is.

25 As a realtor, and I have been a realtor

1 for over 20 years, I do have the opportunity to
2 speak with a lot of people, and being on the
3 leadership team of the Florida Realtors, I do
4 get to speak to realtors. As of last week, we
5 had a convention from all over the state. The
6 things that are important to us is what you are
7 hearing from everyone here, so I thank you for
8 allowing us to say what is important.

9 On a personal note for myself, I live in
10 east Hillsborough County. I am very happy with
11 the way it sits. I know you have to make some
12 changes and it is going to be difficult for
13 you, but there are communities that have
14 changed in the last ten years and there's been
15 a lot of growth, and now there's growth that is
16 no longer there. I want you to please keep
17 that in mind. Densities are changing. It is
18 not going to be the same as it is today next
19 year or the year after, so please keep that in
20 mind.

21 But the one thing I do want to bring up to
22 you now is something I heard over and over
23 again last week with the realtors. That is the
24 time frame. This we know you know is crucial,
25 but please don't put us in a position to where

1 we don't know who we are voting for. Thank
2 you.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
4 Ms. Johnson. And I hope -- Ms. Johnson, I hope
5 you will be able to stay until the end of the
6 hearing, because I think there is some
7 information about time frame that might give
8 you a little bit more data and some comfort,
9 hopefully.

10 Next, Robin Lankford and then Willie
11 Lawson. Following Willie Lawson, Dr. Wesley
12 Johnson.

13 Robin, thank you for coming tonight. We
14 appreciate hearing from you.

15 MS. LANKFORD: Well, thank you. As you
16 said, my name is Robin Lankford, and I have
17 lived in Hillsborough County for over 30 years.
18 That is a long time in one county for Florida.

19 I want to thank you first for your
20 common-sense approach to gathering input from
21 all of us about drawing the new maps and
22 allowing the public a never before access to
23 redistricting the whole process. The My
24 District Builder software makes it so easy for
25 anyone to submit a proposed map to the

1 Legislature.

2 And I know there's been some groups,
3 specifically the League of Women Voters, that
4 are not participating or maybe not appreciating
5 the path you are taking this year in the
6 redistricting process, and I think that is a
7 shame. After all, the League submitted maps to
8 you ten years ago and they worked very hard to
9 get Amendments 5 and 6 passed. Obviously they
10 are interested in the redistricting process, so
11 why would they not submit maps this time
12 around? Getting 5 and 6 passed was only half
13 the battle, in my opinion. The League needs
14 now to offer some concrete suggestions for
15 drawing maps. With these standards in place,
16 it is more important than ever that the
17 Legislature draw good maps, and I don't think
18 you can do that without getting suggestions
19 from the public. With Amendments 5 and 6 on
20 the books, I think it is incumbent upon the
21 League to show us what they think is fair
22 districts. I hope they will choose to
23 participate and be a meaningful part of the
24 redistricting process by submitting maps like
25 they did ten years ago.

1 We did hear from some folks tonight who
2 said that they think that you should submit
3 them first. Well, you can't win in that
4 situation. If you tell us what you are going
5 to do, we are going to say you didn't allow us
6 input. Now you let us have input, and now that
7 is wrong, too. I feel sorry for you in the
8 fact that it is very difficult for you to make
9 your constituents happy, because it is like no
10 matter what you do, you can't win. But I
11 appreciate the fact that you are holding these
12 meetings and that you are here listening to all
13 of us tonight as you have done in other
14 counties as well.

15 So until you hear from everybody, I
16 appreciate you continuing to keep those lines
17 of communication open, and I encourage the
18 other voters and concerned citizens to submit
19 maps to you for you to have a chance to look
20 at, and I also would highly encourage the
21 League of Women Voters to do the same.

22 Thank you for your time.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
24 Ms. Lankford, appreciate your testimony.

25 Next, Willie Lawson, and after Mr. Lawson,

1 Dr. Wesley Johnson and then Elizabeth Morowati,
2 I believe it is, and I apologize if I
3 mispronounced your name, Elizabeth, but please
4 do come on down.

5 Mr. Lawson, we are delighted you are here,
6 and we look forward to what you have to share
7 with us.

8 MR. LAWSON: Well, that is great. Thank
9 you so much. Again, thanks for being here.
10 You know, I am running for a local office, but
11 right now, I wouldn't trade with you guys for
12 anything on the planet. I just wouldn't do it.

13 Again, I am a resident of east Tampa,
14 County Commission District 3, the State House
15 District 59, State Senate District 18 and
16 Congressional District 11. I have been here
17 for years.

18 The hope of these hearings is to produce
19 not only fair districts, but just districts,
20 because fair, as you know, is subjective. It
21 is just that is important. And I believe that
22 district representation needs to look like the
23 electorate. The ever-changing demographic
24 dynamics of Florida, however, provided
25 ever-changing backdrop by which to draw these

1 lines.

2 I would hope that much care is taken to
3 provide all Floridians with a voice in the
4 political process. I would hope that you would
5 avoid the temptation to destroy political
6 discourse by the time old tradition of
7 gerrymandering.

8 I would also -- and this is tough in this
9 highly politicized time, I know that is going
10 to be tough, also avoid the temptation to use
11 any particular area as a trading chip or
12 bargaining chip to satisfy a political agenda.
13 That also must be avoided.

14 I am sure this is a difficult process, but
15 please remember whatever you do affects real
16 people. These aren't just lines on a map.
17 These are real people.

18 Please also remember the importance to
19 provide more than fair districts. Like I said,
20 fair is subjective. You must provide just
21 districts that show that Florida is a
22 government by all the people, a government of
23 all the people and by all the people. It would
24 be a travesty to miss the opportunity to right
25 the wrongs of the past while offering a

1 platform to the voices of the future. Many of
2 these voices are from emerging, traditionally
3 ignored or bargained-away areas. They are from
4 every stripe that are starting to understand
5 the importance of them to stand and be heard.
6 They are hearing from their communities that
7 there must be change from the status quo.

8 Please keep in mind that in order for
9 Florida to continue to move forward
10 politically, socially, morally, racially, we
11 must have full participation in a political
12 process by all Floridians. I am in no way
13 asking for a return to segregation, but a
14 sensitivity to the demographic dynamics that
15 can provide some of the things of which I have
16 already talked about, an awareness of the
17 importance to provide access to government and
18 representation to everyone that makes up the
19 tapestry of this wonderful state.

20 So, in closing, please understand the
21 difference between fair and just districts,
22 please remember that what you decide will
23 affect a generation of Floridians, and finally,
24 remember to thank past the next election cycle
25 and far into the future of Florida. Good luck

1 and God bless.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much,
3 Mr. Lawson.

4 Next, Dr. Wesley Johnson, and following
5 Dr. Johnson, Elizabeth Morowati and then
6 Christopher Cano.

7 Dr. Johnson, thank you for coming, and the
8 floor is yours, sir.

9 DR. JOHNSON: Thanks. Nice to see you
10 all, Senators and Representatives. As you
11 mentioned, my name is Dr. Wesley Johnson, and I
12 am a medical research scientist, I am a
13 businessman, I served seven years in the United
14 States Navy in the submarine force and I am a
15 voter. I have lived in Dade County, I have
16 lived in Citrus County, Alachua County, and now
17 for the past eight years, I have lived in
18 Hillsborough County, and Senator Latvala and
19 Representative Young are my representatives in
20 the Senate and the House.

21 I am skeptical, quite frankly, of the
22 redistricting process. My skepticism is
23 largely due to the current partisan structure
24 of Florida's government, one political party
25 that holds all the cards. Historically, when

1 one party holds power, that party is loathe to
2 give it up. In fact, every effort is typically
3 made to solidify and extend that party's power.

4 I am challenging you, each and every one
5 of you, to take the high road, the ethical
6 road, do the right thing, do the fair thing.
7 Doing so will make your life and your job much
8 harder. It is easy to do it the bad way, but
9 much harder to do it the ethical way. But the
10 voters and citizens of Florida deserve no less
11 than your supreme effort to do it correctly.

12 The great philosopher John Rawls said,
13 contrary to the previous speaker, that fairness
14 is justice. That is a definition, fairness is
15 justice.

16 A fair process is the goal that has been
17 set before you by Florida's voters. I'll
18 remind you all that an unjust society does not
19 long endure. Thank you for your attention.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: And thank you very much
21 for your service to our country.

22 Next we will hear from Elizabeth and --
23 oh, thank you very much, ma'am. And I am --
24 did I pronounce your name correctly? Morowati,
25 and you are recognized, and thank you so much

1 for being here tonight.

2 MS. MOROWATI: Thank you. Let me tell
3 you, I have been here since 1979, but I lived
4 overseas for nine years, so I am an American
5 first and then a Floridian. I was in New York
6 before that, born in Brooklyn. You can hear
7 that accent, I am sure.

8 What I have done here is I have prepared a
9 statement, but I have given you existing
10 layouts of congressional districts and overlays
11 showing recommended changes, and what started
12 me on this track was District 11. It is
13 gerrymandered and it is absurd.

14 Now I am going to read my text, if you
15 don't mind. Okay. Sirs, these comments and
16 recommendations refer to the U.S. House of
17 Representatives, Districts 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13
18 only, and now are being discussed via the
19 redistricting process.

20 Accompanying this cover letter are sets of
21 maps pertaining to existing boundaries as well
22 as those I am proposing. You are going to see
23 with the overlay, the existing and the
24 suggested.

25 Based on recommendations for redrawing of

1 district boundaries: A, any district should be
2 designed for the mutual benefit of both the
3 constituent and their Representatives so that,
4 one, the constituents can have their
5 Representative easily accessible via a physical
6 address should they want or need to visit an
7 office, as well as use other means of
8 communications, the Internet, phone, fax, mail,
9 et cetera; two, the Representative can have
10 more direct and interactive contact with their
11 constituents to not only hear about their
12 concerns, but observe these concerns, if
13 necessary, during their travels throughout the
14 various communities they represent.

15 B, boundaries should be drawn with
16 common-sense continuity. B, practical for both
17 Representative and constituents alike for
18 reasons stated in A and B above.

19 General comments -- now, I'm referring to
20 District 11 as now drawn belies these criteria.
21 It is located in three counties: Pinellas,
22 Hillsborough, Manatee. I propose consolidation
23 of District 11 to improve both quality and more
24 Representative interactions between
25 Representative and constituents by having

1 redrawn -- it redrawn solely within
2 Hillsborough County alone.

3 Two, to do so, surrounding districts will
4 have to be boundary adjustments based upon any
5 comments above. Florida will be getting two
6 members for the U.S. House of Representatives
7 because of an increased population, this being
8 the case because of increased demographics and
9 where they -- excuse me -- dominate one or more
10 of the following recommendation boundary
11 adjustments might be examined and divided into
12 two districts from the existing one based upon
13 where the increase in population dominates.

14 Four, District 9, which is presently Gus
15 Bilirakis' seat, looks as though the areas
16 between Dunedin to the south and Palm Harbor to
17 the north have been cut out as part of District
18 11, which is Bill Young's seat. It is also
19 appears as though the district to the east
20 should really be part of District 12, which is
21 now Dennis Ross' seat.

22 SENATOR GAETZ: And, ma'am, may I -- just
23 in deference to those behind you, could I ask
24 you to conclude? This has been extremely
25 helpful, and all of this will go on the record

1 and on the Internet so everybody here can see
2 this.

3 MS. MOROWATI: Okay, okay, okay. Can I
4 just conclude with the recommendations then?

5 SENATOR GAETZ: Could you just wind that
6 up in about five seconds?

7 MS. MOROWATI: Sure, recommendations, yes.

8 District 11 should be more compact only
9 within the County of Hillsborough, these areas
10 currently in Pinellas County to be part of
11 redrawn District 10, and those areas currently
12 in Manatee County to be part of redrawn
13 District 13, and that was my focus and you have
14 the --

15 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, and everything
16 that you provided to us will be in the record,
17 shared with every member here, and those maps
18 were extremely helpful. Thank you very much,
19 Ms. Morowati.

20 Next, Christopher Cano, and following
21 Mr. Cano's testimony, David, I think it is
22 Kulcsar, and then Sharon Janis, if you will be
23 on deck.

24 Mr. Cano, did I get your name right, sir?

25 MR. CANO: Yes, sir, yes, you did.

1 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much for
2 being here and sharing some of your time with
3 us.

4 MR. CANO: Not a problem.

5 My name is Christopher Cano. I know many
6 of you in the room. I am born and raised here
7 in Hillsborough County, just celebrated 28
8 years on this planet and in this county, and I
9 am happy to be here this evening.

10 What I am here to talk about is not just
11 Amendments 5 and 6, of which has been touched
12 on, but also the Voting Rights Act, in which
13 each of you are very familiar with, and the
14 dilution of minority population groups and
15 their voting power.

16 Hillsborough County is under pre-clearance
17 because of past discrimination to the Hispanic
18 community, and that is why we are under
19 pre-clearance by the Justice Department. And
20 in saying that, when you go to redraw these
21 lines, I would caution you to take into account
22 the Hispanic community's population to avoid a
23 lawsuit and avoid a wastefulness of taxpayer
24 dollars.

25 Representative Janet Cruz's district,

1 District 58, happens to be one of the only
2 districts that we have always had a Hispanic
3 Representative, because of the large majority
4 Hispanic population. Currently it is
5 51 percent Hispanic. And there was a map
6 submitted to you earlier today via e-mail
7 through a nonprofit group called LatinoJustice
8 up in New York, which actually handles, you
9 know, this issue that we're talking about as
10 far as dilution of Hispanic voting power.

11 We would ask that you would actually
12 re-include, as it once was, Town and Country in
13 her district, which is a large Hispanic
14 neighborhood, because in the end, all of these
15 debates that we are having break down the
16 neighborhoods, you know, should this
17 neighborhood be in this district, should that
18 neighborhood be in that district, and you can't
19 properly draw these lines unless you take
20 neighborhoods into account. I, myself, am on
21 the Board of Directors for the Wellswood
22 neighborhood here, and we are very happy to
23 have Representative Cruz as our Representative.
24 We would ask that you keep our communities and
25 stop dividing them up.

1 I know it is going to come down to
2 Representative Young and Representative Cruz
3 getting together and deciding where they want
4 to draw their border at. So we would ask that
5 you draw everything between Hillsborough Avenue
6 and Waters Avenue and put that into District
7 58, and we would hope that they would work
8 together to do that.

9 People have concerns about gerrymandering,
10 and for many of you in the room, you talked
11 about 5 and 6 and you talked about
12 gerrymandering. Well, gerrymandering is
13 simple. If you direct yourself up to the House
14 districts, you can see that our esteemed Chair
15 Weatherford's district goes into Hillsborough
16 County. And we would ask, why is that
17 necessary when you represent pretty much all of
18 Pasco, why do you need that sliver, New Tampa?
19 That is what Amendments 5 and 6 were designed
20 to stop, and that is what we ask that you do is
21 that you make the districts compact, that you
22 take in our geographical boundaries and that
23 you do what the voters of the state of Florida
24 have asked you to do last November. Thank you
25 for your time.

1 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
2 Mr. Cano.

3 Our next speaker will be David -- is it
4 Kulscar? Kulcsar, thank you very much.

5 And since the hearing has begun, great
6 news. We have had another 34 people sign up to
7 speak since we started. So now -- now we are
8 into triple digits, and so, therefore, I am
9 going to take the prerogative of the Chair to
10 make sure we hear from as many as we can, and I
11 am going to ask if you could possibly hold your
12 verbal comments to about two minutes, and then
13 we will take your written comments and pass
14 them out to the committee and make sure they
15 are available to the public as well.

16 And with that, David, you are recognized.

17 MR. KULCSAR: Okay. I don't want to seem
18 like I hold any animosity towards any one of
19 you. I don't know any of you really that much
20 personally at all, so don't assume I am
21 attacking you. But as I stand here, I am
22 looking at the incoming Speaker of the House
23 and the incoming Senate President. These two
24 men have been ensured these positions based on
25 the predictability of the elections in our

1 Legislature, and of which they are in charge of
2 drawing the majorities for the 2012 session.

3 Masterfully, in 2002, the Republican party
4 in power has crafted a miraculous map that
5 ensured their lock on the state of Florida.
6 For the next ten years or so, the map has
7 pretty much done its job. However, this is
8 giving them a peace of mind to at least choose
9 people ahead of time. You have freshmen people
10 -- freshmen legislators being choosed to be
11 Speaker of the House, State Senate Presidents,
12 at the end of their eight-year terms and
13 eight-year term limits.

14 However, I feel this thing is a very
15 dangerous thing for our democracy. Our
16 predictability is making it very difficult for
17 us to really feel engaged with our Legislature
18 and our political system. If, say, you do
19 something very unpopular to the citizens of
20 Florida, we could vote you out. We want to
21 vote you out, but it may be pretty hard to. I
22 mean, we want more districts that are actually
23 more representative of the areas. And I have
24 drawn three maps for House, Senate and
25 Congress. A lot of them are swingy. I'm sorry,

1 but that's just how Florida is. We are not
2 called a swing state for nothing.

3 Now, I am not going to expect you guys to
4 draw maps that will draw yourselves out of a
5 job. That would be kind of futile to say,
6 wouldn't it? But I am going to say this: It
7 angers me as a voter, it repulses me as a
8 citizen and it depresses me as an American when
9 I see the maps that we have right now. Orlando
10 is sliced and diced four ways just so Winter
11 Park can have three Congressmen is wrong. And
12 when I also look at the maps we have in our
13 area, St. Petersburg -- the only person in St.
14 Petersburg that's actually really in District
15 12, I think -- or which one, Kathy Castor's
16 district -- is just the black section of it --

17 SENATOR GAETZ: And David, can I ask if
18 you might --

19 MR. KULCSAR: I am almost done.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: -- summarize?

21 MR. KULCSAR: Yeah. What I am saying is
22 simply we need to be honest and more equitable
23 in our districts at least, because Bill Young,
24 his district has been -- let's just put it this
25 way: Pinellas County has not voted for a

1 Republican President since George Bush, Sr.,
2 and Bill Young has stayed possibly a little bit
3 longer, whatnot, his district or whatnot could
4 be a little bit better if it had all Pinellas
5 County. So --

6 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
7 David, and our next speaker is Sharon Janis and
8 then Christopher Shalosky, and following
9 Christopher is Mickey Castor. And, again, we
10 ask, just in respect for all of those people
11 who have come who are your friends and
12 neighbors who want to speak behind you, if you
13 could hold your verbal comments to about two
14 minutes.

15 You are recognized.

16 MS. JANIS: I live in St. Petersburg
17 and --

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Could I ask you to pull
19 the mike up? Tommy, would you pull that up?
20 Please go ahead.

21 MS. JANIS: Okay. I am from St.
22 Petersburg, and I hope you will excuse me
23 reading a note from my Blackberry, because my
24 thoughts want to fly away with the butterflies
25 in my stomach, so -- for a long time, Florida

1 politicians have been drawing voting districts
2 in ways to keep themselves in office and to
3 favor their party. As you know, last November,
4 we, the people, overwhelmingly passed
5 Amendments 5 and 6 so that districts can be
6 drawn in ways that are fair and logical. They
7 would have districts drawn in ways that makes
8 them compact, equal in population, and they can
9 use the existing geographical boundaries.
10 Amendments 5 and 6 are conducive to two -- to
11 democracy. Real communities would have a
12 voice, instead of contrived ones.

13 As you know, districts would not be drawn
14 to favor or disfavor a particular candidate or
15 party, and the real reasons the court
16 challengers are there are simply about
17 protecting those in power. They are not really
18 about protecting minority rights or democracy.

19 Thank you.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
21 Sharon, for your good testimony.

22 Next, Christopher Shalosky and then Mickey
23 Castor with the League of Women Voters and then
24 Christine Goding with the Polk County Elections
25 Office.

1 Christopher, thank you for coming, and the
2 floor is yours.

3 MR. SHALOSKY: Thank you, sir. My name is
4 Chris Shalosky. I have been a resident of
5 Florida since 1988 and a resident of
6 Hillsborough County since 2004.

7 I just want to start by saying thank you
8 very much for having these public hearings.
9 The government works best when it is open and
10 transparent, and I, for one, am very happy and
11 very pleased that you guys are taking our
12 inputs first before you draw maps, because it
13 is usually done in darkness. We like it done
14 in the light. So thank you for listening to us
15 first.

16 I want to say that you guys have a very
17 difficult task ahead of you, Amendments 5 and 6
18 provide a lot of ambiguity, and I am just
19 afraid that that is going to be the lawyer
20 employment act of this year, because the people
21 that should be the winners in this
22 redistricting act are the people and it
23 shouldn't be tied up in the courts for years,
24 and I am just afraid it is.

25 And a lot of people have covered the

1 topics I wanted to cover, but one other one
2 that someone hasn't is that when we talk about
3 favoring or disfavoring a candidate, if you
4 take any part of a candidate's current district
5 away, aren't you disfavoring him? Those are
6 his current constituents, they are people who
7 vote for him. So if you take away part of his
8 current district, you are disfavoring him. So
9 I don't see how you can win with the way this
10 bill is written.

11 So I do appreciate the way you guys are
12 going about it, I think you've got a tough road
13 ahead of you, and I just wish you good luck.
14 Thank you.

15 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
16 Chris, appreciate it.

17 Next we will hear from Mickey Castor with
18 the League of Women Voters and then Christine
19 Goding with the Polk County Elections Office
20 and then Jack Keates with Tampa 912 Group.
21 Jack, if you will come down, please.

22 Ms. Castor, thank you for coming. It is
23 good to see you.

24 MS. CASTOR: Good to see all of you, and
25 thank you for coming and giving us an

1 opportunity to provide input.

2 I am the President of the Hillsborough
3 County League of Women Voters, and all of you
4 as members of the redistricting committee have
5 a very important responsibility. You have two
6 choices in how you carry out that
7 responsibility. You can continue on your
8 announced timeline of adopting the new maps in
9 March. This will result in confusion and chaos
10 for all concerned. Your own legislative
11 attorney said this timeline will create massive
12 voter confusion, chaos for all concerned.
13 Elections supervisors, you have heard from
14 Dr. Lennard, who talks about the difficulties
15 that this timeline would create for all
16 elections supervisors, for candidates and
17 potential candidates, who will have a very
18 short time frame to know what district they are
19 running in and how to mount a campaign, and
20 most of all, voters will be confused, because
21 they will have a very short time to get to know
22 the candidates in their district, the potential
23 candidates in their district. Surely your
24 commitment to good government will not allow
25 you to pursue such an outcome.

1 The alternative is you can follow the
2 timeline submitted to you on August 10th of
3 this year by the League of Women Voters of
4 Florida, Democracia, the NAACP and Common
5 Cause. How many of you have seen and agree
6 with that timeline? Anybody seen it? Good.

7 In summary, it asks four things: To
8 publish and commit to an accelerated
9 timeline --

10 SENATOR GAETZ: And, Ms. Castor, again,
11 out of respect for those behind you, could I
12 ask you to summarize, please?

13 MS. CASTOR: Yes.

14 -- adopt a rule requiring all maps to be
15 filed by October 3rd, adopt a rule requiring
16 all committee action on redistricting plans to
17 be completed by the end of 2011 and adopt a
18 rule requiring all plans to be voted on the
19 first week of the session.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you.

21 MS. CASTOR: This will not deviate from
22 your constitutional requirements. You can do
23 it. We hope you will. Thank you.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. Castor,
25 very useful testimony.

1 And now, Christine Goding with the Polk
2 County Elections Office, then Jack Keates with
3 Tampa 912 Group and then Scott Barrish.

4 Ms. Goding, thank you very much for being
5 here.

6 MS. GODING: Thank you for giving me the
7 chance to speak. I am the Deputy Supervisor of
8 Elections from Polk County, as you said, and
9 this is the third redistricting process that I
10 will be going through. I have been with the
11 office for 20 years. I am thankful that we all
12 have so much better tools to use as we go
13 through this process now, but as Dr. Lennard
14 spoke earlier, we do have a lot of work to get
15 done in a short time frame. So I really just
16 want to echo what he had to say and just ask
17 for as much time as we can to get the
18 information out to the voters and get the right
19 ballot to the right voters, because of that
20 timeline with -- you know, if you finish at the
21 best possible time scenario, we have two weeks
22 to get absentee ballots out to our overseas
23 voters. So thank you for that consideration.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. Goding, and
25 I hope that you will have a chance to stay to

1 the end of the hearing, as well as Ms. Castor,
2 because occasionally there are some things that
3 get put into the bloodstream, and after a while
4 they actually sound like facts, and I think you
5 will get some reassurance when you hear from
6 the Speaker Designate later.

7 Jack Keates. Jack, thanks for coming
8 tonight, giving us your time.

9 MR. KEATES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman,
10 members of the jury.

11 SENATOR GAETZ: That is the jury.

12 MR. KEATES: I know, I know. I was going
13 to mention that.

14 I didn't bring any maps tonight. I didn't
15 bring any fancy terminology. I brought an
16 experience.

17 Last year before the November election, I
18 was driving down 41 through Parrish -- or,
19 pardon me, Palmetto, down in northern Manatee
20 County, and saw a sign -- pardon me, multiple
21 signs for Kathy Castor. I honestly don't
22 remember if I saw any for Senator Joyner, but I
23 do remember because Kathy Castor, whatever you
24 think of her politically -- I live just outside
25 of Temple Terrace. That is 40 miles between

1 there and down there.

2 That is one of the reasons why I am here
3 tonight is because we are gerrymandered.
4 Whether we like it or not, Florida has a
5 problem. It is in your hands. I don't -- I
6 don't envy you your job, I really don't,
7 Republican or Democrat, I don't care. It would
8 be easy to just say, "fix it," but you are not
9 going to be able to make everybody happy. I
10 don't even expect you to make me happy, but
11 please, please work on it. Keep these citizens
12 in mind.

13 I didn't realize until I came in here
14 today, although I have heard some of your
15 reruns, and they are pretty good, and I have
16 heard other people who feel like I do, it is
17 always nice to know the majority of these
18 people in this county feel the same way.

19 Thank you.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much. Thank
21 you, Jack. And we heard, by the way, Jack, up
22 in Alachua County from a civics teacher who I
23 think was an official of the Democratic party,
24 so, therefore, he had to be trusted, being a
25 civics teacher, of course, that gerrymandering

1 didn't get its start in Florida or even with
2 Governor Elbridge Gerry in Massachusetts, but
3 it was that rascal Patrick Henry who drew some
4 strange lines to try to push his enemy, James
5 Madison, out of a congressional seat. So it is
6 all of the way back to those rascals Patrick
7 Henry and James Madison. We are in good
8 company.

9 Scott Barrish is next, and following
10 Mr. Barrish, Adriane Lunny and then Vera
11 Chapman.

12 Mr. Barrish, you are recognized, and we
13 are pleased you are here.

14 MR. BARRISH: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

15 My name is Scott Barrish. I have been a
16 Hillsborough County resident for over ten
17 years, very active in local and state politics,
18 as some of you here on this panel are well
19 aware.

20 Amendments 5 and 6 that was passed this
21 election cycle, who wouldn't want fair
22 districts? However, when you read those
23 amendments, the terms are very ambiguous and
24 vague, and it's going to be extremely difficult
25 for this body to come up with concrete

1 definitions of those terms and come to an
2 agreement on how to draw these districts. As
3 much as you want to do it and pass it in the
4 Legislature, it is going to go to the courts,
5 and that is not fair. We cannot hold the
6 judges accountable, but we can hold you
7 accountable. So please work on getting these
8 definitions and passing these districts in the
9 Legislature. Thank you.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
11 Mr. Barrish.

12 Next, Adriane Lunny, if you are here,
13 Ms. Lunny, and then Vera Chapman, and then if
14 Joseph McCormick will come down to the on deck
15 circle, we would be grateful.

16 Ms. Lunny, thank you so much for being
17 here tonight, and you are recognized.

18 MS. LUNNY: My name is Adriane Lunny, I am
19 from Sun City Center, Florida, and I won't take
20 your time repeating what other people have
21 said. I would just like to remind you that
22 Amendments 5 and 6 were passed by a majority of
23 voters, Independents, Republicans and
24 Democrats. It was not a one-party deal. Thank
25 you.

1 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much,
2 Ms. Lunny.

3 Vera Chapman. How are you?

4 MS. CHAPMAN: Doing just fine.

5 SENATOR GAETZ: Good to see you. We are
6 delighted you are here, and you are recognized.

7 MS. CHAPMAN: Thank you, thank you. Let
8 me get this down.

9 I am from Sun City Center. I am a -- I
10 live in a community of about 20,000 people. In
11 season, we have 20,000. This time of the year,
12 we don't.

13 Sad to say, it depends on which side of
14 Route 674 who represents you, and that causes a
15 lot of confusion. Maybe that is what you want.
16 I would certainly hope not. To give you
17 further definition, my Congressman -- I'm in
18 Congressional District 12, Senate District 10
19 and State House 63.

20 Sixty-three percent of Floridians voted
21 for fair districts. No statewide elected
22 official got 63 percent of the vote. And I
23 know that percentage is higher than many of you
24 got. Even Dean Cannon didn't get 63 percent.

25 We are the people. You need to stop

1 wasting our time and our money on these sham
2 hearings and your desire to overturn 5 and 6.

3 I am old enough to be the mother of some
4 of you here on this panel, and I can assure
5 you, if you were my child, you would be taken
6 behind the shed and it would be a darn stiff
7 switch that would take your hineys.

8 Use the Fair Districts rules when you draw
9 your official maps. Finally, if you do not
10 understand terminology like "compact,"
11 "contiguous," "fair," I recommend you buy a
12 dictionary.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you. And now from
14 the other side of the woodshed, Joseph
15 McCormick, and following Mr. McCormick, we have
16 Judy Davis McCormick. You are related?

17 MR. McCORMICK: Spouse, yes.

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Okay. And you are not
19 going to let her speak first?

20 MR. McCORMICK: Well, I was, but you
21 called me down first, so I came first.

22 SENATOR GAETZ: Okay, okay, because if she
23 spoke first, then that way you could make your
24 remarks consistent. Now you are on your own,
25 my friend.

1 MR. McCORMICK: Okay, I will let her speak
2 first.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: All right. Wise man, wise
4 man. Judy, you are recognized.

5 MS. McCORMICK: He knows when to give up
6 the floor.

7 I am Judy Davis McCormick. I have lived
8 in Florida for 40 years, and lived in Tampa for
9 17 years, I guess, the same amount of time I
10 have been married to this wonderful man.

11 During the last several days, I have been
12 working on creating district maps. The My
13 District Builder website is very easy to use as
14 long as I am keeping the districts very simple
15 and straightforward. When working on areas of
16 the state where I have lived, Tampa,
17 Tallahassee, Panama City, Ft. Walton and the
18 Keys, I have no problem. The difficulty comes
19 when I start trying to keep like communities
20 together and other areas with which I am not so
21 familiar.

22 While doing this exercise, it occurred to
23 me that the group of people most qualified to
24 understand the various communities in all areas
25 are the elected county Supervisors of

1 Elections. I understand, as Dr. Lennard has
2 said, that they have created the VDTs, but --
3 and -- I'm sorry -- that they have created the
4 VDTs. I changed my notes. But perhaps if this
5 group were given more of a role in
6 redistricting in the future, the process would
7 be made simpler. Not only do they know their
8 areas better than outsiders, they also know the
9 difficulties in creating the many complicated
10 ballots that are required for each election,
11 and they are elected without political
12 affiliation since 2008.

13 As an added benefit of placing the
14 responsibilities on the 67 county supervisors,
15 the legislators of our state would be removed
16 from any cloud of suspicion that they are
17 creating districts to benefit their own
18 political parties.

19 Perhaps the next amendment Florida voters
20 should consider is to remove the charge of
21 redistricting from the legislators and place it
22 in the capable hands of the state's county
23 Supervisors of Elections. Thank you.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much. And
25 now we will hear from the lower chamber of the

1 house of McCormick. Joseph McCormick, thank
2 you very much for being here. You now know
3 which lines to stay within.

4 MR. McCORMICK: That is right, thank you.
5 I will be brief. Thank you for the opportunity
6 to speak today on redistricting.

7 By way of disclosure, I signed the Fair
8 District petition, contributed a small amount
9 of money to help pass it and voted for them. I
10 would ask any members of either the House
11 Redistricting or the Senate Reapportionment
12 Committee to remove themselves from their
13 committee if they have any conflict of interest
14 or perceivable conflict of interest in this
15 matter.

16 For example, Senator Gaetz, you -- the
17 website shows that you have -- you also lead
18 the Florida Leadership Alliance. That group
19 has contributed \$10,000 to the legal defense
20 funds of U.S. Representatives Mario Diaz-Balart
21 and Corrine Brown. That lawsuit attempts to
22 defeat the restructuring -- the redistricting
23 amendments as they relate to federal voting
24 districts. This apparent conflict of interest
25 seems an easy target for any future lawsuit to

1 overturn the actions of the 2012 Legislature in
2 drawing up new congressional districts and, in
3 turn, state redistricting.

4 In the best interest of the people of
5 Florida, if any of you have such a conflict of
6 interest, please remove yourself from your
7 Senate or House committee before taking any
8 action on this when committee meetings begin in
9 September. You will restore a huge amount of
10 confidence of the people of Florida in their
11 elected representatives if you will do so.
12 Thank you.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much. And,
14 Mr. McCormick, I hope you will have a chance to
15 stay until the end. I think you will be able
16 to get some information that might disabuse you
17 of any you might have there.

18 John -- is it Teti with the League of
19 Women Voters? And John, I'm sorry I didn't
20 give you a long enough heads-up, but following
21 John, Charlie Touchton and then Mark Smith.

22 John, did I get your name right?

23 MR. TETI: It is John Teti.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Teti. I am very sorry,
25 sir. You are recognized.

1 MR. TETI: Thank you. Welcome to Tampa,
2 distinguished visitors. I really do appreciate
3 the opportunity tonight.

4 I am speaking on behalf of the League of
5 Women Voters. I wish to apologize, first of
6 all, to the Legislature, because somehow we,
7 the people, didn't make ourselves clear in
8 November. We told you what we wanted. We, the
9 people, sent you to Tallahassee to -- with an
10 unambiguous mandate with the passage of
11 Amendments 5 and 6. Yet we obviously left
12 leaving you something that you didn't
13 understand.

14 You joined in a lawsuit to defeat that,
15 and we asked you to drop that lawsuit, stop
16 spending our money, we, the people, stop that
17 immediately, and it is a wasteful and foolish
18 effort.

19 Having watched some of the videos of the
20 past conferences across the state, it would
21 still seem that you are dumbfounded in not
22 understanding what we, the people, are asking
23 for.

24 Let me add the voice for all here tonight
25 in saying that we, the people, sent you,

1 everyone, to Tallahassee to draw the districts.
2 It is not for us, the League of Women Voters,
3 or any other entity to actually draw them. We
4 can give you recommendations, and the League as
5 individuals are doing so, but the League will
6 not draw the -- as we did in 2000, because you
7 didn't listen to us. You completely ignored --
8 we spent a lot of money, and you completely
9 ignored what we did.

10 So we ask that you draw your maps, get on
11 with the job, and we want you to do this before
12 the end of March -- no, March 9th. We want to
13 see the maps in January. So thank you very
14 much.

15 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Teti.

16 Charlie Touchton is next, and following
17 Charlie Touchton, Mark Smith and then Kenneth
18 Key, if you will please come down and take your
19 seat in the on deck circle.

20 Mr. Touchton, thank you for coming and
21 sharing your views with the committee.

22 MR. TOUCHTON: Thank you, Senator Gaetz.

23 Good afternoon, I am Charlie Touchton. I
24 live in South Tampa. I have lived in Florida
25 most of my life and in Tampa most of that time.

1 Number one, I really appreciate this
2 opportunity to talk to all of you and give you
3 one set of inputs relative to the task you have
4 in front of you. It is a challenging effort, I
5 know, and I don't envy you. And yet I can look
6 at the Amendments 5 and 6 and the broad
7 guidelines that those two amendments present to
8 you, and I wind up being fairly comfortable.
9 Admittedly, compact is kind of hard, and
10 practical might be kind of hard, but if I look
11 at it in terms of four fundamentals that I call
12 fair, balanced, cohesive and logical.

13 Fair and balanced is fairly
14 straightforward. All I am looking for there is
15 for every voter in every district to feel like
16 he has an opportunity to be heard and an
17 opportunity to reach out and touch his
18 legislator as I am able to do locally, to reach
19 out and touch my Senator as I am able to do
20 locally, and even though it is across the bay,
21 and therefore it is somewhat of a stretch and I
22 can talk to him -- to Dana more easily more
23 than I can talk to Jack, but at the same time,
24 that is the kind of reach-out that is
25 important.

1 The second piece, however, gets a little
2 bit more complicated, and that's where we get
3 to cohesive. Cohesive, compact, hard to say
4 exactly how you separate those two, but if we
5 look at House District 56 reaching from
6 Westchase on one end, I think, down to
7 Riverview on the other end, that is not compact
8 and that is not cohesive. You can't reach out
9 and touch. I am fortunate because I live in
10 South Tampa, and that is in the center. But if
11 I were -- if I were somebody that lived in
12 Westchase, and my Representative were down in
13 Riverview, that would be a problem.

14 Similarly, going across the river --
15 across the bay to St. Petersburg, similarly, if
16 we go into District 11, it just doesn't make
17 sense, and that is where --

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Charlie, if I could get
19 you to bring it in for a landing.

20 MR. TOUCHTON: Yes, sir.

21 The -- try to reach out and touch --
22 Manatee doesn't make sense. The -- Pinellas
23 County in the case of District 11 doesn't make
24 sense. So what we need is to tighten our
25 boundaries however you find it in your best

1 interest to do so and --

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you. Thank you very
3 much.

4 MR. TOUCHTON: -- I think we can do that.
5 Thank you very much, Senator. I appreciate the
6 opportunity to speak.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Yes, sir, of course.
8 Thank you for your testimony.

9 Mark Smith is next, and following
10 Mr. Smith, we will have Kenneth Key, and then
11 if Ella Coffee would please come down and be
12 ready to testify.

13 Mr. Smith, thank you for coming, and you
14 are recognized, sir.

15 MR. SMITH: Thank you, and thank you for
16 giving me this opportunity --

17 SENATOR GAETZ: And if you could pull the
18 mike up, that way everyone can hear your
19 testimony.

20 MR. SMITH: Thank you.

21 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, sir.

22 MR. SMITH: I appreciate that.

23 My name is Mark Smith. I am a resident of
24 Valrico, District 9. I am here today to
25 request the redistricting committee consider

1 leaving all of Valrico with -- and east
2 Hillsborough in District 9 for two reasons.
3 The first and foremost is that we want
4 Congressman Bilirakis to remain our
5 Congressional Representative. Second, we want
6 to remain with District 9 because this district
7 best represents our community.

8 In recent years, we have seen the failure
9 of corporations, financial institutions and
10 foreign governments. We have witnessed the
11 fundamental transformation of our healthcare
12 system and the near collapse of our very own
13 federal government. The change we are
14 experiencing is traumatic and is tearing apart
15 the social fabric of our society.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Sir, I need you to bring
17 it back to redistricting, please.

18 MR. SMITH: This district in District 9,
19 this is a multi-county band of bedroom
20 communities composed of commuters,
21 professionals, military veterans and small
22 business owners. This district is a homogenous
23 district, and the last thing that we want
24 changed is our congressional district where a
25 new Congressman's ideology will contrast with

1 the interests of our community. There is a
2 high potential that a new representative would
3 support their traditional base at the expense
4 of newly acquired voters and destabilize our
5 current effect of political representation.

6 There are two ways to divide up districts:
7 Geography or demographics. Because we are
8 largely a suburban district, our need for
9 representation differs at many levels from
10 neighboring districts. It would be a
11 disservice to assimilate parts of District 9
12 into districts with urban areas, as it would be
13 a disservice to the urban voters as well. I
14 believe a representative is at their best when
15 they are representing a defined group of
16 voters. When that interest is split, one group
17 will be favored at the expense of the other.
18 We will have a more effective representation
19 using our current demographic boundaries.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.
21 We appreciate your testimony.

22 Next we will hear from Kenneth Key,
23 please. Kenneth, thank you for being here
24 tonight, then Ella Coffee and then Dan
25 Raulerson -- Raulerson, I apologize, Mayor of

1 the City of Plant City.

2 Kenneth, thank you for coming, and you are
3 recognized. Go Rays.

4 MR. KEY: Thank you for the opportunity to
5 speak here tonight. I agree with many of the
6 people that have spoken before, so I am not
7 going to -- try not to repeat too much of it.

8 But one of the things that the committee
9 and the Legislature needs to keep in mind is
10 the fact that an overwhelming majority of the
11 populous did approve Amendments 5 and 6, and it
12 is not very difficult to understand what the
13 terminology means. It is common sense. Chris
14 Hart actually said something earlier, which I
15 think may be the first time I have agreed with
16 him politically, but having the south St.
17 Petersburg part of Kathy Castor's district
18 makes no sense, unless you are gerrymandering.
19 It just -- it doesn't.

20 So if you use common sense -- and he also
21 looked back at the reason why 5 and 6 were
22 necessary to begin with. If the Legislature 10
23 years ago and 20 years ago had done their job
24 and drawn fair districts that made some
25 semblance lanes of sense, 5 and 6 would have

1 never happened, all right. We elect you to use
2 common sense, because it is like both parties
3 do it, you know. The Democrats did it just 20
4 years ago, you guys did it 10 years ago. Well,
5 let's break the cycle.

6 I do have two questions real quick I did
7 want to ask for the record, one of which is, is
8 there any private entity contributing funds to
9 help for the preparation of any map by any
10 Legislature? And, also -- and I think that
11 comes to conflict of interest, but also
12 Representative Precourt at the Boca Raton
13 hearing said that the House and Senate used
14 different District Builder software. What is
15 the difference between the two, are they using
16 the same data, and are there private software
17 programs being used to draw maps?

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Great questions, and we
19 will get those answers for you at the end,
20 assuming we have a little bit of time left.

21 Next, Ella Coffee, and then following
22 Ms. Coffee, Mayor Raulerson, and then Mike -- I
23 think it is Pheneger, I apologize if I
24 mispronounce, President of the ACLU of Florida.

25 Ms. Coffee, thank you for coming, and you

1 are recognized.

2 MS. COFFEE: Thank you. My name is Ella
3 K. Coffee, and I hope that buys me a couple
4 extra moments with Representative Weatherford
5 there. I reside in State House District 67.
6 The majority of that district is in Manatee and
7 Sarasota Counties. The district office is in
8 Sarasota. There isn't a district office in
9 Hillsborough County. I don't have as much in
10 common with the communities in Manatee and
11 Sarasota that I do in Hillsborough. Our
12 children attended public schools here in
13 Hillsborough County. Our youngest is actually
14 attending Thomas Jefferson High School where we
15 are tonight, as a senior and a member of the
16 AAA state champions, which will probably now
17 take those few moments from Representative
18 Weatherford now. We shop, we play and we vote
19 here in Hillsborough County. My representation
20 should be from Hillsborough County. I should
21 be able to visit an office in Hillsborough
22 County. District 56 fits that criteria. That
23 district office is in Riverview, which is my
24 community.

25 District 63, which is represented also by

1 a Representative out of the county in Polk
2 County, his office is in Lakeland. District 67
3 backs up to 63. Again, those Representatives
4 that are my neighbors should not have to travel
5 out of the county to visit their
6 Representative. Our boundaries for District 56
7 should include east of Interstate 75 to Balm
8 Boyette Road and south to State Road 672.

9 District 59 boundaries should continue up
10 41 to State Road 582, to include citizens that
11 share the same city council, county
12 commissioners, but remembering that communities
13 share the same interests.

14 District 58 should continue northwest from
15 Hillsborough Avenue to Sligh Avenue and
16 continue over west with the current boundaries.

17 The minority districts must be preserved.
18 The redistricting process is in place to ensure
19 we are represented by those who share our
20 community's interests, values and beliefs, and
21 who will be accountable to the citizens.
22 Communities share common languages,
23 characteristics such as housing, economic
24 factors, education, working in the same
25 industries, racial and ethnic commonalities.

1 When drawing maps --

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. Coffee.

3 Could you conclude very, very quickly?

4 MS. COFFEE: Sure.

5 When drawing maps, they should be
6 continuous as it relates to communities. Help
7 make Florida as good as America's promise, one
8 person, one vote. Ensure that none of our
9 minority seats are held -- none of our minority
10 seats that are currently held end up being
11 fractured or cracked. Thank you.

12 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
13 Ms. Coffee.

14 Mr. Mayor, thank you for your service to
15 the community, and we are anxious to hear your
16 testimony, and following your testimony, it is
17 Mike Pheneger, I think -- is that correct --
18 with the ACLU, and then Evelito Otero, I
19 believe.

20 Mr. Mayor.

21 MAYOR RAULERSON: Thank you, Senator, and
22 first of all, thank all of you for being here.
23 Not only do you have a tough job, but you have
24 been threatened to be taken to the woodshed.
25 Now, I saw a bunch of you straighten up in your

1 seats when she said that, so apparently there's
2 enough of you up there old enough to know what
3 that really means. I won't say which ones, but
4 what I want to do first of all is to thank you.
5 I will be short, which is not my nature, but I
6 do want to say that we are -- in east
7 Hillsborough County, in the Plant City area, we
8 are happy with our current representation, both
9 at the state level and the federal level. We
10 represent the areas -- or the areas we are
11 represented by are 9 and 12. We are very happy
12 with those people, and we would really like for
13 you guys to figure out a way that we could get
14 a third one in there somehow. We would love to
15 have three U.S. Representatives from the Plant
16 City area.

17 However, practicality being what it is,
18 the most important thing I think is that we
19 need to understand -- and it has been
20 articulated by people before me very well, so I
21 will be short. We have a very
22 agricultural/industrial base group of people
23 and economy in east Hillsborough County. So
24 what we would ask is that you take that into
25 consideration and make sure that the

1 agricultural interests of Hillsborough County,
2 which is 62nd in the country in terms of all of
3 the counties of the United States in
4 agricultural production. And when you grow
5 food, and we have talked about how important
6 jobs are, when you grow food, folks, you grow
7 jobs, and that is important to this economy.
8 And east Hillsborough County and Hillsborough
9 County in general has done an extremely good
10 job of growing those jobs and growing the food
11 that feed the rest of the world.

12 In closing, I would certainly like to wish
13 you well, God speed and God bless you, good
14 luck. Thank you.

15 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
16 Mr. Mayor, and thank you for your service to
17 the people of your community.

18 Mike, I think I butchered your name.

19 MR. PHENEGER: It is Pheneger.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Say again, sir.

21 MR. PHENEGER: Say that P-h as an F, like
22 in telephone.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: Okay.

24 MR. PHENEGER: It is Pheneger.

25 SENATOR GAETZ: Okay. Thank you for

1 correcting me. And after your testimony,
2 Evelio Otero and then Maria Elbilbaisi, I
3 think. And I apologize, I know I messed that
4 one up.

5 Mike, you are recognized. Thanks for
6 coming.

7 MR. PHENEGER: Thank you. I am the
8 President of the ACLU of Florida. I am also a
9 retired Army colonel. I retired after a couple
10 of tours out at MacDill Air Force Base where I
11 was the Director of Intelligence for Special
12 Operations Command.

13 We are very interested in this thing. I
14 want to say dittos to Mickey Castor and the
15 elections supervisors on issues of timing, but
16 I would like to kind of take on the critics of
17 5 and 6, because I have noticed Representative
18 Weatherford here nodding a lot of the time when
19 they were up here.

20 They say that the words are vague and
21 ambiguous. Well, there's not much more vague
22 and ambiguous than nothing, and because without
23 5 and 6, that is what you've got, nothing. The
24 only guideline you have is to make the
25 districts relatively equal in population, okay.

1 So we have given you some districts. Now, I
2 think these are pretty easy to do. After equal
3 in population, you can say contiguous. A
4 district that is contiguous isn't separated by
5 Lake Okeechobee or Tampa Bay, things like that.
6 A district that is compact doesn't begin on the
7 east coast of the state of Florida and end up
8 in Ft. Myers. That is not compact. So we can
9 see that these districts, they may be subject
10 to some interpretation, they are there. All of
11 this is, in fact, possible.

12 Now, the other thing I would like to do is
13 talk a little bit about the districts and the
14 citizens-developed districts, because I have
15 heard Representative Weatherford now talk about
16 that twice, and using that as a basis. I must
17 tell you that I have my suspicions about using
18 citizens-established districts as the basis for
19 your consideration. First, elections have
20 consequences, and for better or for worse, we
21 have given you the job, okay. It is your
22 responsibility to draw the districts and apply
23 the constitutional standards.

24 The second thing I would like to say is
25 that I would be suspicious that you all have

1 kind of done the equivalent of salting the mine
2 and putting out districts from so-called
3 members of the citizenry to --

4 SENATOR GAETZ: Mike --

5 MR. PHENEGER: -- kind of conform to what
6 you want to do.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Colonel, in deference to
8 those behind you, if I could get you to wrap
9 up, sir.

10 MR. PHENEGER: I will wrap up, and I will
11 simply wrap up with this: If you all produce a
12 set of districts where each of you is not
13 absolutely sure that you are going to be
14 reelected, then maybe you all have done the
15 job. Thank you.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Colonel, and
17 thank you for your service to our country.

18 MR. PHENEGER: I have a gift for you.
19 Show me the maps. I will give one to each of
20 you.

21 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you. I always need
22 another campaign button. I can put it next to
23 my Spiro is the one.

24 Now, Evelio Otero. Did I pronounce that
25 name correctly?

1 MR. OTERO: Yes, you did. Before you did
2 it, only my mother used to call me Evelito.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Evelito.

4 MR. OTERO: So Evelio is my name.

5 SENATOR GAETZ: Evelio. So I got it
6 right?

7 MR. OTERO: You got it.

8 SENATOR GAETZ: Good. You are recognized.

9 MR. OTERO: Yes. Ladies and gentlemen, I
10 am Evelio Otero, I am also a retired colonel
11 from MacDill, and special operations commando
12 was my last assignment where we developed
13 international agreements and SOF, Special
14 Operations, and I also worked in Intelligence
15 with a central commander in the war beginning
16 on September 11, that is when we started, and
17 one thing that I learned that you are doing
18 very well is that intelligence comes before
19 operations. You are the infantry. We are
20 providing you the intelligence. It is very
21 difficult to do it the other way around. If
22 you develop the maps and nobody knows what is
23 going on, then it is going to be
24 self-defeating. So what you are doing right
25 now, obtaining the intelligence from us so you

1 can go ahead and develop the appropriate maps
2 is the way to go. I applaud you for that.

3 I also wanted to -- I also wanted you
4 folks to know that being a member of the Tampa
5 community since 1997 and having been one of the
6 senior-ranking Hispanics in Central Command and
7 the most senior-ranking Hispanic in Special
8 Operations Command, I am in touch with that
9 community. I am very much in touch with the
10 Hispanic community, and I would encourage you
11 to maintain the community as it is, to maintain
12 the integrity of the community, whether it is
13 in House 58, whether it is in the Senate 18,
14 Districts 18 and 58, please maintain them as
15 such. When it comes to the Congressional
16 district, the Congressional District 11, that
17 is fine, except Pinellas, which makes no sense
18 whatsoever. They are great people, love them
19 to death, I go there a lot to smoke my cigars,
20 but when it comes to political reasons, we
21 don't have anything in common. There are
22 issues that need to be discussed when it comes
23 to funding from universities, when it comes to
24 baseball parks, et cetera, that if there is no
25 actual representation for those -- for those

1 specific districts, it is self-defeating.

2 I just want to say thank you very much for
3 everything you are doing. I respect you very
4 much, and maintain your duty of elegance.

5 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
6 Colonel.

7 And, Maria -- I am going to try this --
8 Elbilbaisi.

9 MS. ELBILBAISI: Yes.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: Elbilbaisi. Maria
11 Elbilbaisi, thank you for being with us
12 tonight, and following Maria's testimony,
13 Carole Torres and then Benito Torres.

14 And you are recognized, ma'am. Thank you
15 for coming.

16 MS. ELBILBAISI: Thank you, members, for
17 coming here today to listen to us --

18 SENATOR GAETZ: And I apologize, ma'am, if
19 you could speak directly into the microphone,
20 that way everybody can hear you.

21 MS. ELBILBAISI: Thank you, members, for
22 coming here today to listen to us on a critical
23 issue that, depending on what you do, could
24 empower us or could diminish us.

25 My name is Maria, and I live in Ybor

1 neighborhood, a proud historical black
2 community of Tampa. At this time, House
3 District 59 is a minority black district, and
4 that I ask you to uphold in the State Senate
5 and in Congress, united with other communities
6 in Bradenton and St. Petersburg. We have the
7 opportunity to participate in the political
8 process and elect a Representative of our
9 choice. I ask you to maintain these districts
10 to give us a voice. The Florida Constitution
11 requires you. Thank you.

12 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
13 Maria, we appreciate your testimony.

14 And next, Carole Torres, please, and
15 following Carole Torres, Benito Torres, and
16 then Pat Spencer.

17 Ms. Torres, you are recognized. Thank you
18 for coming and sharing your thoughts tonight.

19 MS. TORRES: Thank you. My name is Carole
20 Torres, and I appreciate all of you listening
21 to all of us this evening. I will be brief,
22 because I know there are others behind me.

23 I am mainly here to ask you not to turn
24 back the wheels of political progress that we
25 have -- the black community here in Tampa have

1 witnessed in the past decades. The black
2 community in House District 59 constitutes a
3 majority, and we don't want this district split
4 up. In the State Senate and in Congress, our
5 community, along with others in Tampa Bay, form
6 majority districts that give us the ability to
7 elect a Representative of our choice. The
8 Voting Rights Act and Amendment 5 and 6 require
9 you to keep our community empowered. Not
10 following the law will result in unnecessary
11 and expensive lawsuits. They can be avoided if
12 you get it right the first time. Thank you so
13 much.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much, ma'am.
15 And now we will hear from Benito Torres.
16 Benito, you were wise to let Carole go first.
17 And you are recognized, sir, and we are pleased
18 that you took time out of your day to come and
19 testify before the committee.

20 MR. TORRES: Thank you. I would like to
21 welcome everybody. I have lived in Tampa since
22 1973.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: Could you speak directly
24 into the mike, because there are some folks in
25 the way back who could not hear you, sir?

1 MR. TORRES: Okay. I said I would just
2 like to welcome everybody, and I have lived in
3 Tampa just about since -- about the time since
4 I left New York City, that was 1973. So I
5 currently reside in the State House District 59
6 where we are proud to be represented by Betty
7 Reed. I also take part in electing our State
8 Senator, Arthenia Joyner, and Castor in the
9 U.S. House. In the State House seat, the black
10 community forms the majority. In the House,
11 Senate and in the U.S. House together, we --
12 with Hispanic voters, we form a
13 majority-minority district. We elect
14 candidates who know the needs of our community,
15 and we like it this way. I ask that when
16 redrawing the district boundaries, you maintain
17 these districts as much as possible so that our
18 voice stays strong and we are not weakened.
19 Thank you.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very, very much,
21 sir. We appreciate that. And in this part of
22 our hearing, we are going to take a short
23 break, but in this part of our hearing, Pat
24 Spencer is going to be our final speaker, and
25 then don't go away, because we have lots more

1 folks who would like to share their views.

2 Ms. Spencer, thank you for coming tonight,
3 and we look forward to anything you may have to
4 share with us.

5 MS. SPENCER: Thank you very much. I,
6 too, would like to say thanks to all of you for
7 coming, and if you will notice, I am watching
8 each and every one of you, because I have read
9 so much about you, and I read about you,
10 especially during the sessions, but when you
11 can put a face with a name that you have read,
12 then when I read, I will know who I am upset
13 with or who I am pleased with. So thank you
14 for coming.

15 And maybe I don't agree with what
16 everybody has said, because a lot of people
17 have said the way you are doing the hearings
18 and doing your maps and not having the maps
19 here, I do not agree with that. So I am going
20 to be very brief with what I am saying and ask
21 that once you get all of the information at the
22 hearings and you get your maps drawn, in your
23 schedule will you please try to put in some
24 time that you can come back to the citizens and
25 let us see what you are presenting to us, and

1 that way, we can have some input. Thank you
2 and God bless.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
4 Ms. Spencer. And we will take a 15-minute
5 recess, but don't go away, come back after 15
6 minutes.

7 (Brief recess taken.)

8 SENATOR GAETZ: Would you start over?

9 MS. RACHEL: Yes.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: And would you speak
11 directly into the mike, please?

12 MS. RACHEL: Yes. My name is Wanda
13 Rachel, and I am a resident of Hillsborough
14 County and I have been a resident for over 40
15 years and I am a commercial truck driver. And
16 I am here today as a member of the
17 African-American community here in Tampa to ask
18 you to please reserve our vote when you redraw
19 your district lines.

20 Amendment 5 and 6, passed by over
21 60 percent of the voters, guarantees us our
22 rights as minorities to participate in the
23 political process and to elect representatives
24 of our choice. So I hope you will remain -- I
25 hope you will maintain the district that

1 currently allows us to have that
2 representation.

3 House District 59 is very important to us
4 as black minority-majority district. Please
5 don't undo that. Also, please uphold Senate
6 District 18 and Congressional District 11 as
7 districts that let African-Americans and
8 Hispanics from around Tampa Bay join together
9 to elect candidates of our choice.

10 Please follow the law and let our voices
11 be heard at all levels of the government, and
12 thank you for your time.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. Rachel,
14 very much for your testimony tonight.

15 Next we will hear from Willie James
16 Jackson, and following Mr. Jackson, Eva
17 Collette, and then Patricia W. Hall from the
18 League of Women Voters.

19 Mr. Jackson, thank you for coming, and you
20 have the floor, sir.

21 MR. JACKSON: Okay. Hillsborough 3 --
22 good afternoon. My name is Willie Jackson. I
23 am a native of Florida -- I mean, Tampa,
24 Florida.

25 SENATOR GAETZ: Could you pull the

1 microphone up just a little bit?

2 MR. JACKSON: I have been from Tampa,
3 Florida, for 60 years. I appreciate -- I
4 appreciate you -- I can't get this right. I
5 have to hold it up. I appreciate you coming
6 here to listen to us.

7 My main concern here today is to urge you
8 all to continue to -- the political progress
9 that we in the black community have witnessed
10 -- have witnessed here in the Tampa Bay area
11 over the past few decades.

12 In House District 59, the black community
13 is the majority, and we may -- I'm sorry -- we
14 want you to keep it that way. In the state --
15 in the State Senate and Congress -- Congress,
16 uniting with Hispanics would form a coalition
17 district, allowing us the ability to select a
18 Representative of our choice.

19 I would like to remind you legislators
20 that not only are we -- are you legally
21 required to keep our community empowered, but
22 it is just the right thing to do. Thank you.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you. Thank you very
24 much, Mr. Jackson. Great testimony.

25 Eva Collette is next, and following Ms.

1 Collette, Patricia Hall, and after Ms. Hall
2 speaks, Kathy Brown.

3 Ms. Collette, thank you for coming and
4 taking time from your evening to share your
5 views.

6 MS. COLLETTE: Thank you. I just am in
7 such awe that y'all have sat here for so long
8 and listened to so many people's different
9 views. I thank you for listening to mine. I
10 am going to speak very slowly so y'all know
11 exactly what I am speaking about.

12 I agree with Dr. Lennard and Mr. Wolff. I
13 see Mr. Wolff is no longer here, he has left,
14 but those -- they had my -- they said
15 everything I wanted to say, and I didn't want
16 to leave and y'all call my name and I am gone.
17 Thank you very much.

18 SENATOR GAETZ: We appreciate your taking
19 time, and your comment's important to us.

20 Next is Patricia Hall with the League of
21 Women Voters, and then Kathy Brown and then
22 Michael Weinbaum.

23 Ms. Hall, retired teacher?

24 MS. HALL: Yes.

25 SENATOR GAETZ: Glad to have you here

1 tonight.

2 MS. HALL: Retired teacher from Jefferson
3 High School, no doubt.

4 SENATOR GAETZ: All right.

5 MS. HALL: The Legislature has had the
6 data necessary to draw district maps since
7 March. In the five months since, not a single
8 map drawn by any legislator has been revealed
9 to the public. Other states that have public
10 hearings do so in order to allow citizens the
11 opportunity to comment on the actual proposed
12 maps. For example, after maps are finalized in
13 Arizona, they are made available to the public
14 for comment for 30 days before final passage.
15 Why are you not showing us any maps? You have
16 had the census data for five months.

17 While you have created My District Builder
18 for the public to draw their own maps, the
19 system does not provide the tools necessary to
20 draw real statewide maps with measures of
21 compactness and other data.

22 Maps submitted by the public will not be
23 voted on. This mapping for the public is a
24 charade intended to make people believe they
25 have input when the real maps will be drawn by

1 consultants and presented with little or no
2 meaningful public input. The real mapping will
3 be done away from the public eye and without
4 meaningful public input.

5 Committee leaders have said the public
6 will have an opportunity to comment during the
7 redistricting process in Tallahassee. What
8 about the vast majority of us, as Pat Spencer
9 mentioned, who live nowhere near Tallahassee
10 and members of the public will not be allowed
11 speak in time-limited meetings? You promised
12 the public that they will have two or three-day
13 comment period before any votes are taken on
14 any proposal. Get real. How can citizens
15 hundreds of miles from Tallahassee review,
16 analyze and comment on complicated statewide
17 maps in two or three days?

18 And how many people have computers in
19 Florida? They tell us to send e-mails or post
20 comments on the website. Are they serious?
21 Will they really read hundreds of last-minute
22 e-mails or posts during the two or three-day
23 period? It is no wonder that the vast majority
24 of citizens who have been attending these
25 hearings have expressed suspicion --

1 SENATOR GAETZ: And, Ms. Hall, if I could
2 get you to bring it in for a landing.

3 MS. HALL: I will.

4 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you.

5 MS. HALL: -- suspicion about the true
6 motives of legislators. There's something very
7 strange about this refusal to present any maps
8 for comment.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much --

10 MS. HALL: Thank you.

11 SENATOR GAETZ: -- Ms. Hall. And next,
12 Kathy Brown, and following Ms. Brown, Michael
13 Weinbaum, and then after Mr. Weinbaum, Matthew
14 Cooper.

15 Ms. Brown, thank you for taking your time,
16 and we look forward to what you have to share
17 with us.

18 MS. BROWN: Senators, Representatives and
19 fellow citizens, I am Kathy Brown, a 37-year
20 resident of Valrico. I have been semi-retired
21 for the last two years and have now --

22 SENATOR GAETZ: Ms. Brown, could you move
23 over like two inches? There you go, you are
24 right on the mike now.

25 MS. BROWN: Is that better?

1 I have been semi-retired for the last two
2 years, so I now have time to do my civic duty
3 and try to participate in government.

4 Thank you for allowing me to speak here.
5 I am truly awed by the task you have before
6 you. You can please some of the people all of
7 the time, all of the people some of the time,
8 but you can never please -- you cannot please
9 all of the people all of the time. I fear that
10 at the end of your task, most people will not
11 be pleased. However, I do -- do see the reason
12 for having the redistricting and getting rid of
13 gerrymandering. I do know one thing:
14 Gerrymandering is not a good thing.

15 And I live in District 9, which sprawls
16 from Tarpon Springs to east of Plant City. I
17 do not believe that that is a good way to plan
18 a district. When my -- when my Congressman
19 holds a town hall in Tarpon Springs, it is
20 quite a hardship for people in my area to
21 attend that town hall and have our views heard.
22 And yet parts of Valrico are in Congressional
23 District number 12. Those people have an
24 equally difficult task to get to their
25 Congressman.

1 As I said earlier, I realize you have a
2 daunting task to accomplish, but I just ask
3 that you set district boundaries that make
4 sense and keep communities together.
5 Valrico should not be divided into two
6 districts. Thank you.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
8 Ms. Brown.

9 And next -- did I get it correctly, it is
10 Michael Weinbaum?

11 MR. WEINBAUM: I just wanted to say yeah,
12 most people don't get that right, so --

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Well, thank you,
14 Mr. Weinbaum, for being here tonight, and you
15 are recognized, sir.

16 MR. WEINBAUM: I am not here to recommend
17 a specific district or a specific community
18 that can't be divided, because I understand
19 that districts are just like puzzle pieces. If
20 you say, well, this community can't be divided,
21 then you got a big piece and you got to work
22 other little pieces around it, and then all of
23 a sudden, someone else's community is divided.
24 Someone's community has got to be divided.

25 So the first districts that you should

1 draw should start at the corners of the state,
2 and you should just work your way until you get
3 enough people. You should start at Key West,
4 go north on U.S. 1 until you get enough people
5 for whichever district it is. You should start
6 at the Alabama border, keep working your way
7 east until you get enough people. Now, I mean,
8 unless you run into a geographically compact
9 minority population.

10 I also heard that -- some of the
11 commenters said they didn't know what
12 "feasible" meant. Every district is feasible.
13 If you drew it, it is done. That means --
14 "feasible" just means it can be done.

15 "Practicable." That is, again, a
16 meaningless term. If I was able to do it, that
17 means someone else could do it, and it seems
18 practical to me.

19 So the only term I want you guys to focus
20 on is "compact." I went to high school in
21 Jacksonville, had a good geometry education, I
22 got my engineering degree, University of
23 Central Florida, so I am a product of you guys'
24 schools, thank you for that. And a circle is
25 the most compact shape possible. "Compact" is

1 the ratio of perimeter over area. A square is
2 a very compact shape, a rectangle slightly less
3 so. Something that is C-shaped or U-shaped,
4 like District 12, very non-compact. Now, what
5 this means, since "compact" is now in our
6 Constitution, that if you draw district lines
7 and I am able to simply move your lines and
8 make something more compact -- and, again, this
9 is a mathematical value, it is a ratio. If
10 mine is less than yours and therefore more
11 compact, and both of our lines affect the
12 minority representation about the same way, I
13 win, you lose.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: See you in court. Your
15 time is up. Thank you very much.

16 And next, Matthew Cooper, and then Sara, I
17 think it is Scher, with Planned Parenthood and
18 then Rod Jurado.

19 Matthew, thank you for coming tonight, and
20 you are recognized, sir.

21 MR. COOPER: Thank you. I am Matthew
22 Cooper. I am a fifth-generation Floridian. My
23 great-great-grandfather was one of the first
24 sheriffs of Dade County.

25 History is important. If we look back ten

1 years, it is important to remember our
2 Republican Legislature was able to gerrymander
3 districts so that in the DC Florida
4 congressional delegation, there are 16
5 Republicans now, only nine Democrats, even
6 though Florida boasts a 600,000 dollar more --
7 more Democratic voters than Republican.

8 The Fair District amendment threatened
9 this gerrymandering system, and, of course,
10 Republican domination. There could have been
11 only two responses, and there were, confusion
12 and delay, confusion by pushing two competing
13 amendments to confuse voters as to which was
14 the real one, delay by spending 2.5 million
15 taxpayer money to kill the amendments that
16 passed, confusion by encouragement now of
17 hundreds of maps when only one really matters,
18 delay by promising to release maps only days
19 before filing deadlines, and confusion by
20 forcing court challenges to overlap election
21 periods, finally, delay as shown by
22 Representative Weatherford's promise to give us
23 pertinent information, but only after all of us
24 have given our comments.

25 I suggest to you, Republican Gaetz and

1 Republican Weatherford, that you do have maps,
2 they do exist and they are very detailed. I
3 call on you both to reveal tonight the partisan
4 maps I submit you have, postpone these hearings
5 and reschedule them when we have something to
6 work with. Thank you for your time.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much,
8 Matthew.

9 And next is Sara Scher with Planned
10 Parenthood, and after Sara, then Rod Jurado and
11 then Jocelyn Dickman.

12 Sara, thank you for coming, and you are
13 recognized.

14 MS. SCHER: Thank you. My name is Sara
15 Scher, and I am on the Board and speaking on
16 behalf of Planned Parenthood of Southwest and
17 Central Florida.

18 It appears to us that the Legislature's
19 timeline for drawing districts is extremely
20 unfair to Florida voters. Along with so many
21 others, we question why the Legislature won't
22 prepare the new district maps earlier, leave
23 time to debate them this fall, then pass them
24 during the first week of the legislative
25 session, instead of waiting to finalize the

1 maps until the end of the legislative session
2 in March 2012.

3 Florida's maps will be approved later than
4 almost every other state in the nation. Our
5 new districts may not be finalized until
6 August, just two months before the
7 all-important 2012 elections. Election
8 supervisors will have insufficient time to
9 prepare for elections, and it is unlikely
10 absentee and oversea ballots will be finalized
11 by their deadline for mailing. Challengers or
12 new candidates will have little, if any, time
13 to mount campaigns. Uncertainty as to what a
14 district will look like helps incumbents,
15 because incumbents are already known to the
16 voters and have a huge advantage in raising
17 money. Challengers will be reluctant to throw
18 their hats in the ring.

19 One can only think that the current
20 timeline is designed as an incumbent protection
21 plan. Without maps to comment on, the public
22 does not have an opportunity for meaningful
23 comment before final passage. Is this the way
24 our democracy is supposed to work? We don't
25 think so.

1 Also, why is the Legislature spending our
2 precious tax dollars, over \$1 million so far,
3 to oppose Fair Districts passed during last
4 year's election by 63 percent of the
5 electorate? All of this money is being spent
6 unnecessarily while teachers are being fired,
7 social services are being cut, fewer women are
8 able to access healthcare and not a single job
9 is being created.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: And, Ms. Scher, sadly,
11 sadly, your supporters used up the rest of your
12 time. So, therefore, we thank you for your
13 testimony.

14 And our next -- our next testifier is Rod
15 Jurado. Mr. Jurado, are you here? And
16 following Mr. Jurado, Jocelyn Dickman.

17 MR. JURADO: Rod Jurado. I have been --

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Mr. Jurado, if you would
19 speak directly into the mike, it would be very
20 helpful.

21 MR. JURADO: All right. Rod Jurado. I
22 have been a citizen of Hillsborough County for
23 53 years now. In fact, my mother is a graduate
24 of Jefferson High School, my grandmother was a
25 student here.

1 When I was in high school, I was told that
2 there's no point in being a Republican because
3 you can't vote. And over the time, I studied
4 my civics, I know that for 120 or so years,
5 there really wasn't any discussion about how
6 districts are going to be laid out, and I, for
7 one, thank all of you, both Republican and
8 Democrat, for being willing to open up. I know
9 many of you here personally, I have talked to
10 you, I've got your phone numbers, we have
11 talked, whether it is in Tallahassee or in -- I
12 see Erik Fresen from Miami here. I appreciate
13 the fact that we have people from all over, and
14 I know it is -- you are hearing people telling
15 you -- living in Temple Terrace, last time ten
16 years ago, you started in the north and started
17 in the south and came to the middle, and we
18 ended up in a very fortunate situation with
19 three Congressmen. It will never happen again,
20 but it got us a chance to do a lot of things,
21 get a lot of things done. We also ended up
22 with two county commissioners in Temple
23 Terrace, and I think that we've got to be
24 careful about reminding people that more
25 representation is better than limited

1 representation by saying your boundaries are
2 more important than your people.

3 And so thank you very much for all the
4 time you have and all the work you are putting
5 in. You remind me of what is happening right
6 now in New York with the weathermen who are
7 being beat up because the storm wasn't as
8 strong as it should have been. So thank you
9 very much for being willing to be the
10 weatherman for us and trying to predict the
11 future and do the things by listening to us
12 before giving us your maps.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, Rod,
14 for your comments. And next, Jocelyn Dickman,
15 and following Ms. Dickman, Joann Matthews, and
16 then in the on deck circle would be Mike
17 Michelin, please.

18 Ms. Dickman, thank you so much for coming,
19 and we are anxious to hear what you might have
20 to share with us.

21 MS. DICKMAN: I know you are.

22 Hello, everyone. First thing I want to
23 say is, you are asking us to trust you as a
24 body to do what is right for the citizens who,
25 as I said in Pasco, are your bosses. Your job

1 is to do -- do things for the voters, for the
2 citizens. It is very difficult to trust our
3 Legislature this year after the majority in the
4 Legislature, and you all know who I am speaking
5 to and who I am not at this point, this year
6 passed the most vial, despicable, depraved to
7 the point of criminal legislation against
8 voters in the state of Florida with the Voter
9 Suppression Act. How are we to believe that a
10 body who could pass that kind of law would do
11 anything for the people of Florida, number one.

12 Number two -- also, Representative
13 Weatherford, my Representative, when you
14 campaigned this year earlier -- last year,
15 sorry, you had ads that said you didn't believe
16 in bigger government, but you believe in better
17 government, which is very interesting coming
18 from an incumbent --

19 SENATOR GAETZ: Now, ma'am, if you want to
20 talk to Representative Weatherford, I know he
21 will stay after and chat with you, but let's
22 keep it to redistricting.

23 MS. DICKMAN: Okay, that is. That's --

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Let's see if we can bring
25 it back to redistricting.

1 MS. DICKMAN: It's coming right back there
2 if you let me have a chance.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Hey, ladies and gentlemen,
4 now we will listen to this lady with respect,
5 and she is going to keep it to redistricting.

6 MS. DICKMAN: It is coming back.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Okay. Let's see if we can
8 bring it into the zone.

9 MS. DICKMAN: It is the difference -- it
10 will.

11 SENATOR GAETZ: Okay.

12 MS. DICKMAN: It is the difference of the
13 definition of "bigger government" versus
14 "better government." "Bigger government" is
15 you pick the district. It is Representative
16 Weatherford who advertises for better
17 government, drawing a district for his brother
18 to run for State House and himself run for
19 Congress.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: No, no, ma'am --

21 MS. DICKMAN: It's redistricting.

22 SENATOR GAETZ: -- ma'am, let's keep it --
23 let's keep it to the subject of the hearing.
24 If you want to meet with --

25 MS. DICKMAN: Is the subject drawing

1 districts? Because that is what I am trying to
2 speak about.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Try -- try to bring it
4 back to the subject of the hearing.

5 MS. DICKMAN: Okay, back to redistricting.
6 I know it's been said at these hearings that no
7 one on this panel has in the past drawn a
8 district for themselves, and I understand that
9 that is a truth. The issue isn't what you have
10 done in the past, it is what you are going to
11 do in the future with this new redistricting.
12 Yes, you haven't drawn your districts in the
13 past, but I want you to tell us that you are
14 not going to personally draw your districts the
15 way you want them for yourself in the future.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much for
17 your testimony. Following Ms. Dickman, we will
18 now have Joann Matthews. Ms. Matthews, are you
19 here? Joann Matthews? Well, I'm sorry, she
20 apparently gave up on us.

21 Mike Michelin. Mike, are you here?
22 Following Mike, we will have Greg Vawter and
23 then Helen Baines.

24 Mike, thanks for coming, and the floor is
25 yours.

1 MR. MICHELIN: I appreciate the
2 opportunity to be here. It is not every day
3 that the public gets to address a large
4 contingent of the legislators, so out of due
5 respect, I think that we should be able to say
6 anything we want.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Sir, I apologize, could
8 you speak a little more closely into the
9 microphone?

10 MR. MICHELIN: Sorry. I said that if you
11 want to talk about respect, I believe that
12 people should be able to state whatever they
13 need in the time that they have up here, and
14 that you should not be --

15 SENATOR GAETZ: Well, I apologize, sir,
16 but we are just here to talk about
17 redistricting, not about other subjects that
18 might be important --

19 MR. MICHELIN: Okay.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: -- so if you can keep it
21 to redistricting, we would be delighted to hear
22 your testimony.

23 MR. MICHELIN: I have a prepared
24 statement, and it is not because anybody handed
25 me a script, it was because I hear you can get

1 more respect and attention by withholding your
2 anger and criticism from your public comments,
3 which I find it very hard to do with what is
4 going on in Tallahassee right now.

5 Two of the biggest issues with
6 redistricting is what everybody else has said,
7 the delay tactics and the procrastination that
8 is going to push us right up into the midst of
9 the election cycle next year. Furthermore, the
10 litigation that is being --

11 SENATOR GAETZ: Mike, we are missing some
12 of your good comments. If you would stay right
13 on top of the mike, if you can. I apologize.

14 MR. MICHELIN: The litigation that has
15 been brought forth against the amendments that
16 were passed last -- the election, no matter
17 what you feel about Amendments 5 and 6, the
18 election was last year, they passed
19 overwhelmingly, and now the litigation that is
20 being brought using the same tax money from the
21 people that voted overwhelmingly to pass these
22 amendments is unconscionable and it should
23 outrage every citizen of the state.

24 The people have sent a voice to
25 Tallahassee that they want -- that they don't

1 want self -- political self-interest to
2 overrule the will of the people. The will of
3 the people says that we want fair districts
4 that are drawn based on geography, not
5 incumbency. So I would ask that you would stop
6 the tactics that advance your partisan causes,
7 and fulfill the will of the people.

8 SENATOR GAETZ: Thanks. And, Mike, if you
9 had some additional comments, turn them in, and
10 we would be happy to include them in the
11 record.

12 Next we will hear from Greg Vawter and
13 then Helen Baines, and following Helen, Vivian,
14 I think it is Bacca, B-a-c-c-a.

15 Greg, thank you for coming, and the floor
16 is yours, sir.

17 MR. VAWTER: Thank you, Senator,
18 Representative.

19 To some extent, I feel like I am thanking
20 the foxes for inviting the chickens to provide
21 input. Nonetheless --

22 SENATOR GAETZ: It was such a great line,
23 I am going to give you a chance to repeat it
24 into the microphone where they can all hear it.

25 MR. VAWTER: That is all right, you have

1 heard it, I am going to go on.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: I heard it, but they
3 didn't. It was so good.

4 MR. VAWTER: The point I would like to
5 make is that we are here to talk about power,
6 and the League of Women Voters has been called
7 out for not drawing maps. We have already
8 provided our position that the maps should be
9 drawn by the Legislature and then provided to
10 the public for comment, and that is what we are
11 looking for.

12 What we are interested in is whose best
13 interests are we looking out for here? I'm
14 sorry, I will wait.

15 A VOICE: Go ahead.

16 MR. VAWTER: All right. The fairness that
17 we are looking for is what is fair to the
18 people who you represent, not necessarily what
19 is fair for you as you are looking out for
20 your -- we know you are concerned for the
21 non-incumbent candidates who will be facing you
22 for election. We need to think about the fact
23 that to some extent the foxes are in charge of
24 the hen house to try to figure out what is
25 going to happen with this next election, and so

1 what we have are some defined rules that say
2 how this is supposed to be done.

3 For people who would like to have some
4 input as to whether the League of Women Voters
5 draws maps, I happen to be the membership
6 chairperson for the Hillsborough County League
7 of Women Voters, and I would be happy to enroll
8 anybody who would like to join our group and
9 have something to say about whether we have
10 those maps drawn, but in the meantime, we would
11 like to encourage our Legislature to do that
12 job. Thank you very much.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much.
14 Appreciate your comments, Greg. And Helen
15 Baines is next, and following Ms. Baines -- are
16 you here, Ms. Baines? Helen Baines? Going
17 once, twice. Well, we will come back to her if
18 we have time.

19 Vivian Bacca, did I get take right, ma'am?

20 MS. BACCA: Bacca.

21 SENATOR GAETZ: Bacca, I'm sorry. And
22 then Neil Cosentino, Cosentino, I'm sorry, and
23 then Glenn Carr.

24 Thank you very much for coming tonight,
25 ma'am, and the floor is yours.

1 MS. BACCA: Hi, my name is Vivian Bacca, I
2 am from Brandon, Florida, and I voted for Fair
3 District amendments in part because I didn't
4 think it was fair that my portion of Brandon
5 was lumped in with Polk County voters when it
6 came to choosing our Congressional
7 Representative. I believe that as much as
8 possible, communities should be maintained
9 intact. Specifically, I would like to see all
10 of Brandon in the same congressional district
11 with our fellow eastern Hillsborough County
12 citizens.

13 And I would also like to suggest that if
14 you are going to time speeches, please bring a
15 timer. Most people are used to the dinging
16 that we can hear that warns us when our 30
17 seconds is getting close. Thank you.

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much. We
19 will give you a ten-second warning from now on.
20 That is a good point, good suggestion, Vivian.

21 Neil, you are up, and then Glenn Carr, and
22 following Glenn Carr, we are going to get to
23 Laura Simpson. Laura, come on down.

24 Neil, how do I pronounce your name, sir?

25 MR. COSENTINO: Cosentino.

1 SENATOR GAETZ: Cosentino.

2 MR. COSENTINO: Thank you for asking.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Of course, sir. Thank you
4 for coming.

5 MR. COSENTINO: I am representing a think
6 think. Our think tank is Camelot Florida. We
7 have been asked to look at this issue, and,
8 therefore, I am representing a spokesperson for
9 2.1 million NPA registered voters. That is
10 23 percent of the voters in Florida, and that
11 is significant.

12 We are optimistic that you will do the
13 right thing, we really are, I think we are
14 going to find that we will come up with
15 something better than what we had, and,
16 therefore, it will keep getting better. That
17 is the way we do it in America.

18 As a fighter pilot and Vietnam veteran,
19 Phantom -- if you've ever flown a Phantom,
20 anybody in here flown a Phantom, you keep your
21 eye on the mission, and the mission here is to
22 do the right thing, and hopefully I can bring
23 in all the soldiers that we have lost, because
24 when they died, they didn't die for
25 gerrymandering, I can tell you that for a fact.

1 And that might sound emotional, but I have seen
2 men die, and I know they didn't die for this.

3 So coming back to the issue of being
4 optimistic, I also caution you, everyone here,
5 we are going to have a Republican convention
6 here. If you don't do the right thing, okay,
7 there's going to be a lot of problems here in
8 this city. And as you know, it is July of next
9 year -- August, I'm sorry, August of next year.
10 If you mess this up, you are going to have
11 13,000 media here looking at it. So do it
12 right. If you are going to do it right, do it
13 right this time. Thank you very much.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much, and
15 thank you for your service to our country.

16 Next is Glenn Carr. Is Glenn here? Glenn
17 Carr?

18 Laura Simpson?

19 All right. Tim Heberlein, Tim Heberlein.

20 And, I'm sorry, Tim, I didn't give you a
21 heads-up, but you are next, and then Eddie
22 Adams, Jr., representing Adams for Congress. I
23 wonder which Adams that is. Then Ruth Brewton
24 Talley, please.

25 Tim, thanks for coming, and you are

1 recognized before the committee.

2 MR. HEBERLEIN: Thank you very much. I
3 was actually at a previous hearing, so I will
4 keep my comments brief, just extended comments
5 that I had made at the previous hearing.

6 But I wanted to again thank you for
7 putting this hearing again -- appearing
8 together in Tampa. I know that you have
9 expended a lot of resources in having these
10 hearings and public comment, but, again, I am
11 still waiting for the maps, as I said in Polk
12 County. I am still waiting for the maps here
13 as well.

14 And I want to address the issue of asking
15 the public to provide these maps using the
16 District Builder software. It is -- you
17 mentioned earlier it is putting an answer
18 before the question if you had presented maps
19 before that. But instead what you have done is
20 asked us to give us an essay answer to a very
21 complex geography question, which none of us
22 are really -- I am not an expert in geography,
23 I am not an expert in geographical information
24 systems or minority voter regression
25 statistics. So when you are asking me to use

1 this software to cut lines through communities
2 which I know nothing about, it is doing a
3 disservice not only to the rest of the
4 communities in which I am drawing, but also it
5 is your job. And you are asking for our public
6 comment here, and our public comment came last
7 year in November when we voted yes on
8 Amendments 5 and 6.

9 And to the other point, actually just a
10 couple of months ago the Board of County
11 Commissioners did their redistricting process.
12 They actually provided six maps, and they have
13 just the same census data that we've had here.
14 So I would love to see at least one map being
15 provided with the information that you have had
16 for quite a while.

17 And, actually, someone had mentioned
18 earlier the software, that the Senate and the
19 House are using different types of software.
20 I, too, would like to know the differences.
21 Why is that happening? Why are you using
22 different types of software? Is the data the
23 same? That is a little bit disconcerting to
24 me.

25 And also, his other question, is any other

1 private entity contributing funds to help the
2 preparation of any map to any legislator. I
3 want to know that on record, please. Thank
4 you.

5 SENATOR GAETZ: Sure, we will get to those
6 questions. Thanks for your testimony. And it
7 is good to see you again.

8 Eddie Adams, Jr., Adams for Congress. We
9 aren't going to talk about the congressional
10 race today, we are just going to talk about
11 redistricting, right, Mr. Adams?

12 MR. ADAMS: Well, thank you, sir, thank
13 you very much. Thank you for the opportunity
14 to be before you today, and part of the process
15 that we are dealing with today, ten years ago
16 they did not have a crystal ball to see what
17 the results of the last redistricting hearing
18 was all about. Ten years ago, there was a
19 mandate by the courts to create minority
20 congressional districts so that blacks would be
21 represented in the U.S. Congress and the State
22 of Florida. That being said, it appears that
23 we have come back full circle to try to undo
24 some of that that happened ten years ago. So
25 hopefully you guys' crystal ball will work a

1 little better this time.

2 District 11 goes from -- one of the
3 districts that is involved goes 100 miles in
4 one direction from one end of the district to
5 the other end of the district. I know because
6 I wore out a knee trying to work from one end
7 to the other end of the district. Now, that
8 makes no sense to a lot of folks back in the
9 old days when common sense used to be common.
10 It is no longer common, and the fact that you
11 got to get in your truck or car and drive
12 100 miles, and the folks that is in Manatee
13 County, those 15 precincts down there who don't
14 even know who their Congressional
15 Representative is.

16 So, again, hopefully this time we will
17 make it more effective in how we do it, and
18 that the people who actually have the
19 opportunity to vote for their members of the
20 state and for the U.S. Congress, the House and
21 the Senate and all those good things, actually
22 have an opportunity to participate in the
23 process by knowing who their Representative is
24 and being accessible to their Representative.

25 Thank you for the opportunity to speak before

1 you.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Adams, and
3 thank you for being a candidate for office.

4 Ruth -- I think it is Brewton Talley. Is
5 that correct, ma'am? And following Ms. Talley,
6 Ginny Zukowski, the PTSA Legislative Chair for
7 Bartels Middle School, and then Susan Smith, if
8 you would be down here, ready to testify.

9 Ma'am, thank you for coming, and the floor
10 is yours.

11 MS. TALLEY: Thank you for being here, and
12 we appreciate your coming, and we want you to
13 know that we would like to have a little fairer
14 districts.

15 I am in District 9 and I live in
16 Hillsborough County and I am relegated to -- to
17 District 9 instead of District 11, and I would
18 like to have a more concrete district for this
19 area where I live. And I appreciate the fact
20 that you are here, but I do hope that you -- I
21 had hoped you would have the maps, so I am
22 saying please bring the maps back and have
23 another meeting.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much. And
25 next is Ginny Zukowski, who is the PTSA

1 Legislative Chair for Bartels Middle School. I
2 will tell you, if you are working as a parent
3 to help kids in a middle school, then my hat is
4 off to you.

5 MS. ZUKOWSKI: Thank you very much.

6 Okay. Well, this has been very
7 interesting to watch this process, so this is
8 my first time coming to one of these, and it is
9 an eye-opening experience.

10 I want to just say most of you don't even
11 know, but we are watching you, and when he
12 talked about that 23 percent of voters, this
13 whole row was glued in, and it was just amazing
14 how your ears totally sparked up. My reasons
15 for coming here is really more of the school
16 and the voting that is going on like right now.
17 Every Monday is a half-day, so I know coming to
18 these things do affect our kids in the school,
19 so we are hoping that it is more fair, because
20 I am seeing the effects in the school, I mean,
21 is it impacting. So I hope you are making good
22 choices, because we do have to educate
23 ourselves because we are not seeing our
24 children go the lengths that they should, or
25 the opportunity as well. So I hope -- I hope

1 we get to see the maps, too. I guess that is
2 the main drive for this evening, see the maps
3 another meeting. Thank you.

4 SENATOR GAETZ: Good, thank you. Susan
5 Smith, and following Ms. Smith is Joe Matta
6 with AARP, and then Mary Bright with
7 Moveon.org.

8 Ms. Smith, thanks for coming.

9 MS. SMITH: Hello. Thank you.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: The floor is yours.

11 MS. SMITH: Thank you. I am Susan Smith,
12 and I live in Odessa, Florida, which is in the
13 northwest part of Hillsborough County.

14 "Us versus them," I heard this term
15 yesterday from Dr. Susan MacManus, who is a
16 respected professor at the University of South
17 Florida. She has coined the term to describe
18 the upcoming 2012 election. "It will be us
19 versus them," she said. People expect their
20 governmental institutions to be forthright with
21 them, but trust in government is at an all-time
22 low, and a lack of transparency is at the heart
23 of it, according to Dr. MacManus. Even though
24 the topic they were discussing was the
25 Governor's mysteriously missing e-mails, that

1 same lack of transparency, along with the
2 delays and obstruction, have been the hallmarks
3 of this redistricting process so far in
4 Florida.

5 By holding these hearings without maps and
6 by using lawsuits to delay, you have caused
7 voters to suspect that you are not acting in
8 good faith. Your actions or lack thereof are
9 contributing to distrust both in you and in the
10 institution you have been charged with leading.

11 You claim that you came to hear what the
12 citizens want. Well, we told you very clearly
13 last November 2nd what we want. With the
14 passage of Amendments 5 and 6, we sent a
15 message that we no longer want the incumbent
16 protection racket known as gerrymandering. It
17 is time for true accountability at the ballot
18 box. Specifically we told you that we want
19 districts that do not favor any political
20 party, we want minority representation
21 protected, and we want contiguous and compact
22 districts of equal size that respect existing
23 geographic boundaries.

24 I urge you to return to Tallahassee to
25 draw the maps in a timely and transparent

1 manner. The results of this process will be
2 your legacy. Please approach it fairly and
3 without thought to your own political future.
4 Democracy cannot be sustained with a
5 distrustful and cynical electorate. Us versus
6 them is no way to run the state. Thank you.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. Smith. Our
8 next speaker is Joe Matta. Is Joe here? And
9 following Joe, we will have Mary Bright with
10 Moveon.org, and then Frank Winch -- Wyche, I
11 believe -- then Mary Kay Ross.

12 Joe, you represent, it says here, AARP.
13 You don't look old enough.

14 MR. MATTA: I am. Believe me, I am.

15 Good afternoon, Chairman Gaetz and
16 Chairman Weatherford. I am here as a volunteer
17 with AARP.

18 I urge the legislation -- Legislature to
19 make the redistricting process to be fair and
20 equitable for all of Florida, not just a few,
21 but all of Florida. As you exercise your
22 constitutional duty to draw voting districts
23 for the next ten years, starting with our 2012
24 election, AARP urges you to ensure that there
25 is transparency for the Legislature's

1 redistricting process every step of the way.
2 Transparency means that redistricting
3 discussions among the members and by the
4 members should be open to the public, with
5 enough notice for them to plan for attendance.

6 Transparency also means that we, the
7 public, have the opportunity to comment, and to
8 have those comments be meaningfully considered
9 by the Legislature during all the redistricting
10 proceedings and on redistricting proposals,
11 both interim and final. And this must be done
12 before the Legislature makes their decisions.

13 You must ensure timeliness, and that seems
14 to be the biggest thing that we are all talking
15 about here. We want to see the maps, we want
16 to see them long before March.

17 Florida voters have always stated --
18 already stated their constitutional mandate to
19 the Legislature. We voted last November for
20 those things. The Legislature should complete
21 the redistricting process in a professional and
22 timely manner. The procedures, steps, have
23 been given to the Legislature, and that needs
24 to be completed.

25 SENATOR GAETZ: Joe, could I get you to

1 summarize, please? Just because we've got a
2 whole bunch of people behind you who would like
3 to speak.

4 MR. MATTA: Yeah. Well, we should take
5 the steps to ensure that the redistricting
6 process is done timely.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you.

8 MR. MATTA: Thank you.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, Joe.
10 That is very good testimony.

11 Mary Bright? Ms. Bright?

12 Frank Wyche? Frank, come on down, and
13 then Mary Kay Ross, then Cathy, and I
14 apologize, Paunov at 5134 29th Avenue North. I
15 am sure I butchered that name.

16 Frank, you are recognized. Thanks for
17 coming, and we look forward to your testimony.

18 MR. WYCHE: Thank you, good evening. I
19 will be quick, so keep up. I call this I have
20 seen things change.

21 When I was six years old, Daddy ran for
22 office, an office that no longer exists. He
23 got beat very badly, to say the least.
24 Twenty-five years later, I worked on the
25 Hillsborough County Environmental Land

1 Acquisition Program campaign, and we won.
2 Winning was fun. So when I saw Amendments 5
3 and 6 voted in this last year, I, of course,
4 said to myself things change.

5 Elected officials, I vote in the
6 congressional and State House districts that
7 cover three counties, and when I saw Amendments
8 5 and 6 pass, I was hoping that in the 2012
9 elections I would be voting for Representatives
10 that will be, hey, representing my geographic
11 area. Things change.

12 Now, a young man spoke earlier about how
13 it is your responsibility to present us
14 something to comment on, it is not our
15 responsibility to present you with the plan.
16 And ten years from now, most of you will not be
17 here, whether it is because of term limits, you
18 have gone on to other things or whatever -- or
19 whatever. But history will judge what you do
20 when things change, and from my experience and
21 from seeing things change, it doesn't have to
22 do with party, Republican, Democrat or
23 otherwise. It comes down to which side you
24 were on when choices were made.

25 Thank you very much, and have a nice

1 evening.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much, sir.
3 Next, Mary Kay Ross, and then following
4 Ms. Ross, Cathy Paunov, I think. I'm sorry,
5 ma'am. Then Garry Spencer and then Edward
6 Quinones.

7 Mary Kay Ross, thank you for being here
8 tonight, and we are anxious to have your
9 testimony on the record.

10 MS. ROSS: Well, I can't thank you all
11 enough. I have looked so forward to this
12 particular gathering, and the information that
13 has been given has been really so significant
14 and I think it will help you along your way and
15 the task that you got forward.

16 And I am only speaking as me as a person.
17 I was fortunate enough to be involved in some
18 political campaign recently, and I am from the
19 11th District, and that experience is a great
20 teacher. And over the last year and a half, I
21 learned a lot about District 11, and I learned
22 how difficult it is. And I have walked Manatee
23 County and I have walked Pinellas County and I
24 have walked Hillsborough County extensively,
25 and I can tell you that this is an almost

1 impossible district in which to correctly give
2 representation. So we need to look at
3 Hillsborough. Hillsborough is such a viable
4 area and we have become such a wonderful city
5 and I think living in the Tampa area, that we
6 need a district that will well represent us as
7 a District 11. So I charge you with the huge
8 task of trying to not make us cross bridges and
9 not make us go to other counties. It is -- we
10 need this within Hillsborough County.

11 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
12 Ms. Ross, and thank you for supporting the
13 candidates of your choice so vigorously.

14 Cathy, help me out.

15 MS. PAUNOV: Paunov.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Paunov.

17 MS. PAUNOV: You did real well.

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much, and I'm
19 sorry if I messed your name up. Go ahead. You
20 are recognized.

21 MS. PAUNOV: Thank you. Senators and
22 Representatives, my name is Cathy Paunov. I am
23 a high school teacher here in Hillsborough
24 County. I teach at Gaither High School. And
25 the course I teach is AP human geography, and

1 this is not the edition I am teaching out of,
2 this is the newest edition, but it has the same
3 map that is found in the edition I teach my
4 children.

5 In this particular case, there is a
6 discussion of gerrymandering. It cites one
7 good example of legislative districts organized
8 around geographic and county and city borders.
9 It then gives two examples of bad states and
10 gerrymandering. One of them, of course, is
11 North Carolina, and regrettably, the other one
12 is Florida. It actually blows up south Florida
13 to show that creative elements of 22, 23, 19,
14 17 and 20, which I have to say is almost
15 artistic in its -- in its shape and size, not
16 in a good way. I want the next edition of
17 Rubenstein's textbook for my students to show
18 Florida as, like Iowa, using geographic
19 boundaries, contiguous. Huh, my goodness,
20 doesn't that sound like Amendments 5 and 6?
21 Thank you.

22 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you. Thank you very
23 much, Cathy. There are some of us who want to
24 get Florida reshaped to look like Iowa, too.

25 Garry Spencer is next. Garry Spencer?

1 Not here.

2 Okay. How about Edward Quinones? And
3 following Mr. Quinones is Graham Stacy and then
4 Steve -- I think it's Phillippy or Phillippy,
5 with the ACLU of Florida.

6 Mr. Quinones, you are recognized, and
7 thank you for coming tonight.

8 MR. QUINONES: Thank you very much. My
9 name is Ed Quinones. I have been involved in
10 different Hispanic causes for many, many years.
11 I have recently been involved with the
12 redistricting process here in Hillsborough
13 County. We had public meetings just like this
14 one, we presented different maps, we had lots
15 of testimony from many, many quarters, many
16 different parts of this area, and lo and
17 behold, it didn't mean very much, because a
18 one-party system decided it was going to be
19 their way and that was it. There was no
20 respect for the public hearing, and I suspect
21 that this same type of hearing is what we are
22 facing today.

23 Tallahassee is going to be very hard to
24 change. We have no confidence that you are
25 going to be able to do very much in spite of

1 the law, in spite of all the regulations, and,
2 luckily, we have a court system in this country
3 where we can correct some of these things where
4 civil rights are respected and minority rights
5 can be respected. So, gentlemen and ladies, we
6 will see you in court.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
8 Mr. Quinones. And next we will hear from
9 Graham Stacy, and following Graham, Steve --
10 and I apologize, it is either Phillippy or
11 Phillippy, with the ACLU, and then Victor
12 DiMaio, President of the Hillsborough County
13 Democratic Hispanic Caucus.

14 Graham, thank you very much for staying
15 with us, and you are recognized for your
16 testimony.

17 MR. STACY: Thank you very much. My name
18 is Graham Stacy. Ladies and gentlemen of the
19 committee, thank you for letting me come and
20 speak here today.

21 Now, at this meeting and others, I've
22 repeatedly heard many people come up to the
23 stand and talk about how the system is unfair
24 and all the maps are rigged to favor some
25 random group of people and so on and so on.

1 Now, nobody's map can appease everybody, so if
2 you want a map that meets your standards, then
3 draw one yourself. But thus far, very few
4 people have actually proposed a plan to be
5 considered and scrutinized. So my mother,
6 sister and several friends and I have worked
7 together to create a Florida House district
8 plan named -- the proposed maps are named
9 proposed map one and proposed map two.

10 Now, while map one's focus is to follow
11 the standards required by Amendments 5 and 6,
12 compactness and fairness were considered the
13 main priority. While proposed map two was
14 developed with the federal government's
15 minority district standards --

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Folks -- excuse me,
17 Graham. Folks, if you want to look at the
18 proposed map, it is up there on the screen.

19 MR. STACY: While map two was developed
20 with the federal government's minority district
21 standards in mind, all the while still
22 attempting to comply with Amendments 5 and 6.

23 Districts can only be as compact as the
24 area that they represent are. Understanding
25 those limitations, map one and map two were

1 drawn in an effort to create not perfectly
2 compact districts, but to create districts out
3 of even population numbers and logical
4 boundaries.

5 Thank you very much.

6 SENATOR GAETZ: Graham, could I just ask
7 you one question? Just out of curiosity, and I
8 apologize for prying, but can you tell us how
9 old you are?

10 MR. STACY: I will be turning 14 on the
11 15th.

12 SENATOR GAETZ: You will be turning 14?

13 MR. STACY: Yes.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: Wow. You might be able to
15 be a consultant to the League of Women Voters.
16 Thank you. And your -- your proposed maps will
17 be included in what we provide to all of the
18 citizens of Florida, and all of our committee
19 members will study your maps and we really look
20 forward to studying them some more. Thank you
21 for your testimony.

22 And, Steve, is it Phillippy? Phillippy?
23 Help me out, Steve.

24 MR. PHILLIPPY: Steve Phillippy, just like
25 the park over in Pinellas County.

1 SENATOR GAETZ: Okay. Representing the
2 ACLU, and you are recognized, sir.

3 MR. PHILLIPPY: Yes, and I don't -- I --
4 first of all, Mike Pheneger, the President of
5 the ACLU of Florida, has already spoken today,
6 so I don't want to steal his thunder.

7 I particularly like the gentleman before
8 us, okay, before me. A 14-year-old to do that
9 kind of work with his family, I think that is
10 the kind of thing we need in the future.

11 One of the things that I am concerned
12 about -- and, again, let me give the ACLU line,
13 and first we believe in Amendments 5 and 6 as
14 need to be enforced, and I also believe that
15 the timelines need to be relevant and you need
16 to work on those, and I think that conflict of
17 interest need to be avoided.

18 One of the reasons that I am involved and
19 have been involved in the ACLU since 1988 is
20 because I really couldn't find that I was
21 really politically involved. I wanted to be
22 just kind of involved in making things fair for
23 everybody and making certain people have the
24 right to speech, okay. That is -- free speech
25 is very important to me. So I am -- I am --

1 congratulate you for doing this speech, but --
2 this listening, but I am concerned about the
3 fairness.

4 One of the things that I have in my
5 background and currently doing, I work for the
6 Supervisor of Elections two or three days a
7 year as a clerk in my own district. I also am
8 involved in -- in doing some things in the
9 schools that I think are important, too.

10 So we -- these are wonderful
11 Representatives, and everyone here has gathered
12 here to talk about redistricting, which is all
13 about fairness and getting people involved in
14 their own representation, in governing
15 themselves. And I just encourage you to
16 continue to -- the long term is how does
17 democracy work, how effective is everyone's
18 involvement in democracy, and I just don't
19 think that some of the things that you are
20 doing, although I hope that you are good
21 intentioned, and I am not a cynic like some of
22 the others, I believe that most of you have
23 good intentions, but I believe that you need to
24 think about the big picture. The big picture
25 is how does democracy work and how much are

1 people involved so that they will be part --
2 feel part of the process.

3 Thank you very much.

4 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much, sir.

5 And next, Victor DiMaio, Mr. DiMaio,
6 representing the Hillsborough County Democratic
7 Hispanic Caucus, and you are recognized, sir.
8 Thanks for coming tonight.

9 MR. DiMAIO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
10 Chairman Gaetz, Chairman Weatherford, Senators
11 and Representatives, my name is Victor DiMaio,
12 I am president of the Hillsborough County
13 Hispanic Democratic Caucus, and one of the
14 things I am very proud of -- by the way,
15 welcome to District 58, which is the district I
16 have lived in my whole life. This district was
17 represented by state -- started when it was
18 first formed by State Representative Eldon
19 Martinez, who had the district for almost 23
20 years, after that, State Representative Deborah
21 Tamargo, who is actually in the audience
22 tonight with us, and after that, Bob Enriquez
23 and then Michael Scionti and then
24 Representative Cruz. So we have a long line of
25 Hispanic Representatives here, and we are

1 basically here because we want to keep it that
2 way. Our district that we drew -- my
3 Vice-Chairman, Chris Cano, was up here earlier,
4 and he presented a map, which was e-mailed to
5 the committee. We worked with a group called
6 LatinoJustice in New York with a professional
7 demographer, and we tried to keep the district,
8 which is what the amendments are for, is
9 contiguous, it follows the boundaries, and the
10 neighborhoods which you want to keep compact,
11 and we would like for you to take that under
12 consideration. We have worked very hard for
13 many years to, you know, keep our culture and
14 our community together, and we would just like
15 to keep the respect that we would like to
16 continue on with the continuity of the
17 district.

18 We would like to also make a suggestion or
19 recommendation, because we got together with
20 about 24 other groups here in Hillsborough
21 County for the first time in the history of our
22 county to fight for a county commission seat.
23 We've stayed together for this redistricting
24 issue. We would like to see if there is anyway
25 possible -- we are actually working with a

1 demographer, we may work on a Senate district
2 and a congressional district as well for a
3 Hispanic seat.

4 Just as a reminder, there is a famous case
5 in 1994, it was called DeGrande versus Johnson,
6 and at that time, the Legislature was
7 controlled by the Democrats, and DeGrande, who
8 represented the Republican party, fought the
9 Democrats at the time because -- as you
10 remember, when I mentioned Eldon Martinez, he
11 was at one time the only Hispanic
12 Representative for the entire State of Florida.
13 There was no other Hispanic Representatives in
14 the state.

15 SENATOR GAETZ: And could I ask you to
16 conclude just out of respect for those behind
17 you?

18 MR. DiMAIO: Yes, sir.

19 But that is what we are asking for. We
20 are asking for -- to respect the Hispanic
21 community, keep our -- keep Representative
22 Cruz's district intact and look for a district
23 that she might be able to advance to later on
24 as a Senator or a Congress lady. Thank you
25 very much.

1 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, sir. We really
2 appreciate your comments. And I apologize to
3 this next individual, first because I didn't
4 give this person a heads-up, and secondly,
5 because I know I am going to butcher the name.
6 Ercilia Albistu. Ercilia Albistu, are you
7 here? Well, you got a round of applause
8 anyhow.

9 Joe Affronti with the City of Temple
10 Terrace. Joe? Thank you for coming. And
11 following Joe's testimony, Joan Alagood and --
12 just a moment, please -- and then Deborah
13 Tamargo.

14 MAYOR AFFRONTI: Thank you very much,
15 legislators, for being here.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Mr. Mayor? You are the
17 Mayor of Temple Terrace?

18 MAYOR AFFRONTI: Yes, I am.

19 SENATOR GAETZ: Wow. We thank you for
20 being here.

21 MAYOR AFFRONTI: Thank you.

22 SENATOR GAETZ: Thanks for your service to
23 the community.

24 MAYOR AFFRONTI: Thank you.

25 Temple Terrace has about 25,000 residents,

1 which is a very diverse community. There is no
2 one political party that is a majority in
3 Temple Terrace. So what I am here to ask is
4 that we keep Temple Terrace the way it is.

5 We have -- we have been very privileged to
6 have three U.S. Representatives in Temple
7 Terrace, District 9, District 11 and District
8 12, and because of that, we are in the process
9 now of a \$160 million redevelopment,
10 \$160 million, and during these times. And it
11 was because of the support that we have
12 garnered from our Representatives, and also
13 District 60 for the Florida House and District
14 12 for the Senate.

15 So we would appreciate keeping things
16 intact as they are for Temple Terrace. We love
17 the representation that we got, and we hope
18 that you will consider leaving it that way.

19 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Mayor, and
20 your Senator Joyner knew exactly who you were,
21 and she was finishing your sentences in my ear.
22 So she is on top of this issue, believe me.

23 Joan Alagood, and following Ms. Alagood,
24 Deborah Tamargo, and then on deck, please,
25 Lydia Medrano.

1 Ms. Alagood, thank you for coming, and you
2 are recognized.

3 MS. ALAGOOD: And thank you, Senator, and
4 thank you, Representatives, for hearing us out
5 and for listening all night. And I have been
6 watching, because I went to one hearing like
7 this with the county commission, and there was
8 a guy on his Blackberry all night, so I have
9 been looking to see and I have been seeing some
10 attention here. This is a celebration --

11 SENATOR GAETZ: We are afraid of the
12 woodshed.

13 MS. ALAGOOD: -- of freedom and democracy
14 and personal responsibility, which is why I
15 drove here from the south end of
16 Valrico tonight. There are 40 of you here
17 listening to one of me, and that is quite an
18 honor.

19 The tool on-line is quite clear, as
20 evidenced by the 13-year-olds who can use it.
21 What is wrong with the rest of us? And he has
22 an opportunity to present that to you and for
23 you to take it into consideration, and I do
24 agree with the other folks that have said give
25 us some time after the -- you know, several

1 maps are out for us to comment again.

2 I would ask you to listen to the voters,
3 to keep the districts clear and compact. I,
4 too, helped work in an election campaign where
5 I went from Temple Terrace to Manatee County to
6 south St. Pete, and it was a little ridiculous.
7 I mean, I want contiguous lines and fair lines.

8 Now, James Madison didn't have a computer,
9 but we do, so I also ask you to avail
10 yourselves of the technology to make this work
11 better than what they could have done in those
12 days. Keep it fair, real and simple.

13 However, I want to make one side comment
14 about something ironic here, and that is the
15 folks that are getting up and saying, you know,
16 5 and 6, 5 and 6, listen to 5 and 6. These are
17 the same people who went -- when Nancy Pelosi
18 was saying elections have consequences and read
19 the bill after it's been written, you know,
20 give us a break. You can't say that in -- in a
21 national election. Okay. That is so. All
22 right.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: I think your time is up,
24 ma'am.

25 MS. ALAGOOD: Thank you, sir, appreciate

1 it.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much.

3 Next is Deborah Tamargo, please, and
4 following Ms. Tamargo is Lydia Medrano with the
5 LULAC of Florida, and then Gary Dolgin, I think
6 it is D-o-l-g-i-n. If I mispronounced that, I
7 apologize.

8 Deborah, thanks for coming, and you are
9 recognized.

10 MS. TAMARGO: Senator Gaetz and Senator
11 Weatherford, Chairmen, Senators and
12 Representatives, welcome to my hometown. I am
13 a second-generation Tampa native, and so I have
14 been through a few redistrictings and I have a
15 couple of comments to share with you this
16 evening.

17 One comment is regarding the listening.
18 My good teachers and my great parents taught me
19 to listen first, that that was the smart thing
20 to do, listen, assess and then act. So I want
21 to compliment you on being what my parents and
22 my teachers would have called smart.

23 The second point I would like to make is I
24 think I have heard a lot of very disingenuous
25 comments this evening. Obviously, the Fair

1 Districts amendments had a great campaign, but
2 what I think they failed to do was really
3 explain what it is that you are tasked with
4 doing. So I do understand that you have a
5 difficult task, and part of it is that
6 understanding. There appears to me in just
7 reading, without being an attorney, that there
8 may be some conflict with the Voter Rights Act
9 and with pre-clearance, so that is a very
10 difficult issue. It is not as easy as going to
11 the Webster's Dictionary and finding a few
12 definitions and then producing the maps. And I
13 will tell those of you who that are not from
14 Hillsborough County, that our county
15 commissioners did just that, they drew their
16 maps and they presented them to the public, and
17 guess what? The public was appalled here in
18 Hillsborough County. So I think it is very
19 disingenuous to tonight tell you that they want
20 to see maps when, in fact, they didn't like it
21 being force-fed by our county commission just a
22 very couple of months ago.

23 So I applaud you, I do feel like this Fair
24 District thing is a little bit of a ruse, and I
25 congratulate you for listening, assessing,

1 acting, and we will have plenty of opportunity
2 to comment again. Thank you.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much,
4 Ms. Tamargo.

5 Lydia Medrano with LULAC, and following
6 Ms. Medrano, Gary, I think it is Dolgin, and
7 then Elizabeth Belcher.

8 You are recognized. Thanks for coming.

9 MS. MEDRANO: Thank you. Good evening.
10 My name is Lydia Medrano, and I am the District
11 Director for LULAC, the League of United Latin
12 American Citizens, and LULAC is a national,
13 nonpartisan civil rights organization. And
14 LULAC, LatinoJustice and other Hispanic
15 organizations in the Tampa Bay area have come
16 together, formed a partnership with the sole
17 purpose of participating in redistricting. So
18 I don't want to hear like one time somebody
19 told me where have you been. So we are here.
20 We are participating.

21 The voter act -- the Voting Rights Act
22 provides protections to minority groups.
23 Hispanic is the largest minority group now in
24 Florida, and I want to speak in support of
25 District 58 that was presented to you before,

1 and Victor also spoke about it, which has
2 51 percent Hispanic population in that
3 district. I hope this information is useful
4 for you. Thank you.

5 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, Ms.
6 Medrano, and thank you for your group's
7 submission of maps. I think particularly your
8 group has been very, very helpful to us. Thank
9 you so much, ma'am.

10 And next is Gary Dolgin, I believe. Is it
11 Dolgin?

12 MR. DOLGIN: Dolgin.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Dolgin, I had it right the
14 first time. Thank you very much for coming,
15 and you are recognized, sir.

16 MR. DOLGIN: Good evening, everyone, and I
17 hope that you all --

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Could you pull the mike up
19 just a little bit so everybody can hear you?

20 MR. DOLGIN: My name is Gary Dolgin, and I
21 hope all of you will be inspired by the
22 14-year-old to follow his example and draw some
23 maps.

24 Too much power in one party is a threat to
25 our democracy, whether it is Republican or

1 Democrat. We live in a equal divided state
2 with approximately half Democrats and half
3 Republicans. We elected Barack Obama in 2008,
4 and then turned around and elected Rick Scott
5 in 2010. That is pretty divided. But yet the
6 Legislature is made up of 75 to 80 percent of
7 Republicans right now, and the Senate is --
8 seems to be pretty similar. That doesn't seem
9 right, and when you look at it, it is because
10 of gerrymandering.

11 Talk about District 11 where I live, which
12 is a Democratic district, and the reason it is
13 a Democratic district is because you have areas
14 of Pinellas and Manatee in that district, you
15 have packed all the Democrats in the area into
16 that district so that the surrounding districts
17 can be majority Republican. Now, in
18 California, there is the same complaint that
19 the Republicans have against the Democrats.

20 We have a better democracy if we have
21 competitive districts. If I asked each of you
22 to raise your hand, how many of you had a
23 competitive election last year? You all swore
24 under oath to defend the Constitution of the
25 State. If you all meet your oath, that will

1 mean that some of you will not be reelected.
2 The question is whether you will have the
3 courage to follow that oath and put the
4 interests of the people ahead of your own
5 personal political interests. Thank you very
6 much.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much, sir.
8 And next, Ms. Belcher, thank you for coming
9 tonight and giving of your time, and after your
10 testimony, I believe that Herbert Belcher is
11 speaking, and then after that, Maria Lopez, and
12 then Patrick Mantegia, I think.

13 SENATOR JOYNER: Mantega.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: Mantega. Boy, am I lucky
15 I've got Senator Joyner here.

16 Ms. Belcher, you are recognized, and thank
17 you for sharing your time with us tonight.

18 MS. BELCHER: With all due respect, this
19 is a waste of time and expense for the
20 citizens. Where are the maps? Where are the
21 -- why is the Legislature wasting money on
22 lawsuits when the citizens made it abundantly
23 clear that -- with the Fair Districts amendment
24 that -- what citizens wanted? And why the
25 citizens strongly feel that this is a waste of

1 time is the fact that one of our own local
2 elected officials has apparently left the
3 building.

4 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, Ms.
5 Belcher. And next we will hear from the other
6 side of the Belcher family, Herbert. You are
7 recognized, sir.

8 MR. BELCHER: Thank you. I am Herbert
9 Belcher. I would just like to say I would like
10 to see Amendments 5 and 6 fully upheld. It is
11 straightforward. Unlike many other people here
12 who are against that, we would definitely
13 appreciate you following it to the law. Thank
14 you.

15 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
16 Mr. Belcher. Next, Maria Lopez, Ms. Lopez,
17 representing the Latino Professionals Network.
18 In fact, she is the Director. And then Patrick
19 Mantega and then Sharon Calvert.

20 MS. LOPEZ: Good afternoon and welcome.
21 My name is Maria Lopez, Director of Latino
22 Professionals Network. I am part of the
23 coalition that the Hispanic community has
24 formed.

25 I have a sense of disappointment, and it

1 has come from previous hearings regarding
2 redistricting. In the hopes that you, besides
3 hearing, you actually listen, we are here today
4 as well, but not only on behalf of the
5 Hispanics, but on behalf of everybody, because
6 we feel that we have not been heard, no one was
7 heard previously, and we hope that today we
8 are.

9 We sensed also that there were many bones
10 thrown to us, and those were that since we were
11 everywhere in the areas, in the regions, then
12 we can grow, and they didn't recognize --
13 didn't recognize the natural increase and
14 concentration of Hispanics, so they didn't
15 follow that line. They also said that we have
16 gone very far and that we should be happy for
17 not having our rights recognized. That is what
18 we read between lines of what happened
19 afterwards. But not only us, there were other
20 communities that were not heard at all.

21 We are as Hispanics an important factor in
22 the demographic change since in the last ten
23 years, we have grown 70 percent. It is not a
24 small percent, it is 70 percent. And we feel
25 that there is an effort to go contrary to that

1 growth. So we would like to -- that you
2 consider keeping District 58 intact and you
3 follow the natural ties that the communities
4 have formed, and not the opposites.

5 SENATOR GAETZ: May I ask you to
6 summarize, please, ma'am?

7 MS. LOPEZ: That is the summary, keep the
8 58 intact.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: Great. Thank you.

10 MS. LOPEZ: Thank you. And then give us
11 another pat on the back so we should be happy
12 for not having our rights recognized.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much, ma'am.
14 Next we will hear from Patrick Mantega, I am
15 getting it right here thanks to Senator Joyner,
16 and then Sharon Calvert, and then we will hear
17 from Gary Gibbons.

18 Patrick Mantega, thank you so much.

19 MR. MANTEGA: Thank you. I am here to ask
20 that you honor Florida's diversity. I believe
21 that with a little extra effort, the
22 Legislature can make compact, continuous
23 districts that respect concentrations of
24 Hispanic and black minorities.

25 The Hispanic community shares a mostly

1 common heritage, culture and cuisine. They
2 frequent the same bodegas and sandwich shops.
3 Hispanic community boundaries should be as
4 important in the redistricting process as
5 municipal and subdivision boundaries.

6 The census shows that Hispanics are the
7 state's largest minority population, but the
8 population of Hispanic elected officials falls
9 far short of our population percentage. No
10 prominent Hispanic congressional district in
11 central or north Florida, no prominent Hispanic
12 State Senate district in central or north
13 Florida. The only prominently Hispanic House
14 district on the west coast of Florida is where
15 we currently sit in District 58.

16 Florida's Hispanic population has grown by
17 leaps and bounds, but, sadly, the number of
18 elected officials that share Hispanic heritage,
19 culture and the love of cafe con leche have
20 not. Please rectify this problem.

21 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.
22 Next, Sharon Calvert, please, Ms. Calvert, and
23 then we will hear from Gary Gibbons and then we
24 will hear from Jane Gibbons.

25 Ms. Calvert, thank you for coming.

1 MS. CALVERT: Well, thank you, and I
2 appreciate having this opportunity, you coming
3 to Hillsborough County.

4 First of all, I would like to reiterate
5 again that those who were looking for a map
6 were given tools and opportunities to draw a
7 map and present it, so they could have had a
8 map.

9 I would like to see the maps created along
10 natural boundaries as much as possible as those
11 who reside, those voters, within those natural
12 communities and those natural boundaries share
13 commonalities, and voters within those natural
14 boundaries would feel more part of a process
15 that would foster better voter participation.
16 Thank you.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
18 ma'am. Our next speaker is Gary Gibbons, and
19 then we will hear from Jane Gibbons and then
20 from John Russell, if you will be on deck.
21 Mr. Gibbons.

22 MR. GIBBONS: Hi. I believe this is the
23 20th hearing or so that you all have had, and
24 at each one the people have spoken just as they
25 spoke in November, and you aren't listening.

1 At each one of these hearings, they have asked
2 for maps. It is your constitutional duty to
3 prepare the maps, it is not mine. We elected
4 you. You work for me. Make the maps.

5 Now, believe it or not, some people have
6 characterized these hearings as a game, and I
7 have wondered what that game might be. Is it
8 the old 60s TV show, "I've Got a Secret"? No,
9 because on that one, the contestants had to
10 answer questions, and in this case, y'all have
11 a gag order that prevents you from answering
12 any of the questions. Is it charades where
13 there's a lot of acting and people trying to
14 guess what is going on? Maybe. Is it
15 Pictionary? I don't think so. If so, we would
16 have maps. But what I am really afraid about
17 is that what this is really about is the old
18 game of Monopoly. There are some people who
19 say that you want to control the districts, you
20 want to ensure your reelection, you want to
21 keep the districts a secret until the very last
22 second in order to prevent anyone -- any
23 opposing candidates from running against you,
24 and that you will do whatever it takes to stay
25 in office.

1 Now, I hope that is not the case, and I
2 want you to remember the oath that you took.
3 Each of you took an oath to uphold the
4 Constitution of the State of Florida and the
5 Constitution of the United States and --

6 SENATOR GAETZ: And could you --

7 MR. GIBBONS: -- Amendments 5 and 6 --

8 SENATOR GAETZ: -- wrap it up?

9 MR. GIBBONS: -- are in the Florida
10 Constitution.

11 SENATOR GAETZ: We will have to do Truth
12 or Consequences if you don't wrap it up.

13 MR. GIBBONS: I want you to remember that
14 when any of you allow taxpayer dollars to be
15 used in lawsuits to attempt to invalidate
16 Amendments 5 and 6, you are violating your
17 oath.

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Gibbons.
19 And now, having heard from Mr. Gibbons, we will
20 hear from Mrs. Gibbons and see if we can slip a
21 cigarette paper in any way between their
22 comments.

23 You are recognized. Thank you for coming.

24 MS. GIBBONS: Hello, I am Jane Gibbons,
25 and I would actually like to share a phone

1 conversation that I had earlier today with a
2 friend of mine: "Hi, Farah, I would like to
3 talk to you, but I'm going to have to be
4 getting off soon because I am going to a
5 meeting."

6 "Where are you going?"

7 "I am going to Jefferson High School."

8 "Why are you going to Jefferson?"

9 "I am going to a hearing about
10 redistricting. Do you remember all those
11 petitions we got signed from all those people,
12 how we were going to get that gerrymandering
13 ended and we were going to have more sensible
14 districts and we were going to have competitive
15 elections? Well, they are trying to keep all
16 those changes from happening."

17 "What do you mean?"

18 "Well, they are being very secretive, for
19 one thing. They refuse to show us any of the
20 maps, they are not answering any questions at
21 any of the hearings. The Republican Speaker of
22 the House has actually put a gag order on all
23 the GOP members."

24 "Well, that is not what we voted for."

25 "No, it isn't, but it gets worse. The

1 House has set aside \$30 million, the Senate has
2 set aside \$9 million to spend in court to fight
3 redistricting."

4 "Don't tell me they are spending taxpayer
5 money to do this."

6 "Oh, they sure are. We didn't vote for
7 that either."

8 "I can't believe they are going against
9 the will of the voters. Didn't that pass by a
10 large margin?"

11 "Oh, yeah, 63 percent. The whole
12 situation is terrible. You know what? My
13 grandmother had a word for stuff like this and
14 for people like this. She called them crooked.
15 And you know what? My grandmother was a really
16 smart lady. When she thought somebody was
17 crooked or something was crooked, she was
18 usually right."

19 Thank you.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, and thanks to
21 your grandmother. And I hope you will stay to
22 the end of the hearing to find out if some of
23 the things that you and Vera talked about were
24 actually true.

25 John Russell, and Mr. Russell, you have

1 two minutes.

2 MR. RUSSELL: Ladies and gentlemen, happy
3 to be here again. You know, I have heard some
4 people make some very good comments here.
5 Whether they will be put to use, I certainly
6 have my doubts.

7 I would like to talk about transparency.
8 Transparency is a word that has been used much,
9 including e-mails that I've received signed by
10 Mr. Weatherford. And what is transparency? Is
11 transparency allowing the public to come up and
12 give their commentary in this -- with respect
13 to this project? I don't think so. What is
14 transparency in the context of doing this?

15 We know that this redistricting, whatever
16 it ends up being, is going to be done on a
17 computer. Well, if it is done on a computer,
18 you have to put some information into the
19 computer. I talked about this before when I
20 saw you guys in Wesley Chapel. And so real
21 transparency would be when you put in front of
22 the public exactly the parameters that are
23 going to be put into program the computer,
24 okay, to program the computer and what it is
25 going to draw, because nobody's drawing these

1 things by hand, this is not a graphic arts
2 exercise. And, you know, we wouldn't even need
3 to have these meetings if there was any
4 integrity in this process. We all know it is
5 about money, we all know everyone is appointed
6 here, including the Democrats.

7 The Democrats should be standing up and
8 screaming, but they are such a minority, 70/30.
9 And, you know, it is funny that Amendments 5
10 and 6 passed by 63 percent of the vote. That
11 is typical for a gerrymandered election. And
12 it is pretty funny when a friend over here
13 whose name I forget stood up, raised his
14 hand -- when he said who had a competitive
15 election or didn't, he raised his hand and said
16 he had a competitive election. I know that was
17 like 60/40, so --

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Mr. Russell, Mr. Russell,
19 bring it in for a landing now.

20 MR. RUSSELL: I am bringing it in for a
21 landing.

22 Bottom line is, bottom line is this is a
23 dog and pony show. It is the fig leaf, as you
24 referred to in the last one in Wesley Chapel,
25 and you are doing a good job as a blocking back

1 for Mr. Weatherford so he can continue his
2 career as a politician. Thank you very much.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Russell.
4 It has always been my ambition to be a blocking
5 back for such a good athlete.

6 Gail Parsons. Gail Parsons?

7 Susan McMillan with Protect Our Waters,
8 and then Boris Viteri. Ms. McMillan, I'm sorry
9 I didn't give you a long enough heads-up.
10 After Mr. Viteri, then we have Tatiana Denson.

11 You are recognized.

12 MS. McMILLAN: Thank you. I am not going
13 to speak on behalf of Protect Our Waters. I am
14 just going to speak on behalf of myself as a
15 citizen.

16 I have been a Republican for almost my
17 entire life, find myself falling sometimes with
18 the Democrats, sometimes with Republicans. I
19 am a mother of three. I am a small business
20 owner. I run a small agency for people who are
21 offenders of domestic violence and substance
22 abuse, and I see firsthand the effects of drugs
23 and alcohol on our youth and the effects of
24 budgets cuts, and I have all kinds of feelings
25 about it, but this is not what we are here to

1 talk about.

2 The reason I am telling you this is
3 because this amendment passed with 63 percent
4 of the vote, and a lot of those people were
5 Republicans and Independents and people
6 similarly minded to me. So I am one of these
7 people, I want you to hear from me. I should
8 be home with my kids tonight, but I am here,
9 and I want to let you know that I don't want to
10 live in a gerrymandered, rigged state. I want
11 my kids to have a state that they can count on,
12 politics that mean something. I want them to
13 feel like their vote means something. And if
14 you guys have maps and you wait until the very
15 last second to show it to the public, that
16 really raises a lot of suspicions and leaves a
17 bad taste in the mouth of everybody who wants
18 to believe in our government. And mistrust in
19 government is growing, and you guys have the
20 power to do something about that and to restore
21 some trust. So I am going to ask you to think
22 about that when you are making your decisions.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, and thanks for
24 taking time from your family tonight.

25 Boris Viteri? Not so?

1 MS. PARSONS: Gail Parsons. I don't know
2 if you thought the former speaker was Gail --

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Oh, yes, Ms. Parsons, we
4 did call you.

5 MS. PARSONS: Yes, you did.

6 SENATOR GAETZ: Please, you are
7 recognized.

8 MS. PARSONS: Thank you. I am a member
9 of -- or a citizen of Congressional District 9
10 in northwest Hillsborough County, Odessa area,
11 and that obviously is one district that is a
12 gerrymandered district. It is north Pinellas,
13 east Hills- -- or east Pasco and all of north
14 Hillsborough, all the way down to Plant City
15 and even below Plant City. I would like to see
16 that type of gerrymandering stopped, fixed,
17 when you do your redistricting. There's others
18 also, but this is the one that I live in.
19 Let's see that fixed. Let's see contiguous --
20 if there is one word that I would like to see,
21 when redistricting is contiguous, contiguous,
22 contiguous. Thank you.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much. That
24 is exactly the kind of testimony we need.

25 And Boris, are you here? Is it Viteli?

1 MR. VITERI: Viteri.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Viteri, I'm sorry. You
3 are recognized, and we are delighted to hear
4 your testimony.

5 Next is Tatiana Denson, and then after
6 Tatiana will be -- no, we have heard from her,
7 I'm sorry -- will be Dr. Carolyn Collins with
8 the NAACP.

9 You have the floor, please.

10 MR. VITERI: Thank you. Welcome to Tampa.
11 I am born and raised here in Tampa. And the
12 previous lady who was up here who said she took
13 time -- she came here instead of being with her
14 kids or family at home, she took the words
15 right out of my mouth.

16 I used to be a Democrat. I am now a
17 Republican. However, I did vote for this --
18 for this amendment. And, obviously, if the
19 amendment got over 60 percent of the votes,
20 that means Republicans, Independents and
21 Democrats voted for it. So it is important
22 that you consider that.

23 I am a swing voter, just like she is,
24 because I heard her say she sometimes agrees
25 with some things on the other side, I am on the

1 opposite side, and I can agree with things on
2 some sides, too, because at the end, it is all
3 about all of us, it is not just about one
4 specific party or one specific community.

5 And since you are in Tampa, I am here to
6 speak about U.S. District 11, congressional
7 district. I've heard a lot of people talk
8 about statewide Representatives and --
9 statewide districts. I am here to talk about
10 the congressional district.

11 This congressional district is
12 gerrymandered. There should be no reason why a
13 Representative that represents Tampa or
14 Hillsborough County should have to go all the
15 way to Pinellas County and speak with voters in
16 St. Petersburg or go to down to Manatee County
17 and speak to voters in Bradenton when they have
18 no connection to us here in Hillsborough
19 County. And, trust me, I will be in Pinellas
20 County tomorrow discussing Bill Young's
21 district, because it is the same situation.

22 This district here in Tampa and this
23 county should be more representative of
24 Hillsborough County. Where are all the
25 northern and western suburbs and eastern

1 suburbs of Tampa? They are not included in
2 this congressional district. You are missing
3 Westchase, you are missing Carrollwood, you are
4 missing Northdale, you are missing Brandon,
5 those are all suburbs of Tampa that should be
6 part of U.S. District 11. And St. Petersburg
7 and Bradenton are not part of the Tampa area.
8 They are part of Pinellas and Manatee. Maybe
9 one could go down to Vern Buchanan, the other
10 one can go the other way to Bill Young. But
11 please keep that into consideration if you want
12 compact and continuous districts, that is the
13 way they should be, because I have walked the
14 district, and there's no way I should have to
15 go all across a bridge to speak to voters over
16 there that have nothing in common with the
17 voters on this side, and vice-versa.

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you. Thank you
19 very, very much.

20 MR. VITERI: Thank you for your time.

21 SENATOR GAETZ: Tatiana Denson.

22 MS. DENSON: Good evening. My name is
23 Tatiana Denson, and I am a resident and current
24 candidate for Florida House of Representatives
25 District 59. Last week during a redistricting

1 informational meeting by our current
2 Representative, Representative Betty Reed, we
3 were told that District 59 was short 15,000
4 residents and that was needed to ensure a seat
5 is maintained in the House.

6 The one request I have is please do not
7 put our district with one that does not have
8 the same needs as our own. And let's be
9 honest, human nature is to want things to work
10 out in one's own good, or for one's own good,
11 regardless of party affiliation. But what
12 about the good of the people? No offense to
13 anyone seated, but the 14-year-old presentation
14 is proof why we need more young people
15 represented in legislation, because we are more
16 flexible and innovative in our views. People
17 need officials who will get to the business of
18 doing what they were hired for, and that is to
19 serve the people. Thank you.

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.
21 Thank you, Tatiana. Next up we have
22 Dr. Carolyn Collins with the NAACP, and
23 following Ms. Collins is Russell Patterson.

24 DR. COLLINS: Good evening and thank you.
25 Representing the Hillsborough County branch

1 NAACP, I would like to just leave a couple of
2 basic principles that we would love for you to
3 consider, and we would like to start those off
4 by ensuring one vote for each individual, one
5 person, one vote.

6 We also would like for you to stick with
7 the concept you've constantly heard,
8 transparency, fairness, compliance with the
9 Voting Right Acts with equal protection.

10 While we look at redistricting as a sense
11 of common interest for those and the
12 individual, we want to also make sure that the
13 reference is made to Section 20 and 21 of the
14 Florida Constitution.

15 The maps, of course, by precincts, we
16 would love to see maps that are drawn that not
17 just deal with the increase in population, but
18 would seriously address the voting age
19 population. If you look at the 2010 census,
20 the results tell us that 51 percent of the
21 growth in the United States of America was in
22 the state of Florida, that 51 percent was with
23 foreign-born African-Americans and Hispanics.
24 We want to make sure that there is fair
25 transparency, equal representation, in those

1 areas.

2 I think sufficient information has been
3 given by Amendment 6. We have participated in
4 the Board of County Commissioners' maps. We
5 are here with you and with the school district
6 at the same time. We are asking not you, we
7 have seen it on your website, the maps, we have
8 tried it, we even had a workshop two weeks ago
9 to even try it. What we are saying is the maps
10 are necessary, so, finally, when you look at
11 the absence of the maps, we are asking that
12 once the maps are drawn, that the community at
13 large, state of Florida, have an opportunity to
14 look.

15 Finally, I would like to clearly say one
16 person, one vote, in summary, no packing, no
17 cracking, no stacking, compactness,
18 contiguousness, and district without seeing the
19 gerrymandering and clearly it is broken.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you.

21 DR. COLLINS: We ask that you fix it.

22 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
23 ma'am. And our final speaker tonight, we are
24 sorry we couldn't get to everybody, but we will
25 have gotten to 93 speakers, then we are going

1 to find out if we have a gag rule.

2 Russell Patterson, Mr. Patterson.

3 MR. PATTERSON: I feel honored. Like many
4 folks, I came to Florida from another state and
5 I live here in Florida by choice, and I moved
6 here because I think it is one of the greatest
7 states in the nation. In the state I grew up
8 in, we used to make fun of other states, and
9 one of the states we made fun of as being kind
10 of backwards is Louisiana. Louisiana is one of
11 the states that's pretty much finished their
12 redistricting process. Let's get on the ball.
13 Let's be Florida, not Flori-duh.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: That is a great way to
15 end. And, Mr. Patterson, I hope you will stay
16 for the comments, because we are going to
17 specifically answer the question about
18 Louisiana. That is a great way to start.

19 Let's find out if we have a gag rule by
20 asking if there are any members of the House of
21 Representatives, Democrats or Republicans, who
22 wish to make any comments, ask or answer any
23 questions or offer any recommendations tonight?

24 Representative Adkins, you are recognized.

25 REPRESENTATIVE ADKINS: Thank you,

1 Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to reflect on what
2 I heard from several individuals tonight,
3 including I believe it was the Supervisor of
4 Elections, and they referenced keeping specific
5 neighborhoods together. And, in fact, I think
6 one person even said that was the reason why he
7 voted for 5 and 6. So I just wanted to make
8 sure that -- I found those comments very
9 helpful. And the supervisor also referred to
10 the Voting Tabulation Districts and the
11 importance of those, so I will be keeping those
12 comments in mind as we move forward, but I
13 found those comments very, very helpful
14 tonight. Thank you.

15 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Representative.
16 Other members of the House? Over there on the
17 very, very end. We will get to you,
18 Representative Fresen, I'm sorry.

19 REPRESENTATIVE REED: I am Representative
20 Betty Reed, District 59. I just want to say
21 thank you to each and every one of you for
22 being here tonight and for speaking. And I
23 know that several people said, "I don't know if
24 you are listening or not." Well, this is being
25 recorded. So anyone that is not listening have

1 the opportunity to go back and hear this all
2 over again.

3 Thank you. Thank you so much for being
4 here.

5 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much. And
6 right behind you, Alex.

7 REPRESENTATIVE FRESEN: Thank you so much,
8 Mr. Chair, and I appreciate your indulgence and
9 I will be quick.

10 I just wanted to point out very simply,
11 first of all, thank you all for coming out here
12 tonight, it is always great to be in Tampa, but
13 being a Representative of a majority-minority
14 district, I appreciated the reminder from many
15 of you tonight, including former Representative
16 Tamargo and others, that the Fair Districts
17 amendment, the very one that everybody keeps on
18 talking about here today, prioritized electoral
19 protections for minority communities, amongst
20 other things. And I take those comments made
21 here tonight as a friendly and reasonable
22 suggestion to follow the prioritization of
23 standards as they are actually written in the
24 law, which we have been reminded to do and we
25 are taking as a task very seriously. But that

1 aspect is actually also a part of Fair
2 Districts, with, of course, an adherence to
3 those overarching principles of the federal
4 law. So I say this because while some
5 standards in Florida's new redistricting laws
6 may be discussed more frequently than others,
7 one in particular that was said three times in
8 the closing of a very recent person testifying,
9 it is critical that we, as legislators, always
10 attend to every single aspect of the law and of
11 the Constitution, not just one or two, and that
12 is what makes our task obviously difficult,
13 it's part of the reason why we have asked for
14 your testimony, so that we can figure out how
15 to actually combine all of those standards that
16 are in 5 and 6, not just one or two, and figure
17 out the best and fairest way to draw these
18 districts. So, again, I thank you all for your
19 guidance and appreciate your comments.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
21 Representative.

22 Representative Frishe, you are recognized,
23 sir.

24 REPRESENTATIVE FRISHE: Thank you,
25 Mr. Chairman. There were several folks who

1 spoke tonight about compactness and the
2 different ways that it might be applied, and
3 one of the reasons we have these hearings is so
4 we can hear how you view it in your own
5 community, because obviously we don't know
6 every single community in the state. I have,
7 for instance, learned a lot about the Panhandle
8 when I was up there and the communities of
9 interest and how sometimes it is roads and
10 bridges and all that actually are what tie a
11 community together. And I appreciate y'all
12 talking about that, because that is going to be
13 very, very important when we get down to
14 considering the compactness of a district.

15 I happen to represent a district that has
16 numerous bridges in it, because I represent the
17 barrier islands of Pinellas County, and a lot
18 of the mainland also. So I understand how
19 bridges and roads and the geographic features
20 sometimes tie together communities, and they
21 sometimes separate them, too, but usually they
22 tie them together. Thank you.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
24 Representative. Any other members of the House
25 wish to make any comments? If not, we will

1 turn to Senators who are here. Members of the
2 Senate wish to make any comments, offer any
3 observations, answer or ask any questions?
4 Senate Joyner.

5 SENATOR JOYNER: Thank you, Senator Gaetz.
6 I just want to thank all of you, the citizens
7 of Hillsborough, Pinellas, Manatee and all of
8 the other counties that are represented here
9 tonight. It is wonderful to have such an
10 outstanding group of citizens participating and
11 expressing their views. So thank you again,
12 and do continue to participate and follow what
13 this Legislature does.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Senator Joyner.
15 Any other comments by members of the Senate?

16 There was one question specifically asked
17 of me. I will try to answer it before I turn
18 to the Speaker Designate. And that was a
19 question about whether or not I had contributed
20 to an organization that opposed Amendments 5
21 and 6. The answer to that question is yes,
22 before the election. Before the election,
23 there were \$12 million contributed, most of it
24 for Amendments 5 and 6, and most of it by folks
25 out of state, but there were a number of folks

1 who contributed money because we thought
2 Amendments 5 and 6 should not be in the
3 Constitution. I was one of those people.
4 However, following Amendment 5 and 6 being
5 added to the Constitution, and following my
6 appointment to this committee, I have
7 contributed nothing to any lawsuit or any
8 action having anything to do with overturning
9 Amendments 5 and 6.

10 It is the ability of every citizen and the
11 right of every citizen to contribute your vote,
12 your walking door to door, your stuffing
13 envelopes, or if you wish to make a financial
14 contribution to or against any cause or any
15 candidate. However, as public servants, once
16 the election is over, we are obligated to
17 uphold the Constitution and the laws of the
18 State of Florida and of the United States, and
19 since that election when Amendments 5 and 6
20 were adopted, I have contributed nothing to any
21 effort to try to upend or to reverse those
22 amendments.

23 Having said that, let me turn to the
24 Speaker Designate. Representative Weatherford
25 has made extensive notes tonight, as have I, as

1 have many members of the committee, and we
2 would like to try to answer some of the factual
3 questions that were raised. Mr. Speaker.

4 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
5 very much, Mr. Chairman, and ladies and
6 gentlemen, I am going to try to be brief. I
7 know everybody wants to get out of here. We
8 appreciate all the comments that have come
9 forth tonight. We've gotten a lot of great
10 advice, we have had some constructive
11 criticism, we have had some straight-out
12 criticism and we even had an offer to take us
13 to the woodshed, which I thought was unique on
14 this swing. My mother always said, she is the
15 mother of nine children, that spanking is good
16 for the soul, so we are getting our fair share
17 of that.

18 But I would just like to say the diversity
19 of comments that I think we have gotten today
20 has shown us, you know, how complicated this
21 process is, and, frankly, how important it is
22 that we hear from citizens. We heard about the
23 diversity of the county from the east side to
24 the west side, and how one side is more urban
25 and one side has more industrial and

1 agriculture base. We heard -- someone showed
2 us a map of the City of Tampa, and was talking
3 about the geographic boundaries of the City of
4 Tampa and then talking about compactness,
5 almost as if those two almost fall out of line
6 with each other, which they do. And so when
7 you talk about Hillsborough County, you talk
8 about the communities of interest, the
9 geographic boundaries of Hillsborough County,
10 it is very diverse. It is racially diverse, it
11 is geographically diverse, the municipalities
12 are diverse, and I think that is important that
13 we think about that.

14 There was a suggestion, Mr. Chairman, that
15 came about, and I don't have the person's name
16 who mentioned this, but I think this is a
17 tremendous suggestion, and, frankly, in the
18 House, we are going to look at this, and I hope
19 you will consider it in the Senate, they
20 mentioned that when Hillsborough County did
21 their redistricting, they actually proposed six
22 maps and they had different options for people
23 to choose from and for citizens to look at,
24 and, frankly, I think that is a very good idea
25 and something that we should consider going

1 forward. So that got my attention certainly.

2 There was a lady, I want to say this
3 right, Mrs. Morowati -- is that right? I just
4 want to say you get the MVP for tonight. I
5 have not looked at the maps you suggested, but
6 you showed up, you had comments, they were
7 detailed and then you actually had specific
8 suggestions that you gave forth, and I thought
9 that was tremendous and that's the kind of
10 feedback we are looking for. I just want to
11 thank you for doing that.

12 There was -- there were some comments in
13 regard to the maps, and I want to be very
14 clear. Everywhere we go, we hear the same
15 question, where are the maps, show us the maps.
16 And there are some groups that are a little
17 more vocal about that than others.

18 The first thing I want to point out in
19 regard to the maps is this: The Fair Districts
20 Chairwoman came and spoke before a joint
21 committee just like this in Tallahassee made up
22 of House members, Senate members, Democrats and
23 Republicans, and specifically said to the
24 committee, that is recorded and I will give you
25 a copy of it to any person who is in this room,

1 that she would not begin to draw the first map
2 until she heard from the public. This is
3 coming from the Chairperson of Fair Districts.
4 So for everybody who voted for that and
5 supported that cause, the leader of that cause
6 thought it was prudent for the Legislature to
7 listen, to listen first.

8 One of the biggest complaints I hear in
9 this process is that politicians tend to act
10 first and listen later, if they listen at all.
11 And we have made a statement in this process
12 that we are going to listen first. And if that
13 is the worst thing that you can accuse us of
14 doing, I will take it. If the biggest problem
15 I've got is being a listener, I will take that.
16 My mom didn't say that about me when I was a
17 kid, by the way, but I will take it now.

18 The other thing, and I am going to read
19 really quickly, last week in Georgia -- I was
20 just reading about this. Last week in Georgia,
21 the League of Women Voters in Georgia not only
22 prepared and publicized its own redistricting
23 maps, it organized a map fair at the Georgia
24 State Capitol to encourage members of the
25 public to present their own maps. And this

1 quote, "Our goal throughout this process is to
2 ensure that citizens have a choice," said the
3 President of the League of Women Voters of
4 Georgia, "and what better way to do that than
5 bringing people here with their own maps to the
6 Capitol." Interesting how we are hearing a
7 completely different story for the last four
8 hours this evening, Mr. Chairman.

9 Not only that, we had a young man by the
10 name of Graham, and everybody is calling you a
11 14-year-old. You are really 13-and-a-half,
12 right? Thirteen, okay, I thought that. They
13 were giving you credit for that extra year.
14 You look 14. But here is Graham with his
15 little -- with his older sister or younger
16 sister and his family who were able to produce
17 120 maps that we saw right there before us.
18 One student, one sister, one family that was
19 able to do that, and it was tremendous and it
20 was of great support. We are going to look at
21 that, we are going to learn from that, and we
22 have had 48 other maps just like that.

23 Ladies and gentlemen, we are going to have
24 maps. We are going to have maps for you to
25 look at, we are going to have maps to get

1 feedback on, but we are having an opportunity
2 to hear from you first, and I don't see why
3 that is such a bad thing.

4 Next on the timeline, a lot of people
5 talked about the timeline and the fact that we
6 need to speed this process up. One gentleman
7 actually mentioned I think Louisiana as a
8 state, and Lord knows, they have had their
9 challenges over the years, but apparently they
10 have finished the process. Well, I can give
11 you a very easy answer as to why Louisiana and
12 about eight other states have finished the
13 process, because they have elections in three
14 months. They have their elections in off
15 years. So their election is in 2011, not in
16 2012. So for states that you hear like
17 Louisiana and Mississippi and New Jersey and
18 others who are way ahead of us on
19 redistricting, first off, they got their census
20 data way before we did. We were one of the
21 last states, not the last, but one of the last
22 to receive our census data. But they also have
23 elections in November of this year. And so the
24 department -- the Census Bureau gave them their
25 data ahead of time so they could start to draw

1 their maps. I just think that is an important
2 thing to point out.

3 Also in regard to the timeline, the
4 Constitution is very clear, and I said this at
5 the beginning, but I will say it again for
6 clarity. It is very clear that we cannot vote
7 on legislative maps legally until January of
8 2012. That is the soonest we could possibly
9 vote on any map. So what we are doing is we
10 are spending the summer on a listening tour,
11 listening to folks just like you, hundreds of
12 hours of public testimony. Next we are going
13 to spend the fall looking at maps, drawing
14 maps, having the opportunity to debate, having
15 an opportunity for you to debate, to look at
16 maps, but we wanted to listen first. And so we
17 will get through the fall, and when we get into
18 session, I can assure you there will be votes
19 taken on maps on the floor and we will get them
20 out on time. We are very sensitive to the fact
21 that we have to have them done by qualifying.
22 We get it, we get it. And I can assure you,
23 and everyone here can assure you that we are
24 going to get that done.

25 Also, there was mention about the certain

1 dates that I think the -- the one I keep
2 remembering, someone mentioned March that we
3 had to -- we were going to vote in March and
4 that our timeline said a vote on March. That
5 is not true. Those are deadlines. We are not
6 operating by deadlines. We are moving at a
7 clip and at a pace that we hope is going to be
8 very, very fast. And so there is no plan to
9 vote in March or anything in the month of
10 March. I hope that we are done far before
11 that, Mr. Chairman.

12 Moving forward, something that I think is
13 very important that came up several times is
14 litigation. We also hear this argument every
15 time there are concerns. There is no
16 litigation in regards to Amendment 5. People
17 think there's litigation -- and those are the
18 legislative maps. There is litigation going on
19 on Amendment 6, which are the congressional
20 maps. And I want to be very clear about this,
21 and that is that there is litigation, but it is
22 our job, both as Chairman Gaetz and myself and
23 every member of this committee, the
24 Constitution says that 5 and 6 passed, it was
25 voted unanimously almost -- or overwhelmingly

1 by 64 percent of the citizens of Florida. We
2 are going to uphold it, we are going to honor
3 it, and every person here is going to make sure
4 that it is implemented in our maps, Amendments
5 5 and 6, okay. We are going to do that, no
6 matter what litigation is going on. And the
7 idea that the Legislature has stored away tens
8 of millions of dollars, which we continue to
9 hear, to fight the maps simply is not true. It
10 is not true. We hear it in every city we go
11 to. I am here to tell you, I am looking y'all
12 in the eyeball, it is not true. It does not
13 exist.

14 Lastly, I am going to finish off,
15 Mr. Chairman, there is an opportunity for every
16 member of this committee, Democrat, Republican,
17 Chairs, Vice-Chairs, any person can propose a
18 map, can submit a map, can debate a map, and I
19 think you even offered to members of your
20 committee that if they propose a map, you will
21 hear it at the very first committee hearing
22 that you have in September. And so ladies and
23 gentlemen, this is the beginning of the
24 process. It is not the end of the process.
25 Your input will continue to matter, it will

1 continue to hold water as we go through it.

2 And I know someone mentioned earlier that
3 there was different games being played, and I
4 won't speculate on different games, I like lots
5 of games. I always grew up liking Yahtzee and
6 Monopoly and, you know, everything else, but
7 sometimes I also enjoyed playing pop the
8 piñata, and sometimes, Mr. Chairman, I feel
9 like we get to be the piñata. But you know
10 what? That is our job. That is our job to sit
11 here and to listen to you no matter what the
12 comment is, and I thought we got some great
13 comments from members of the public. I learned
14 a lot. And we just thank you for taking the
15 time to do that.

16 I did notice one thing, there were two --
17 a couple of questions that were asked, and now
18 that I just looked down, I want to make sure I
19 hit them real quick. To my knowledge and to
20 any knowledge of any person up here that I know
21 of, there are no private funds being used to
22 assist with building districts. I want to make
23 that very clear.

24 The House and Senate did create in-house
25 two separate district building applications.

1 The data is the same, but the operating systems
2 were different. And I suggest that if you
3 want, you can talk to our staff, and they can
4 explain that.

5 And the last one was that eight of the 48
6 public submissions of plans we have received
7 thus far were made with different applications,
8 which means people used their own applications
9 and submitted those to us, and I meant to talk
10 about that in the beginning, but I missed it,
11 Mr. Chairman.

12 Thank everybody for bearing with me on
13 that long explanation. Thank you for your
14 comments. We learned a lot about Hillsborough
15 County, a lot about Tampa Bay, and I hope
16 everyone has a great night. Thank you.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: And with that,
18 Representative Weatherford moves we rise.

19 (Whereupon, the proceedings were
20 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 208 represent a true, correct, and complete transcript of the tape-recording;

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

Dated this 20th day of November, 2011.

CLARA C. ROTRUCK

Notary Public

State of Florida at Large

Commission Expires:

November 13, 2014