

Panama City Redistricting Public Input Meeting  
June 22, 2011 – 11:00 a.m.  
Post-Public Input Meeting Report

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The purpose of this document is to summarize specific district map-drawing suggestions from the Tallahassee public meeting on June 22, 2011. Therefore, the comments in this document will focus on specific instructions provided by Florida residents participating in this meeting.

Other comments that were either not specific on how to draw a map or that were editorial in nature will not be included in this document. For all of the comments in their entirety, please see the meeting transcript, video and/or podcast via [www.floridaredistricting.org](http://www.floridaredistricting.org).

The following encapsulates comments from persons who spoke and/or submitted written comments for the Panama City public meeting. To make it clear, these are the public's suggestions. This document does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Florida Legislature.

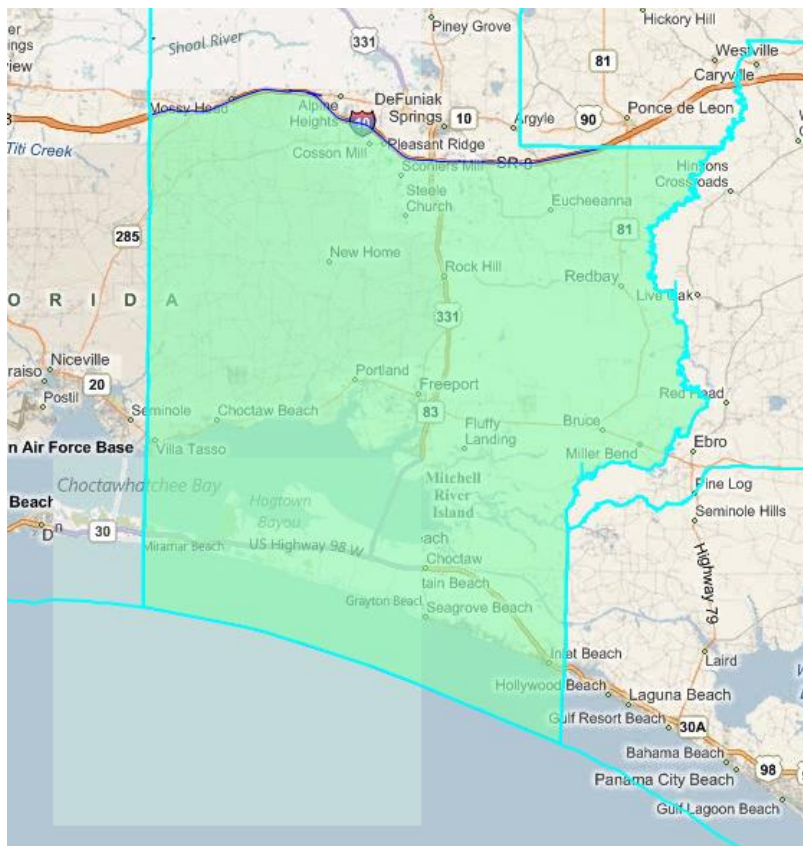
## Specific Map-Drawing Testimony-Panama City Public Hearing

June 22, 2011

**NW-15:** Keep South Walton County in one Legislative District

**Description:** “Keep south Walton together. It is an important community to keep together.”<sup>1</sup> By dividing Walton County along Interstate 10 to create a northern and southern half of the county, “south Walton County” is divided between House districts 5 and 7, Senate districts 2 and 4 and Congressional districts 1 and 2.

**Visual:** Having south Walton County within one district would look like this:



### Policy Issues:

- “South Walton County” was not completely defined. For the purposes of this example, Interstate 10 was used as the dividing line between north and south.
- The district drawn above is 124,326 people short of being a complete House district, 437,681 short of being a complete Senate district and 663,993 short of being a complete

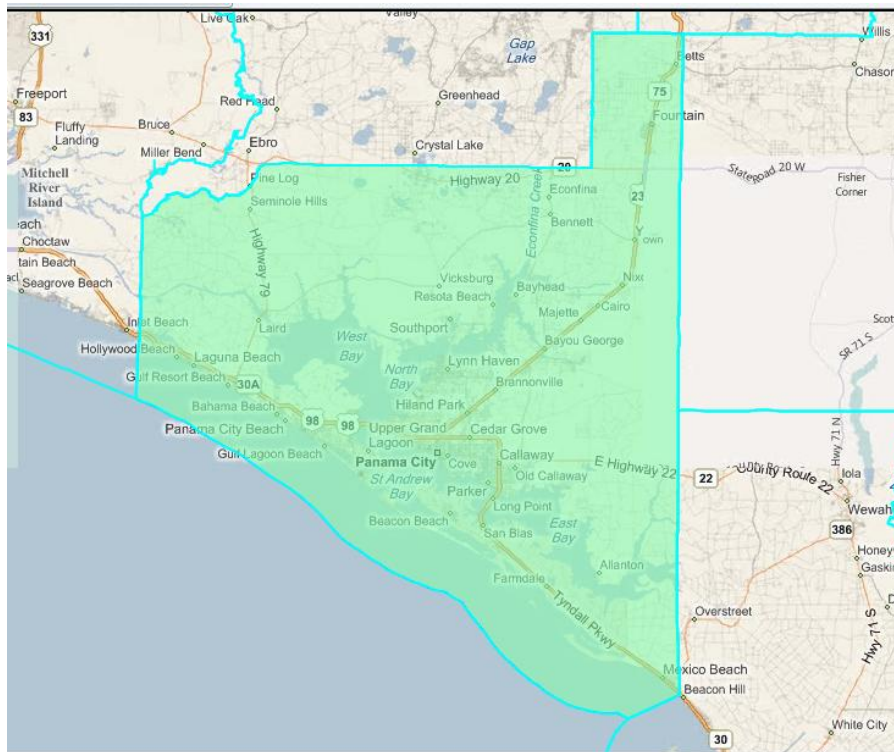
<sup>1</sup> Brenda Rees of Santa Rosa Beach

congressional district. More communities would need to be link to south Walton County to complete a district.

### NW-16: Have Bay County Whole in Legislative Districts vs. Keeping Multiple Representatives in Bay County

**Description:** “It’s confusing to have Bay County split.”<sup>2</sup> “Keep Bay County all together”<sup>3</sup>. “In order to advocate for my issues, I like having multiple representatives for Bay County so that we have more voices.”<sup>4</sup> Currently, Bay County, is split between House districts 6 and 7 and between Senate districts 2, 4 and 6.

**Visual:** Placing all of Bay County into one legislative district would look like this:



<sup>2</sup> Candis Harbison of Panama City

<sup>3</sup> Beth Oltman of the Panama City Beach Chamber of Commerce

<sup>4</sup> Jennifer Jones of the Bay Arts Alliance

**Policy Issues:**

- The population for the county is 12,174 over the ideal population for state house districts. However, Bay County could be kept whole in the Senate and Congressional maps. 301,181 people would need to be added to a Senate district in order for it to be complete and 527,493 people would need to be added to a Congressional district in order for it to be complete.
- The point was raised there is the potential for a community to benefit from having multiple representatives in the Legislature.

**NW-17: Sync Up Legislative District Lines With Judicial Circuit Boundary Lines**

**Description:** “It’s important to remember judicial circuits. They are already functioning governmental districts and they bind us together already.”<sup>5</sup>

**Visual:** Bay County, where this public hearing was held, is in Florida’s 14<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit, which is made up of Bay, Calhoun, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson and Washington Counties. Placing the 14<sup>th</sup> judicial circuit into one legislative district would look like this:

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<sup>5</sup> Jerry Gerde of Panama City



**Policy Issues:**

- In this example, the population of the 14<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit is 293,909, which is 137,231 over the ideal population for a State House district and 176,124 and 402,436 under the ideal population for a Senate and Congressional district, respectively.
- Unlike legislative districts, Judicial Circuits are not based on population. For example, Florida's 11<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit encompasses all of Miami-Dade County, which has a population of 2,496,435, which is nearly 10 times the population of the 14<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit.

**NW-18:** Horizontal Districts vs. Vertical Districts

**Description:** Similarly to the public hearing in Pensacola and Fort Walton Beach, some residents of the area expressed that legislative districts should be built horizontally which would unite the communities of the southern end of the panhandle counties and unite the communities of the northern end of the counties; while others suggested that they should be drawn vertically in an attempt to follow county boundary lines. Try to make the districts as equal as you can with different groups of people. Not just all beaches or all farmers.<sup>6</sup> Keep counties whole.<sup>7</sup> It's important to have representation for the south areas and the north areas.<sup>8</sup> I would suggest that you consider community borders, not just county or city boundaries.<sup>9</sup>

**Visual:**

Horizontal District vs. Vertical Districts	
Reasons Presented in Favor of Horizontal Districts	Reasons Presented in Favor of Vertical Districts
It's important to have representation for the south areas and the north areas. <sup>8</sup>	Try to make the districts as equal as you can with different groups of people. Not just all beaches or all farmers. <sup>6</sup>
I would suggest that you consider community borders, not just county or city boundaries. <sup>9</sup>	Keep counties whole. <sup>7</sup>
It works well that all of the rural counties are together, please keep it that way so we can group together. <sup>10</sup>	It's better to have diverse districts that represent both the rural areas and the beaches. <sup>11</sup>
Rural areas are a community of interest that are served better when concentrated. <sup>12</sup>	

**Policy Issues:**

- If horizontal districts are drawn, districts will have to cross county lines in order to meet the ideal population, and each county in the region would have at least two representatives.
- If vertical districts were drawn along county lines and that county's population did not line up with the ideal population for a district, then the county would either need to be

<sup>6</sup> Jean Miller of DeFuniak Springs

<sup>7</sup> Carolyn Herrera of Panama City

<sup>8</sup> Jim Anders of Panama City

<sup>9</sup> Richard Blonlis of Panama City

<sup>10</sup> Kristy Terry of Blountstown

<sup>11</sup> John Salak of Panama City

<sup>12</sup> Art Kimbrough of Jackson County Chamber of Commerce

split into at least two districts (if the county's population is too large) or the district would need to be within a part of a second county (if the county's population is too small).

- If vertical districts were drawn along county lines, communities that share similar industries and economic issues such as agricultural lands or beach communities could possibly be split.
- Is there a way to build a compromise map of a hybrid of horizontal districts when appropriate and vertical districts when appropriate?