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ILLINOIS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE

Report of proceedings had at the Redistricting
Committee for the Illinois House of Representatives held
virtually via Zoom videoconference on the 1st day of
April, A.D., 2021, commencing at the hour of 12:14 p.m.

CHAIRWOMAN:

REPRESENTATIVE LISA HERNANDEZ

1 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. Good afternoon,
2 everyone. The House Committee on Redistricting shall
3 come to order.

4 I am State Representative Lisa Hernandez. I am
5 a member of the Redistricting Committee and will be
6 chairing today's hearing.

7 Okay. Before I make some remarks, Clerk, can
8 you please take attendance.

9 CLERK: Hernandez.

10 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Here.

11 CLERK: Tarver.

12 Butler.

13 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: Here.

14 CLERK: Bourne.

15 REPRESENTATIVE BOURNE: Present.

16 CLERK: Burke.

17 REPRESENTATIVE BURKE: Here.

18 CLERK: Gordon-Booth.

19 REPRESENTATIVE GORDON-BOOTH: Here.

20 CLERK: Hoffman.

21 REPRESENTATIVE HOFFMAN: Here.

22 CLERK: Mah.

23 REPRESENTATIVE MAH: Here.

24 CLERK: Severin.

1 REPRESENTATIVE SEVERIN: Here.

2 CLERK: Spain.

3 I have seven members who have answered the roll.

4 REPRESENTATIVE BURKE: This is Burke. Here.

5 CLERK: Sorry. Eight members.

6 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Eight members. With
7 eight members present, we will begin the Committee.

8 I'd like to start by thanking everyone who has
9 chosen to participate in today's hearing. Your insight
10 and participation is as important as ever as we begin
11 the redistricting process under unprecedented
12 circumstances.

13 The United States and Illinois constitution
14 require general -- the General Assembly to redraw
15 political boundaries every 10 years to account for
16 population shifts. These hearings are a part of that
17 process. House Democrats are dedicated to transparency
18 and public participation in the redistricting process.

19 While state law requires a minimum of four
20 public hearings throughout the State, our Committee
21 intends to hold far more in present -- and present
22 additional avenues for public participation. Our goal
23 is to hear from as many people as possible and to gain
24 as much information as possible about the diverse

1 communities of our state.

2 Our staff have been making hundreds of phone
3 calls to encourage participation in these upcoming
4 hearings. Those who wish to participate should be given
5 an opportunity. We are holding a series of virtual and
6 in-person hearings throughout the State. Early last
7 month, we announced a schedule of 23 hearings before
8 proposing a redistricting plan. For comparison, in 2011
9 the House Redirecting Committee held 17 hearings in
10 total.

11 While we are guided in this endeavor by the
12 United States constitution, the Federal Voting Rights
13 Act, the Illinois constitution, and the Illinois Voting
14 Rights Act, we are also interested in any relevant
15 demographic information, such as social, political,
16 economic, religious or any other characteristics that
17 are unique to our community -- or to your committee.

18 We want to hear your specific views on any
19 social, political, economic, or religious interests
20 commonly held in the community, any specific interest
21 groups that exist, any concerns you have regarding the
22 current boundaries, or alternatively what works well
23 about the current boundaries and suggestions for the
24 drawing of new boundaries. In short, we want to hear

1 any testimony that is relevant to the drawing of our new
2 political boundaries.

3 This year, for the first time, Illinois
4 residents will be able to -- able to participate in the
5 process from the comfort of their own homes, including
6 through remote participation in these hearings and by
7 drawing their own maps via a website, the Public Drawing
8 Portal, available -- that is
9 ILHouseDems.com/Redistricting -- allows any Illinois
10 resident to draw districts and share those maps with the
11 Committee for consideration.

12 The public may also submit written testimony or
13 other public comment to the Committee by email at
14 RedirectingCommittee@HDS.ILGA.gov. All written
15 testimony, public comments, and maps submitted to the
16 Committee will be made publicly available at ILGA.gov
17 and ILHouseDems.com/Redistricting. Transcripts of the
18 Committee's hearings will also be uploaded to those
19 sites.

20 As for today, we will begin with a short slide
21 show presentation. Following the brief presentation, we
22 have a number of witnesses who have indicated a desire
23 to testify. If you have written testimony prepared, we
24 would ask that you submit the testimony to us and just

1 briefly summarize it in your oral presentation.

2 Spokesman Representative Butler, do you have
3 anything to --

4 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: Yes, Madam Chair. And
5 thank you for organizing this today.

6 Let me say -- and this may be the only time I
7 say this -- I'm glad to be back in the Bilandic
8 Building. It's nice to be back in person here after a
9 year or so, so I'm glad to be here today.

10 Just on the matter of housekeeping, I know we
11 have Leader Durkin here today. I think he wants to make
12 a bit of an opening statement as well. And I did notice
13 the list of witnesses, and I assume as we move through
14 these hearings, we will -- the majority -- excuse me,
15 the minority will have the opportunity to ask for
16 witnesses as well to be put on the list?

17 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: I'm sorry?

18 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: I assume as we go
19 through these hearings we'll be asked -- be able to
20 bring forward witnesses as well? I don't think we had
21 the opportunity, per se, today to have witnesses put on
22 the list.

23 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: My understanding is
24 anyone can submit a witness slip.

1 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: So all of these were
2 people that just submitted witness lists -- or witness
3 slips?

4 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Yes.

5 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Okay. So let me just
6 say -- and also can we had add Representative Spain to
7 the roll, please.

8 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Absolutely. Clerk,
9 please add Representative Spain.

10 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Thank you, Madam Chair.

11 Just a bit of an opening statement. I think
12 it's with a bit of irony that the first Redistricting
13 Committee takes place on April Fool's Day because, once
14 again, the citizens of Illinois are being fooled with
15 the redistricting process, which looks more and more
16 like the same old insider's game of taking care of the
17 majority party's interest.

18 Halfway through the past decade, almost 600,000
19 Illinoisans signed petitions to put the Fair Maps
20 constitutional amendment so all Illinoisans could vote
21 to make it part of our constitution. Instead, Mike
22 Madigan's lawyer went to court, and in a 4/3 partisan
23 decision authored by Mike Madigan's handpicked judge,
24 the Illinois Supreme Court threw out what the people so

1 clearly wanted, an Illinois General Assembly of broad
2 bipartisan support for going to a commission independent
3 of legislators to draw maps.

4 In fact, the majority of members in both
5 chambers have voted for or co-sponsored or publicly
6 supported letting a Fair Maps Commission draw the map
7 instead of political insiders. It's past time we change
8 how we draw our political boundaries. It is time to
9 take it out of the hands of legislators who look after
10 their own political self interest. It is time to let
11 the will of the people finally take hold in Illinois.

12 I look forward to these hearings. I certainly
13 hope there's a lot of public input. I question how much
14 that public input could potentially go into drawing the
15 maps that are most likely going to be drawn behind
16 closed doors. And I don't hold out hope it will change
17 the mindset of the majority in wanting to subject
18 Illinoisans to another 10 years of partisanly drawn
19 political maps.

20 So, again, Madam Chair, I look forward to these
21 hearings. I'm sure they're going to be fun, and
22 hopefully we'll hear from a lot of Illinoisans on their
23 concerns about this. Thank you.

24 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Representative

1 Butler.

2 I'd like to acknowledge we have a special guest
3 here today, Representative -- or I should Leader Jim
4 Durkin. Would you care to say a few words?

5 LEADER DURKIN: Thank you. Thank you,
6 Chairperson Hernandez and ladies and gentlemen of this
7 Committee, and good afternoon.

8 Let me just start by saying that this process is
9 extremely important, and it will probably be the most
10 important decision we make for many years to come.

11 Now, if we do this process correctly, we will
12 lay the foundation for the legislative and congressional
13 seats for the next decade, and we all know how important
14 that is on so many levels. But we are at a very unique
15 time in the nation and also in our state.

16 Now, if we've learned anything from the past,
17 it's that the public -- our public in Illinois -- wants
18 this process -- specifically our public wants politics
19 removed from redistricting, plain and simple. In 2015,
20 over a half a million Illinoisans, 570,000, signed a
21 petition which stated that the legislature must be
22 removed from this process and we should substitute an
23 independent redistricting commission. Leader Butler
24 described that process and how it failed, but that was a

1 statement from over a half a million Illioisians.

2 But we also should take heed of our public on
3 other issues. They, our public, three million
4 particularly Democrat, Republican, and independents,
5 just last November flat out rejected the constitutional
6 change to our tax code. Our public is engaged, and they
7 are watching. That is what that last election was
8 about. They are engaged, and they're watching what
9 we're doing in Springfield.

10 Now, I hope these hearings and meaningful and
11 provide a real opportunity to fulfill the will of
12 Illinoisans and not just an exercise to check off a box.
13 I will say that this is not a place for politics. It is
14 a place to hear from experts. It's a place for us to
15 listen to the public. It's a place for us to examine
16 the past, and also at the same time examine the state of
17 our state.

18 Now, if you do so, I have confidence that
19 Committee will do the right thing.

20 With that, I appreciate that opportunity. I
21 look forward to the testimony today.

22 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Representative
23 Durkin.

24 Before we begin with our witnesses, I do need to

1 make a correction. We will not have the short slide
2 show presentation. NCSL is going to be presenting a
3 presentation. So I wanted to make that known.

4 And I also -- when witnesses begin, I want to
5 remind everybody we do have a court reporter present.
6 So I'm going to ask to please state your name and spell
7 out your name when you do so.

8 Okay. We'll begin with our first panel, and our
9 first panel begins with Wendy Underhill from the
10 National Conference of State Legislatures.

11 Wendy.

12 MS. UNDERHILL: Sorry about that. Thank you
13 very much, Madam Chair, Representative Butler, and
14 members of the Committee.

15 I am Wendy Underhill. That's W-e-n-d-y
16 U-n-d-e-r-h-i-l-l. I'm the director of elections and
17 redistricting at the National Conference of State
18 Legislatures. I am here today with my colleague, Ben
19 Williams, and he'll be putting up his slides. I'll be
20 talking through the first half, and then I'll switch
21 over and he will take over at that point.

22 I want to make sure that everyone knows that
23 NCSL is the nation's bipartisan organization serving the
24 needs of legislators and legislative staff throughout

1 the states and territories. While our structure is
2 bipartisan, our work is nonpartisan. Ben, you can go to
3 the next slide.

4 You'll see here the kinds of things that we do,
5 but I'd say that our responsibility is to respond to
6 research requests from legislators and legislative
7 staff. We do that in a confidential matter, so if any
8 of you want to contact Ben or me after today's hearing,
9 by all means feel free. That's what we're here for.

10 Also, I do want to make the comment that NCSL
11 does not offer advice on policy matters that come before
12 legislatures. Instead, we provide 50 state perspective.

13 Here you can see the outline of what we're going
14 to do today. I'm going to talk through the first half
15 on the census, and then I'll break for a moment. We can
16 take questions if you'd like to at that point -- or
17 really anytime that's appropriate for you, Madam Chair
18 -- and then I'll turn it over to Ben for the second
19 part.

20 So as for the census, there are at least four
21 reasons that this matters a whole lot. One of them is
22 that 1.5 trillion dollars in federal funding is
23 distributed across the states based on formulas that
24 rely on census data, so the more accurate the census is,

1 the more appropriate is the distribution of federal
2 funding.

3 There's apportionment, ensuring that Illinois
4 gets its fair share of representation in the US House.

5 There's redistricting, which is what we're here
6 to talk about today. That is so that every district can
7 be in compliance with the one person, one vote
8 principle.

9 And also this data is used for policymakers at
10 every level of both state and federal to be sure that
11 they've got the best information in hand as they make
12 choices.

13 We do have a map here today of apportionment. I
14 thought you'd might like to see what other states are
15 likely to be losing or gaining seats. I'll note that
16 this data is final. It will not be final until the
17 actual census data is released. The apportionment data
18 is due at the end of the month, April 30th. Let's just
19 go ahead to the next slide.

20 I brought the four data points for you in regard
21 to Illinois, and three of these mean that it's harder to
22 redistrict in Illinois than it is in some other places.
23 The first is that it's likely that on Congressional side
24 you'll be losing a seat. That means you can't just take

1 existing boundaries and reframe the edges of them a
2 little bit. You have to actually remove them from the
3 pot, and then it means more movement on the map.

4 The next is that March 15th is your primary
5 date, and that's pretty early in the schedule. Texas
6 and North Carolina come before you, but you're third in
7 the line up of state primaries next year. And I'll
8 point out that's less than 350 days away at this point.

9 Next, your constitution does call for your
10 legislature to draw your legislative maps by June 30th,
11 and that's something that most states don't have as a
12 deadline.

13 And then the other piece to it all, the upside
14 is that 34 billion in federal funds do come to Illinois
15 every year based on those formulas that I mentioned
16 before, so funding is one of the reasons that people
17 care so terribly much about it.

18 So I do want to point out that every census is a
19 different one than the one before. Policies change,
20 procedures in particular change. It's worth noting that
21 in 1920 Congress decided they were never going to
22 actually go ahead and use the 1920 census to redraw
23 congressional lines. It's just an interesting fact.

24 In 1960, that was the first time that the forms

1 were mailed out to people. Previous to that, it had
2 been all door to door. And then in 1975, NCSL was brand
3 new as an institution. One of the very first things it
4 did was to work with Congress to be sure that the census
5 had a statutory mandate to provide the kind of data at
6 the granular level that's needed by redistricters.

7 So when we think about how people were counted
8 in 2020, there are at least five ways, and one was
9 online. The 2020 census was the first time that people
10 could respond online. It was an experiment, and it was
11 fairly successful according to what the census has to
12 share with us.

13 People could also respond by mail. Some of the
14 folks who didn't go online when they got a post card
15 were eventually mailed a full form, and they could use
16 that. Other people who have a PO box only got the full
17 form, and they could use that.

18 This decade people could respond by phone, and
19 there were twelve languages in addition to English that
20 were available for phone support.

21 And then there were the door knockers. I should
22 let you know my husband, Brian Underhill, was an
23 enumerator for the census, and he knocked on doors in
24 Colorado where we lived. The field operations were, of

1 course, impacted by the pandemic, so the change was
2 constant for his schedule, where he was going to be,
3 could be.

4 And then the last way the data is gathered is
5 through something called imputation, and that's when a
6 household's data information isn't complete for whatever
7 reason, the census bureau fills in the gaps with
8 information from administrative records or from others,
9 perhaps even, like, Postal Service, if they see that
10 person going by, filling in where other things are
11 missing.

12 So the states really don't have to do anything
13 to support the census if they don't choose to. It is a
14 federal operation entirely. But this decade, unlike
15 previous decades, many states, most states did decide
16 that they wanted to put some money in on it. Illinois
17 put 30.5 million dollars of state funding into it.
18 That's the third highest per capita in the nation, and
19 the second highest in terms of actual dollars. So
20 Illinois is on top of that.

21 States also support the census operations by
22 providing geographic data through the data -- the
23 decade, so there's several different way points along
24 the way where the designated liaison is asked to provide

1 information about what they suggest for where blocks
2 should be held and to update local addresses and to
3 share the voting districts precincts, that kind of
4 thing. And when they do those things then the data that
5 comes back is higher quality.

6 So I do want to talk at some length about the
7 delays in the census data because that's where all of
8 the news is right now, and this slide has the most
9 important big news. That's, as I mentioned earlier,
10 congressional apportionment data will be released at the
11 end of this month, so we'll know more about who's going
12 to gain a seat and who's going to lose a seat at that
13 point. We might even learn a little bit about data
14 following that point. I'm not sure about that piece.

15 And then the redistricting data was originally
16 due on April 1st. That deadline was shifted to
17 September 30th. And then just about two weeks ago, the
18 Census Bureau learned that it would be able to provide
19 that exact same data in the second half of August. So
20 in reality for all states, that's -- the second half of
21 August is when you can expect the data to arrive and you
22 can start to redistrict.

23 So you might want to know why there were delays.
24 First of all, the most important thing was the pandemic.

1 That meant that it was hard to be in the field when they
2 needed to be. There were also fires in many western
3 states. There were floods in many southern states.
4 There were policy changes throughout last year. And
5 then there was a thing called differential privacy,
6 which I'll talk a little bit more about later. It's a
7 data quality question, I guess, we might say, or it's a
8 change in policy that will be important this decade.

9 All right. The obvious problem with delaying
10 the census is not so much for those policymakers who are
11 thinking about transportation or education or health.
12 It's about redistricting and states being able to
13 redistrict in time. And, of course, the final deadline
14 for redistricting is to be prepared for elections in
15 2022.

16 So with less time, there's a squeeze, and each
17 state is going to adjust to that in a somewhat different
18 way. The first thing that happens is that the data
19 arrives, and whoever's managing your data needs some
20 amount of time. I've heard two weeks maybe even up to
21 six weeks to make sure that it integrates well into the
22 database. I'm not sure if that's the exact timeline
23 that Illinois will have, but some amount of time has to
24 be provided for that.

1 And then you think about the primaries, but
2 before the primaries comes the filing period. Then
3 there's the filing deadline, which is what we're usually
4 thinking of, but in this case it's probably the opening
5 of the filing deadline period that matters so very much.

6 Some states also have a residential requirement
7 that might say that you have to live in the district for
8 a full year before you can run. If a state has that --
9 and I don't believe Illinois does -- that means that the
10 real deadline becomes the November 2nd -- the first
11 Tuesday after the first Monday in November, but I don't
12 believe that's the case for you.

13 And then every state needs to be very cognizant
14 of what has to happen down the road with the election
15 officials. They have many processes that they need to
16 do. There's local redistricting; there's redrawing of
17 precincts; and there's assigning voters to ensure that
18 they are in the right districts.

19 That's all kind of on the negative side. I did
20 try to think of some things on the positive side. One
21 of those is that by delaying, perhaps the Bureau will be
22 able to ensure the quality of the data. That's sort of
23 the stated reason.

24 Of course, it means that state legislatures

1 can use their regular session for regular business.
2 That matters more in states where their regular session
3 tends to end in May or in June. I think in Illinois you
4 can be called in throughout the year, so maybe that's
5 not so important for you. But other states are using
6 the time they've got now for budgets in particular, and
7 then they'll have a special session in the fall to take
8 care of redistricting.

9 This is a good time for a state to be talking
10 with its state demographer or other experts on how the
11 population is shifting within the State. A lot can be
12 known in advance. You might even be able to draw some
13 preliminary maps with other data, and that would help
14 you see where the problem areas might be. And in
15 particular, I'm hearing that this period before the
16 redistricting data arrives is a good time to gather
17 public input, and I'm hearing that you say that you have
18 more than 20 hearings setup for gathering that input.

19 Then we just wanted to put this slide to
20 indicate what are the deadlines for completing
21 redistricting. These -- most -- some states are silent
22 on it. They just need to have their districts done in
23 time for the filing of primaries and the general
24 elections, others have specific deadlines. And as you

1 all know, you do have one that the Legislature needs to
2 draw the maps by June 30th. And if not, a back up
3 commission comes into play after that. So just knowing
4 that you're almost a small minority of states that are
5 in that situation.

6 So there are different ways that states can
7 address their -- the delay in the census data, and one
8 is to ask the courts for relief. California has done
9 that and has been given permission to extend its
10 deadlines because they won't get the census data when
11 expected. Oregon has asked for something similar.
12 Nothing has been decided there yet.

13 It is possible to alter some of those deadlines
14 that we talked about. There is a bill in Alabama to
15 change their filing deadlines, and so that's an option.
16 The primary dates could be changed. What I've noticed
17 so far is that most states have -- more states have
18 bills to move their primary up in the system because
19 they don't want to hold something into September. It's
20 too late. But we're watching for that.

21 Considering what the backup commission looks
22 like, I think you all are doing that. And we've called
23 something the two step. This would be where a state
24 would use a data source other than the decennial census

1 data and go ahead and redistrict with that data now, and
2 then they could do a quick do-over when the decennial
3 census data comes. The idea being that they could get
4 close with some other data source, and then just have to
5 make changes on the margins.

6 And now I'm realizing that some states might say
7 that their backup data -- or whatever data source they
8 might choose -- might be good enough that that second
9 step wouldn't even be needed. I'm not in a position to
10 argue with what is going to meet court muster [phonetic]
11 and what would not.

12 So that does, of course, beg the question -- oh,
13 I'm sorry. I've got a slide here on what the Census
14 Bureau is doing right now during this extra time. The
15 first thing that it's doing is making sure that
16 everything is coded exactly right. And I -- I actually
17 mixed things up in my notes here, so excuse me just a
18 moment.

19 Then they do that imputation, which I mentioned,
20 where they can assign characteristics to the various
21 households where they didn't have complete information.
22 And then they can apply the differential privacy.
23 That's the second time I've mentioned it. I do promise
24 to come back and tell you a little more about that.

1 Then they do quality control, and then they create it
2 into various formats for the delivery. And the
3 delivery, again, the official date is September 30th,
4 but the -- all states are recognizing that they're going
5 to be just fine with the data that will be made
6 available to them in August.

7 Okay. Now, let's go to the next slide. I
8 changed my notes.

9 So other sources of information that could be
10 used instead of the decennial census data, from the
11 Census Bureau there's the American Community Survey.
12 The one year estimate is probably not going to be good
13 enough for anybody's purposes because it only goes down
14 to geography that's 65,000 in population or greater.

15 The five year estimates are an option right now.
16 What's available is the estimate that covers 2015 to
17 2019 and takes the average of those, so it's sort of
18 like using 2017 data. This goes down to the block root
19 level, not down to the block level, so that may or may
20 not be sufficiently granular for your needs.

21 And then we have also the estimated 2020
22 population. This -- if you can imagine starting with
23 the 2010 data and adding in births and subtracting
24 deaths and migration throughout all of the years, you

1 can have an estimate of where we are in 2020. That
2 doesn't go down to the block level either, so it won't
3 work in all places. But this is what Iowa plans to use
4 this year.

5 And then besides, these sources all offer the --
6 your vendor, whoever's doing your database, probably has
7 access to some other kinds of data and probably your
8 state demographer does as well. So those are two other
9 places to look for alternatives.

10 All right. I've mentioned differential privacy.
11 Here we go. Differential privacy is a subset of
12 something called disclosure avoidance, so that's the
13 umbrella term. The Census Bureau is required to keep
14 the data, the responses that they get, confidential for
15 very good reasons. So they've got that, but it's in a
16 little bit of conflict with their need to provide
17 accurate data. So when you add more privacy, it has an
18 impact on accuracy and usability.

19 So this year they are using this thing that I'm
20 referring to as differential privacy. The Census Bureau
21 made this slide, and they refer to this as injecting
22 noise into the data. So on the left, we've got a set of
23 data, and what we're imagining is what was enumerated.
24 And then on the right we have that data after the noise

1 or the differential privacy has been applied. You can
2 see that there's a 14 in the upper left on the left set
3 and the 15 in the upper left of the right most set.
4 That's the kind of change that gets made. And the point
5 is that by adding noise or reporting out some numbers
6 that are different from the numbers that were actually
7 enumerated, in fact, the underlying data is kept
8 private.

9 So what will this mean for the states? In terms
10 of population, the Census Bureau has said that the state
11 total population number will be consistent and will be
12 what was enumerated. So that's a noise free data point.

13 Other than that, they are -- at this point, the
14 data that they have been releasing that describes how
15 differential privacy impacts data makes it look like
16 there will be more distortions in rural areas than in
17 urban areas, and particularly in small municipalities
18 that are in rural areas, as opposed to counties as a
19 whole, and also smaller racial and ethnic groups.

20 The final decision from the Bureau on how the
21 Bureau will calibrate the differential privacy and how
22 they'll set it between the need for privacy and accuracy
23 is expected in June.

24 I'm almost done with my part here I want you to

1 know.

2 It's not uncommon that the Census Bureau gets
3 sued on various kinds of things. It is a little
4 uncommon that there are two suits already this year.
5 The first one out of Ohio simply said that the Census
6 Bureau needed to follow federal statutory requirements
7 for when data was released. That one has been
8 dismissed. I understand that it's being appealed.

9 And then in Alabama that same question came up.
10 The Alabama suit also says that the differential privacy
11 is unconstitutional. And the schedule for that is very
12 quick because any decisions that get made about the
13 release of the 2020 census data have to come super fast
14 so that the states know what they're working with.

15 And just to put one positive spin on it, I will
16 say that out of that Ohio case, that's when the Census
17 Bureau figured out that they actually could make that
18 August release, so because of that Ohio lawsuit, you'll
19 have the data in August.

20 So if I may, I'll breathe there. I'm happy to
21 take questions.

22 And I want to thank you, Madam Chair, for the
23 opportunity to be here. Questions now, or shall we go
24 on to the redistricting part?

1 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: If it's okay with the
2 members, could we go on to the next? Are you okay with
3 that? Okay. Let's go on.

4 MR. WILLIAMS: Okay. Thank you, Madam Chair.

5 I'm Ben Williams, and I'm with the National
6 Conference of State Legislatures. B-e-n
7 W-i-l-l-i-a-m-s.

8 I'm going to be talking to you about
9 redistricting. I apologize if you see me glancing over.
10 This is where I have the slide deck that we're using.
11 I'm going to go through this fairly quickly just so we
12 can have time for more questions, if that's all right.
13 I believe this PowerPoint has been provided to the
14 Committee, so all of the finer details will be there for
15 you. And as Wendy mentioned at the beginning, if you'd
16 like to follow-up with us about any of this, we're happy
17 to do so, but for now we can go through this fairly
18 quickly.

19 So I'm going to be talking about the laws that
20 regulate redistricting going in descending order. So
21 we're going to start with the federal constitutional
22 principles; we're go through federal statutes; and then
23 we'll go through some common state constitutional
24 principles that may apply in some states; and then we'll

1 go through some of the criteria that are common in some
2 states and maybe some criteria that are relatively new
3 to the scene.

4 So the first federal principle is racial
5 gerrymandering. This is a principle that emerged in the
6 1990s in a case called Shaw vs. Reno out of North
7 Carolina. The district you see on your left is actually
8 the original Shaw district.

9 The interesting thing about the racial
10 gerrymandering case was that when it originated in North
11 Carolina in the 1990s, it was a claim that was brought
12 by white plaintiffs alleging that districts had been
13 drawn in a way that violated their right to live in a
14 race blind society, and over the past 20, 30 years or
15 so, that claim has sort of evolved. Now it has a
16 completely different meaning.

17 And so now when you see a racial gerrymandering
18 claim, it's typically brought by a minority group --
19 mostly commonly black plaintiffs, but not necessarily
20 always -- suing on a claim that is outside the scope of
21 the Voting Rights Act.

22 So the Voting Rights Act requires that districts
23 be drawn with a certain amount of a racial minority
24 group to allow for them to elect a candidate of choice

1 -- something we'll touch on a little bit later -- but
2 there are different claims for whether or not too many
3 people of a certain minority are put into a group, sort
4 of called packing in this sense. The new racial
5 gerrymandering claims get to that element of
6 redistricting.

7 This is the logic of a racial gerrymandering
8 claim roughly summarized. If you asked your counsel
9 about this, they would tell you that this is a slight
10 oversimplification. But for purposes of putting it on a
11 slide, this is the easiest way to envision how racial
12 gerrymandering claim works when it's being presented to
13 a judge.

14 So the other major thing is the partisan
15 gerrymandering cases in federal courts. This was a
16 major focus at the Supreme Court in the last decade. We
17 saw these claims based on First or Fourteenth Amendment
18 theories. The First Amendment Theories came out of a
19 series of cases in Maryland. The Fourteenth Amendment
20 theories came out of a couple of cases in North Carolina
21 and your neighbor Wisconsin.

22 These theories were successfully used in state
23 courts in some cases this decade, but the U.S. Supreme
24 Court declared in a case called Common Cause vs. Rucho

1 that these claims were not the source of questions that
2 federal courts were able to decide. They were
3 nonjusticiable in the lingo of the U.S. Supreme Court.

4 The U.S. Supreme Court did say that these claims
5 could adjudicated elsewhere, so legislatures -- federal
6 or state -- could pass rules around redistricting that
7 attempt to address partisanship, or there could be other
8 sorts of state statutory or constitutional provisions
9 that could have different interpretations than the exact
10 language of the federal First Amendment and the federal
11 Fourteenth Amendment.

12 The other federal principle in the constitution
13 is one person, one vote. This also comes out of the
14 Equal Protection Clause as does racial gerrymandering.
15 This comes out of a series of cases out of the 1960s
16 that are very famous. This is sort of where the modern
17 era of redistricting began. And the only thing that is
18 really relevant at this point with one person, one vote
19 is that there is a difference in the standard for
20 congressional districts and for state legislative
21 districts.

22 So for a Congressional district, the U.S.
23 Supreme Court has said that almost exact numerical
24 equality is required, as close to no deviation -- or

1 just the one person deviation if you have an odd number
2 population -- as possible.

3 And then with state legislative districts, you
4 have a plus or minus five percent from the ideal
5 district size. Ideal district just means general
6 population of the state divided by the number of
7 districts to be drawn.

8 And if there's any deviation beyond that, beyond
9 exact numerical equality for Congressional or beyond
10 that plus or minus five percent for state legislative
11 districts, and the state gets sued, the state has to
12 have a legitimate governmental interest that they put
13 forward to explain why they went beyond these set
14 deviations in federal law.

15 So in terms of federal statutes, the Voting
16 Rights Act is really the most controlling one. The
17 section, Section 5, was struck down by the U.S. Supreme
18 Court in 2013, so it no longer applies to the any
19 jurisdiction.

20 There actually is a Section 5 that's still valid
21 law on the books. What the Supreme Court did is they
22 only struck down the coverage formula that said which
23 states and which jurisdictions were subject to the
24 requirement that they get preclearance from the federal

1 government whenever they make a change to their election
2 laws or their redistricting plans, and because of that,
3 Section 5 is the law of the land that applies in exactly
4 zero locations. So effectively, it does not apply in
5 this decade, but the law is still in the Federal Code if
6 you looked it up.

7 The reason I have a picture of the US Capitol is
8 because Congress is currently considering new
9 legislation that would reauthorize the Voting Rights
10 Act. It would create a new coverage formula for the
11 Voting Rights Act. So, in theory, Section 5 could, once
12 again, apply to states and localities. It's unclear at
13 this point which exact states and localities would
14 apply.

15 That's something we're waiting to see with the
16 final language that is negotiated between the House and
17 the Senate if they both were to pass. I will note that
18 these bills have not come before Committee or to the
19 floor yet, so we're still waiting to get some finer
20 details. But just be aware that that is something that
21 could be headed your way.

22 The other main section is Section 2 of the
23 Voting Rights Act. This applies nationwide. It doesn't
24 require a state to receive permission from a federal

1 court of from the Department of Justice to make a change
2 to their laws. This is a private cause of action, and
3 it does apply to every jurisdiction.

4 The burden of proof in a Section 2 claim is
5 discriminatory effect. So a plaintiff who's bringing a
6 Section 2 claim doesn't have to prove that the
7 legislature or whatever governmental entity is at issue
8 had discriminatory intent in passing a law. They only
9 have to prove that it had a discriminatory effect on a
10 particular minority group.

11 Now, you may ask: How does that apply to
12 redistricting? There is a case in the 1980s called
13 Thornburg vs. Gingles that set out these three Gingles
14 preconditions that any plaintiff would have to prove
15 applies to them in order to get relief.

16 The last two, that a minority group be
17 politically cohesive and that the white voters act as a
18 block to defeat the minority group's candidate of
19 choice, are commonly referred to as racially polarized
20 voting. So if you've ever heard of that phrase before,
21 that's what it's talking about. It's talking about
22 prongs two and three of the Gingles test.

23 And then if you pass that, you go to the Senate
24 Factors, which is a nonexhaustive list of potential

1 factors that could indicate that a Section 2 claim
2 should be valid. This was designed by the U.S. Senate
3 when they reauthorized the Voting Rights Act in 1982.
4 It's a totality of the circumstances list. You
5 generally don't have to find all of them. But, in
6 general, if a plaintiff is able to prove the Gingles
7 preconditions, they're probably probably able to prove
8 the Senate Factors.

9 The only state law provision that I think is
10 relevant to you is the Free and Equal Election Clauses.
11 So I mentioned earlier that the federal cases on
12 partisan gerrymandering were no longer valid and that
13 the -- there was a possibility of moving to other
14 venues. One of those venues is state courts.

15 So the -- in 2018, the Pennsylvania Supreme
16 Court decided a case that was brought before them,
17 arguing that a clause in the Pennsylvania Constitution
18 that said all elections must be free and equal, did that
19 apply to partisanship and redistricting? The
20 Pennsylvania Supreme Court said "yes, it did," and that
21 was the first time that one of these free and fair -- or
22 Free and Equal Election Clauses had ever been applied to
23 a redistricting claim. The entire Congressional
24 district map in Pennsylvania was struck down and was

1 redrawn.

2 A couple months later, a case was also brought
3 in North Carolina under that state's constitutional
4 cause that said all elections must be free. The lower
5 court in North Carolina ruled unanimously that it did
6 apply, and it struck down that state's entire
7 Congressional district map in 2019 and those districts
8 were redrawn for the 2020 election.

9 I only bring this to your attention because
10 Illinois has one of those clauses in its constitution as
11 well. Article 3, Section 3 says all elections shall be
12 free and equal.

13 Now, it's hard to do exact apples-to-apples
14 comparisons when we're talking about state
15 constitutional provisions. Obviously every state has its
16 own unique legal history and own interpretation of its
17 laws. Just because those two states decided something
18 this way doesn't mean that the other 28 states that have
19 a free and equal election clause in their constitution
20 would do so if a case was brought before them. But it
21 is something that we at NCSL expect to see more of in
22 the decade, so I thought you should be made aware that
23 this exists.

24 So now switching over to principles. This is

1 the federal principle that just says that each
2 Congressional district has to similar. Okay. We can
3 move on.

4 The main principles to cover are compactness.
5 This is a very common one. 40 states have it. Illinois
6 has one of these. The only really interesting thing to
7 show you is that when you're looking at your
8 redistricting software and you're trying to measure
9 compactness, you'll have a couple of other different
10 metrics built into it.

11 This square district that you see here is being
12 measured using the two tests that I've listed to the
13 left, Polsby-Popper and Reock. These are two of the
14 most common compactness measures. And if you notice,
15 the Polsby-Popper score on this district is .589, which
16 on a scale zero to 1 means it's higher than the median,
17 .50. On Reock, which also scored from zero being least
18 compact to 1, most compact, it scores .382. Exact same
19 district, exact same shape, just the way you measure it
20 results in a dramatically different score.

21 So when you're looking at your redistricting
22 software, you should keep in mind that just because one
23 score gives you a particular outcome doesn't mean that
24 any other score would reflect something similar. It

1 may, but it doesn't necessarily have to.

2 So another principle is contiguity. This
3 applies in all 50 states. I think the easiest way to
4 think of it is you have to be able to walk from one end
5 of the district to another without moving it. This
6 typically only arises in cases where you have a --
7 you're trying to keep a city boarder together, but the
8 city has annexed neighborhoods that are outside, that
9 are not contiguous with the district, so you have to
10 split something.

11 You either don't keep those non-contiguous city
12 neighborhoods together or you split the county to go get
13 them or in the case of water. I've given you an example
14 from Virginia where the two circles are actually same
15 district. If you see that little red dot on the bottom,
16 that's the same district as that entire peninsula that
17 you see, and that's because that peninsula doesn't have
18 sufficient population to maintain a single house
19 district in the Virginia Legislature.

20 So preserving political subdivisions, this is a
21 pretty common one. I think the most easy way to think
22 about it is most people think of this as counties or
23 cities, keeping them whole. It could be school boards.
24 It could be wards, if you're in a particularly dense

1 population area. But sometimes it's thought of as a
2 stand in for communities of interest.

3 There are some applications that could be useful
4 to look at. In Idaho, there is a whole county rule that
5 is pretty strict, and in North Carolina there is a
6 county grouping rule that is pretty strict. I'm happy
7 to go into those more in the Q and A.

8 Preserving communities of interest is a fairly
9 common one. Even if it is isn't codified as it is in
10 these 25 states listed here, some of the other states
11 just include it as something that they try to address in
12 redistricting.

13 There's no agreed upon definition. I've given
14 you a couple of definitions from Alaska and Missouri
15 that try to give an affirmative definition of what a
16 community of interest is, and I've given you a
17 definition from California, which is a negative
18 definition. It just says what a community of interest
19 is not, and then it sort of up to the commission in that
20 state to try to figure out what a community of interest
21 is, knowing that these things have to be excluded.

22 Another principle is preserving the course of
23 prior districts. The logic of this tends to be changing
24 the lines as little as possible to maintain continuity

1 in representation.

2 I've given you an example from West Virginia
3 where if you look at this Congressional district map,
4 you can see that when they redrew the lines in 2010 the
5 only thing they did was they moved one county from one
6 district to another and left everything else exactly the
7 same. That's because West Virginia has a long tradition
8 of preserving the course of their prior districts, and
9 when they do redistrict them, they tend to make very
10 few, if any, changes at all to their Congressional
11 district map.

12 Some of the emerging principles that are also
13 interesting are prohibitions on favoring or disfavoring
14 an incumbent candidate or party. These are addressed at
15 partisanship. The exact wording has a strong effect on
16 what exactly constitutes it, so scope is really
17 important on that one.

18 Five states have a prohibition on using partisan
19 data. That typically is -- only applies when you're not
20 considering the Voting Rights Act, because if you
21 remember when I went back to Section 2, I was telling
22 you that you have to consider racially polarized voting.
23 How would you know how people vote if you aren't looking
24 at political data.

1 Five states have a rule that requires that
2 districts be drawn to be competitive. Again, there's no
3 agreed upon definition of exactly what competitiveness
4 means. I can get more into that more in the Q and A.

5 And then two states, Ohio and Missouri, are
6 going to be using a principle called proportionality.
7 It's very new, and essentially what it requires is that
8 the number of seats between the two largest parties
9 roughly reflect the average statewide vote share those
10 two parties got in the elections that past decade.

11 So lets say in Missouri you had 60 percent
12 Republican and 40 percent Democratic wins at the state
13 level. That means that when you are drawing districts
14 you should attempt to draw it so that if you have an
15 100-member chamber, you have 60 Republicans and 40
16 Democrats elected to that chamber. That's all I have
17 for the law.

18 I want to mention a couple of different
19 resources that we have. If you don't have one yet, our
20 Redistricting Law 2020 book -- it's been known as the
21 red book for decades at NCSL -- is our preeminent
22 authority on all things redistricting. It's over 200
23 pages long. It has all of the details you could ever
24 want, and it's free for legislators and legislative

1 staff. If you'd like a copy, just send an email to
2 Wendy or me, and we will get that routed to the correct
3 person at NCSL and get that shipped out to you.

4 The other thing is that we have a redistricting
5 seminar coming up, one more, in August of 2021. I don't
6 have the final details on the exact hotel yet, but I can
7 tell you that the dates are going to be August 12th
8 through 14th and it will be in Salt Lake City, Utah. So
9 that is the final redistricting seminar. That's open to
10 legislators, legislative staff, members of the public.
11 Everyone is welcome to attend. Registration information
12 on that will be forthcoming in the -- hopefully in the
13 next week or so.

14 But with that, Madam Chair, thank you very much
15 for having us, and Wendy and I are happy to take any
16 questions that you may have or members.

17 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you, Ben and
18 Wendy. Any questions from the members?

19 Representative Butler and then Representative
20 Spain.

21 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: Thank you, Madam Chair.

22 Wendy and Ben, great to see you guys again. I
23 did bring my red book with me, so thank you -- thank you
24 for what you do for NCSL and all of the great

1 information that you get out to legislators around the
2 country. It's been a pleasure to get to know you guys
3 guys over the last -- the last couple of years at a
4 variety of events.

5 I did just for the record want to correct a
6 little something because I think Madam Chair had
7 mentioned this, and then, Wendy, I think you mentioned
8 this as well. While, yes, we do have a legislative
9 deadline of the end of June for maps in Illinois, the
10 constitution does take into consideration the fact that
11 there could be issues with that; and, in fact, our
12 process under the constitution takes us -- takes us into
13 October actually potentially.

14 So, you know, the constitution has come up with
15 ways in case of issues that may arise. And obviously
16 this year I think we certainly have a huge issue with
17 the delay in the data, which as we heard from Wendy, it
18 looks now that it will be sometime in mid to late August
19 that we will be able to have the data available to us,
20 the data that we need, to redistrict.

21 And so I -- I think, you know, it does give us
22 the opportunity under the constitution to use that data
23 instead of going with partial data or old data that may
24 be the case here.

1 So I didn't really have any question per se, but
2 just wanted to point out the fact that the constitution
3 does actually extend it to October at least, the ability
4 to redistrict in Illinois.

5 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Representative Spain.

6 REPRESENTATIVE SPAIN: Thank you very much,
7 Madam Chair.

8 Ms. Underhill, question for you. You had
9 mentioned some of the different options that states are
10 considering as they understand the change in
11 circumstance with the census this year, and you
12 mentioned seeking relief from your state Supreme Court
13 if you have any deadlines or are looking for extra time
14 and that California had done so. I believe that's what
15 you said; correct?

16 MS. UNDERHILL: Yes, Madam Chair --
17 Representative Spain.

18 REPRESENTATIVE SPAIN: What -- what's the
19 process? I just -- I don't know. Does California --
20 how do they draw their districts?

21 MS. UNDERHILL: California uses a redistricting
22 commission that's made up of Democrats, Republicans, and
23 affiliated voters. It's a complex process for choosing
24 those people, and then a complex process for gathering

1 data and drawing the maps.

2 REPRESENTATIVE SPAIN: Do they -- can the
3 Republicans and Democrats be members of the legislature
4 that do that, or are they selected from outside?

5 MS. UNDERHILL: They're selected from outside.
6 They can't be legislators.

7 REPRESENTATIVE SPAIN: Okay. And just on that
8 point, does -- I'm sure NCSL does know this. How many
9 states have some version of a redistricting commission
10 -- hopefully with independent principles -- and how many
11 states enable the sitting legislators to draw their
12 maps?

13 MS. UNDERHILL: Thank you for that question.

14 And, Ben, be prepared to back me up on this.

15 The answer is a little different when you're
16 talking about Congressional districts than when you're
17 talking about legislative districts, and I'm just going
18 to address legislative districts at this moment.

19 I believe 14 states have something that some
20 body that is outside of the legislature, but of those,
21 many have a strong connection to the legislature. For
22 instance, the legislature appoints the leaders of both
23 parties, and both chambers can appoint either one or two
24 members to it. So it's closely linked. In Montana,

1 they have a commission. Their legislature actually
2 gives them legislative email address. They're that
3 closely tied, and it is legislative staff that support
4 them.

5 So of those 14, other people might like to put
6 them in categories of independent and not independent.
7 We generally don't think of that it way. We can give
8 you a little bit more on some of the others if you're
9 interested in more details on specific options.

10 REPRESENTATIVE SPAIN: Okay. Thank you very
11 much.

12 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: No further questions?
13 Okay. Seeing none.

14 Thank you very much for your presentation, and
15 we will head off to the next panel.

16 MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you.

17 MS. UNDERHILL: Thank you. And we'll stay and
18 listen to what other people have to say.

19 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Great. Thank you.

20 Our next panel will be -- will start off with
21 Phyllis Logan from the the NAACP, then we have Steven
22 Monroy from MALDEF, then comes Roberto Valdez from
23 Latino Policy Forum, and Debbie Liu from the
24 Metropolitan Planning Council.

1 Can we begin then with Phyllis Logan.

2 MS. LOGAN: Good afternoon, everyone.

3 Thank you, Madam Chair.

4 I am Phyllis Logan, P-h-y-l-l-i-s, Logan,
5 L-o-g-a-n. I'm the first vice president for the NAACP's
6 Illinois State Conference as well as the first vice
7 president for the Chicago westside branch.

8 I want to start with a quote from one of our
9 NAACP national leaders. This is the quote, "From the
10 time of reconstruction and beforehand, opponents of a
11 true democracy have attempted to silence and suppress
12 black political power, and each time we've stood strong
13 and fought back. Today is one of those times. We are
14 committed to this fight of making democracy real for all
15 of us and stand ready to do battle against those who
16 seek to strike this ideal."

17 That's a quote from our Dr. T Anthony Spearman.
18 He's the NAACP's North Carolina state president. End of
19 quote.

20 The National NAACP also has a -- works on a
21 redistricting project, and they are actively involved
22 with our state conferences, regional offices, and local
23 units to assist in the formal presentation of
24 redistricting plans that will yield for

1 American-American voters their fair share of electoral
2 power and realistic opportunities to elect their
3 candidates of choice.

4 Illinois Districts 1, 2, and 7 and minority
5 majority Congressional districts, and we're looking to
6 retain these three districts. Our hope is that
7 redrawing these maps will demonstrate the level of
8 African-American voting empowerment that is possible in
9 the jurisdictions, and that should be found in a fair
10 and equitable election district plan.

11 The NAACP Illinois Conference is committed and
12 needs to be assured that communities of color have a
13 full opportunity to elect representatives who will
14 protect their interest and state legislators throughout
15 Illinois. Our concerns are that African-American
16 vote -- that the African-American vote will be cracked,
17 that is splintered between districts so neither has a
18 majority or overconcentrating blocks -- blacks in a few
19 districts, thereby limiting their influence in other
20 areas.

21 I think you, Madam Chair. That's my statement.
22 Thank you.

23 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you Ms. Logan.

24 Spokesperson, would you mind if we go through

1 the whole -- and then ask questions afterwards? Okay.

2 Thank you.

3 Next is Steve Monroy.

4 MR. MONROY: Thank you, Madam Chair and members
5 of the Committee, for the opportunity to testify today.

6 My name is Steven Monroy. That is spelled
7 S-t-e-v-e-n. Last name is M-o-n-r-o-y. I'm a staff
8 attorney with the Mexican-American Legal Defense and
9 Educational Fund, also known as MALDEF. MALDEF is a
10 national civil rights law firm, and for over 50 years we
11 have worked to protect the voting rights of Latinos in
12 the United States through community education, advocacy,
13 and litigation when necessary.

14 Our organization has been involved in Illinois
15 redistricting since the 1980s, and we have regularly
16 partnered with stakeholders representing diverse
17 communities, developed model maps, and partnered with
18 the state's -- and monitored the state's compliance with
19 minority voting rights, particularly the Voting Rights
20 Act.

21 This year in 2021, Latino participation is more
22 critical than ever. Latinos are about 17.5 percent of
23 the state's total population, and about 15 percent of
24 the state's voting age population. Latinos are the

1 fastest growing minority group in Illinois, but
2 redistricting historically has not reflected the growing
3 Latino population.

4 The Federal Voting Rights Act requires that
5 African-American, Asian, and Latino voters have the
6 equal opportunity to elect their candidates of choice,
7 and states must draw minority majority districts at
8 percentages that translate the effective voting power
9 because no all residents of a district can vote.

10 Districts can -- districts should be drawn with
11 voting age population and with consideration for the
12 fact that effective Latino voting power is lower than
13 the voting age population may suggest because the Latino
14 community has larger numbers of noncitizens compared to
15 other communities.

16 This redistricting cycle poses unprecedented
17 challenged to community engagement in the redistricting
18 process, so -- and in order for members of the Latino
19 community to have an effective voice in the process, we
20 offer the following two recommendations:

21 First, that hearings be scheduled at least two
22 weeks in advance and be widely publicized, and we thank
23 this Committee for following that and for providing a
24 schedule. We hope that if there's any changes that

1 they're done within a meaningful amount of time so that
2 we can get the maximum number of community organizations
3 at these hearings.

4 And then, second, that this Committee provides
5 at least two-weeks notice between releasing a plan and
6 holding a hearing to consider that plan so that
7 advocates and members of the public can provide
8 meaningful feedback on these plans.

9 The Latino community has historically
10 experienced voting discrimination and attempts to dilute
11 the effectiveness of their votes. Redistricting should
12 take into account the need to overcome the lingering
13 effects of discrimination and offer minority voters an
14 equal opportunity to elect candidates of their choice.

15 New district boundaries should fairly reflect
16 minority voting strength and not seek to minimize or
17 dilute the minority vote. We expect to testify again
18 before this Committee in the individual issue areas as
19 they arise. Thank you for your time.

20 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Mr. Monroy.

21 Roberto Valdez, you're next, with the Latino
22 Policy Forum.

23 MR. VALDEZ: Good afternoon, Madam Chair,
24 Members of the House Redistricting Committee.

1 My name is Roberto Valdez, that's spelled
2 R-o-b-e-r-t-o V-a-l-d-e-z. I am the senior external
3 liaison for the Latino Policy Forum. Thank you for the
4 opportunity and time to talk about the 2021
5 redistricting legislative map.

6 The Forum is a statewide nonprofit policy and
7 advocacy organization. Part of the Forum's work to
8 strengthen leadership includes ensuring there's a fair
9 redistricting process that provides opportunities for
10 the Latino community and other communities to elect the
11 candidates of their choice.

12 This also includes ensuring there are cohesive
13 Latino communities of interest in the state
14 legislature's mapmaking process, promoting equitable
15 Latino representation in mapmaking proceedings, and
16 advocating for a map that is reflective of the
17 demographics of Illinois's Latino population.

18 In 2011, the Forum participated in redistricting
19 work by presenting a map that reflected Latino equity in
20 the state and the maximum number of Latino-majority
21 districts based on the state's population. The Forum
22 also met with other redistricting coalitions with the
23 same mission of ensuring the state legislature approve
24 the map that reflected the state's diversity of minority

1 communities. The goal was to have Illinois's minority
2 communities -- Latino, African-American, Asian, Muslim,
3 and other communities -- equitably represented in the
4 2011 map.

5 Unfortunately, the result of the 2011 map did
6 not match the Forum -- what the Forum found to be an
7 equitable number of Latino districts in the state.

8 For 2021, the Forum has approached a similar
9 route in convening a redistricting advisory committee
10 led by community advocates and civic leaders from across
11 the state and producing the preliminary map to view the
12 potential number of Latino majority districts possible
13 based on the demographic distribution of the state's
14 Latino population.

15 This exercise establishes a foundation for what
16 the Forum believes to be a fair representation of the
17 Latino community, and what the state legislature should
18 consider including in a 2021 map. The Forum believes
19 this information is critical for lawmakers to consider
20 as they begin to discuss the 2021 redistricting map.

21 Now, our recommendations and considerations for
22 this Committee. According to the most recent data, the
23 total population in Illinois is over 12 million
24 individuals with over 2.2 million of that group being

1 Latino. This makes Latinos approximately over 17
2 percent of the state's population.

3 According to the Forum's analysis, when focusing
4 on Latino concentration throughout the state of Illinois
5 and considering each House district must have a
6 population of approximately 107,000-plus and each Senate
7 district must have a population of approximately
8 214,000-plus and we set that criteria at 50 percent
9 total population, the Forum's analysis shows there being
10 approximately 15 Latino majority House districts and 5
11 Latino majority Senate districts, totaling 20 Latino
12 districts.

13 The geographic breakdown of these districts are
14 the following: Four House districts in the north side
15 area of Chicago; seven House districts in the southwest
16 area of Chicago; four House districts in the suburban
17 Chicago area, which include Waukegan, Elgin, Aurora, and
18 south of O'Hare; two senate districts in the north side
19 of Chicago; and three Senate senate districts in the
20 southwest side of Chicago. Now, the map that I
21 mentioned has been entered in the record for reference.

22 The Forum asks this Committee to consider the
23 minimum number of Latino districts to be 20 in order to
24 meet equitable representation of Latinos in the 2021

1 remapping process. Anything less than 20 Latino
2 districts on the map would not constitute as a fair map.

3 Another consideration is looking at Illinois's
4 population trends, changes, and the growth of the Latino
5 population. Again, the Forum analyzed population by
6 race and ethnicity in 2010, the population data of race
7 and ethnicity in 2019, and the numeric and percentage
8 change of population from 2010 to 2019.

9 This analysis shows the Latino community driving
10 population growth in the state and being responsible for
11 over 9 percent of the total state growth. Illinois
12 would have lost an additional 189,000-plus individuals
13 between 2010 and 2019 if it were not for the Latino
14 population growth.

15 In regards to population numbers, Latinos have
16 the highest increase of any race or ethnicity in the
17 state from those years, 2010 to 2019, and only second to
18 the Asian community in regards to highest number of
19 percentage growth between those years.

20 Finally, as the redistricting process unfolds in
21 the coming months, the Forum also advocates and
22 encourages legislators to keep in mind the guiding
23 principles developed by the Forum's redistricting
24 advisory committee when making decisions around

1 remapping. Those principles have been submitted in the
2 record for your reference.

3 The Forum strongly appreciates the support of
4 this Committee during the remapping process, your time
5 to review, and weighing the data for information
6 presented. We look forward to your continued work.
7 Thank you so much, and I'd be happy to answer any
8 questions.

9 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Mr. Valdez.
10 Next we have Debbie Liu from the Metropolitan
11 Planning Council.

12 MS. LIU: Hi. Good morning. My name is Debbie
13 Liu with the Metropolitan Planning Council. I'm pleased
14 to join you today to discuss the Illinois communities
15 and boundaries for Illinois --

16 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Debbie, before you --
17 Debbie, before you go on, can you please spell out your
18 name.

19 MS. LIU: Yes. It's Debbie, D-e-b-b-i-e, Liu,
20 L-i-u.

21 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you.

22 MS. LIU: Yep.

23 To discuss principles and community engagement
24 requirements Illinois should incorporate into the 2021

1 and future redistricting processes.

2 So I grew up in Chicago's Chinatown where in
3 2000 the neighborhood had four different state
4 representatives. As Asian-American residents, we were
5 convinced that more representation was better, despite
6 how small the population and voice was compared to the
7 rest of the district. In reality, the population had to
8 compete for the attention of different elected officials
9 rather than one on community issues, such as a high
10 school that serves Chinatown.

11 This practice is endemic across many
12 neighborhoods in Chicago, like Englewood with six
13 alderman, and throughout the state and for years long
14 before I was even born. It does not have to be this
15 way. Illinois has the opportunity and responsibility to
16 turn the redistricting process to ensure greater equity,
17 transparency, and accountability.

18 Given the harsh and untrenched polarization that
19 defines today's political climate, it has never been
20 more important to ensure functional and transparent
21 electoral processes that Illinoisans can believe in.

22 This year, the General Assembly has an
23 opportunity to deliver on that responsibility. The
24 state should undertake an authentic community engagement

1 process before and after the mapdrawing process to
2 better reflect how communities exist in real life. That
3 engagement should include special attention to racial,
4 ethnic, and language minorities as part of its equitable
5 process to center voices that have been traditionally on
6 the menu -- rather at the table.

7 But by including the robust community engagement
8 component in redistricting, the General Assembly can
9 make sure that communities like Chinatown are more
10 robustly represented. The state needs community-based
11 criteria that holds bipartisan redistricting committee
12 accountable for accurately defining communities, that
13 means to draw districts that are truly contiguous,
14 compact, practical, and nondiscriminatory, which
15 requires access to updated data reviewed in a very
16 transparent manner and in advance -- and in languages
17 that reflect the state's needs.

18 Every community deserves to determine their own
19 future and to identify how they their representation.
20 Illinois needs to be responsive to the needs of these
21 communities and to ensure that they have reason to show
22 up at every election. Illinois has a chance to be a
23 model and showcasing the best of democracy, starting at
24 the community level.

1 So thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

2 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Ms. Liu.

3 So next we'll open to questions. Any questions
4 from members?

5 Representative Butler.

6 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: Thank you, Madam Chair.

7 Mr. Monroy, good to see you again. I think you
8 testified last week at the executive committee when we
9 talked about the counties legislation regarding
10 population in counties and changing -- changing the
11 definition of population in counties, which we had a
12 little bit of a discussion in that hearing last week
13 about the reasoning behind that.

14 And basically the reasoning behind that was to
15 make sure we have a full and accurate account of
16 everyone that lives in a county. And I guess my
17 question is: Using data that is not the full decennial
18 census data, do you believe that we can have an accurate
19 account of everyone in counties per the -- similar to
20 the legislation that we passed out of Committee last
21 week?

22 MR. MONROY: Thank you for the question,
23 Representative, and for the discussion.

24 We are analyzing very carefully what using

1 alternative census data would mean. As the -- as the
2 representative from the NCSL had mentioned, there are
3 some variations about what is accessible on the most
4 granular data.

5 So, you know, something we can see on the total
6 -- on the overall, what is the estimate of the total --
7 of the population for the entire jurisdiction compared
8 to, you know, what's available for the block root versus
9 the group is -- we do share some concerns about trying
10 to look at, you know, how do we tell how many people are
11 at, you know, this specific area in the most granular,
12 not just because of -- because of the availability of
13 the data, but also what this new process will mean with
14 differential privacy.

15 So we're exploring very carefully all of those
16 options of what it will look like. The most important
17 thing, of course, is to know, you know, with accuracy
18 what is the entire population of the jurisdiction so we
19 can divide -- as Mr. Valdez had mentioned -- so that we
20 can divide the districts equally. And as I mentioned in
21 my testimony, after we divide those districts equally,
22 having each of those populations have enough of a Latino
23 or a black or an Asian population so it's an effective
24 district.

1 So we're really looking at all of the data
2 carefully and making sure that if there are any
3 challenges to ensuring that it's accurate that we know
4 all of the facts as it roles out.

5 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: So needless to say the
6 decennial census data that would come out in August is
7 -- it would give us the most accurate reflection,
8 obviously, because that's down to the block level. That
9 would give us the most accurate reflection to make sure
10 we know what the population is throughout the state,
11 down to the very granular level that would come out with
12 that block data; correct?

13 MR. MONROY: That's our understanding, is that
14 the decennial census is the most accurate and final
15 version, and we're looking forward to monitoring this
16 process and working with the state to see what can be
17 done right now.

18 So we feel -- you know, we're very happy with --
19 with the way that these hearings have been set up with
20 calls by staff to advocates and community members to get
21 this kind of community feedback because we really want
22 to ensure as the data is being rolled out that we have
23 these views from the community about what they look like
24 around the edges.

1 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: Thank you. And I hope
2 we're able to participate in those calls with staff as
3 well from our side.

4 And the last thing I would just say, Mr. Monroy,
5 is I appreciate what you said about having at least two
6 weeks between the release of a map and actually what
7 would potentially be a vote on the map and everything.
8 I think we would like to see maybe more than that, but
9 it certainly is -- gets to the heart of the matter that
10 we don't want to see something rushed through at the
11 last minute.

12 Thank you, Madam Chair.

13 MR. MONROY: And, Representative, if I may, and
14 clarify my comment. I'd like to thank the staff for the
15 calls and invitations to attend these hearings. There's
16 -- we anticipate, you know, all conversations are going
17 to be in public in these hearings, so I wanted to make
18 sure that I have that clarified that everything we would
19 like to discuss here at these hearings.

20 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: Gotcha. Thank you.

21 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Any further questions?

22 I do have a question for Mr. Valdez.

23 Mr. Valdez, you mentioned that you, the Latino
24 Policy Forum, created maps. Can you elaborate on how

1 you went about that a bit more?

2 MR. VALDEZ: Sure. So we started our -- thank
3 you, Madam Chair.

4 We started our redistricting work in the fall of
5 last year. We understood that we wanted to really do
6 two things, and I mentioned this in my oral testimony.
7 We wanted to, number one, get the community input and
8 get, really, the community excited about the process.
9 That was number one.

10 Number two is get preliminary maps drawn so we
11 can begin the conversation of what equity in the Latino
12 community would look like. So we did consult with some
13 mapmakers who provided some background on, you know,
14 maps and draw the maps that you have on your record and
15 talked about, you know, what this meant to the Latino
16 community.

17 We did bring together the advisory committee to
18 show them these maps and went about, you know, our
19 analysis and our recommendations of the 20 Latino maps
20 -- or Latino districts.

21 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: All right. Thank you.

22 Okay. With no further questions, we will go to
23 our next panel. I want to thank all of you for your
24 presentations. Definitely very informative. Thank you.

1 So next -- the next panel we will start with
2 Dilara Sayeed from the Illinois Muslim Civic Coalition,
3 along with Deena Habbal, Elam Ibrahim [phonetic], and
4 then we will follow with Georgia Logothetis from Common
5 Cause, Madeleine Doubek from CHANGE Illinois Action Fund
6 and Paula Lawson from League of Women Voters.

7 Dilara, I hope I'm saying your name right. Can
8 we start with you? Dilara Sayeed.

9 MS. SAYEED: Thank you, Madam Chair.

10 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: And please spell your
11 name out each.

12 MS. SAYEED Yes. Thank you, Madam Chair and
13 Representatives, for inviting us to share at this
14 hearing.

15 And, yes, you pronounced it perfectly. My name
16 is Dilara Sayeed, and I'm with the Illinois Muslim Civic
17 Coalition, D-i-l-a-r-a S-a-y-e-e-d.

18 We're a coalition of over 150 partners and
19 allies of all races, ethnicities, classes, faiths, and
20 backgrounds. We work in 10 counties across the state,
21 so it's good to see some familiar faces from our
22 representatives and our partners at MALDEF, CHANGE
23 Illinois, Latino Policy Forum, and others -- and NAACP.
24 We also will be presenting at some of the more local

1 hearings so that you can hear from representatives from
2 those area.

3 Our focus is ensuring policies made for us are
4 made with us, that elected officials understand the
5 vibrancy and the complexity of our community, and that
6 redistricting is one of the critical pieces to do this
7 and we do it together.

8 The coalition recommends that the Legislature
9 makes sure census data supports redistricting, but that
10 it's combined with information from local community
11 grassroots organizations, such as ours and others, so
12 that you're getting data from those on the -- in the
13 neighborhoods that we're redistricting. We also want to
14 make sure that we have a transparent process, and as was
15 mentioned earlier, that before any vote is done that we
16 continue to have hearings so that the voices of the
17 residents are heard throughout the process.

18 I'd like to share my screen to provide a little
19 bit of the data.

20 The American Muslim community is actually quite
21 diverse. When you take a look at our different
22 demographics, you see that the greater demographic --
23 the greatest demographic is one of African-American.
24 Over 30 percent of Muslims also identify as

1 African-American. Chinese, Asian, and Japanese are the
2 next largest population. White and Arab -- and here
3 we'll talk a little bit about how the census data
4 intermingles the two by referencing Arabs as white. The
5 Latino population is at almost 8 percent, and the Native
6 American, American Indian, and now growing
7 African-American population.

8 The history of Muslims in Illinois and across
9 the nation is over 400 years old, and many times it's an
10 invisible history that isn't in our curriculums and
11 isn't in our own understanding of American.

12 We'd like to share that Illinois has the largest
13 per capita population of those who identify as Muslim
14 from any other state in the nation. That's right. More
15 than New York, Michigan, Texas.

16 It is incredible that we have this many per
17 capita Muslims -- about 3 percent in the state of
18 Illinois -- and yet zero representation in our state
19 Legislature of anyone or any race who identifies as
20 Muslim. This is a wrong that redistricting can correct,
21 and we urge our representatives to build maps that are
22 representative of our communities and inclusive of those
23 who are often invisible.

24 In central Illinois, just a very simple Google

1 search leads to an identity of over tens of thousands of
2 Muslims across Champaign; Peoria; Sangamon County, which
3 is Springfield; and in McLean County, which is
4 Bloomington and Normal, Illinois.

5 In the Chicagoland area, a map of those centers
6 that support Muslim families and communities leads to a
7 list of over 120 across the five counties, Cook, Dupage,
8 Will, Kane -- I think I got them all. This means,
9 again, hundreds of thousand of residents who also
10 identify as South Asian, also identify as
11 African-American, Arab, or Latino and Muslim create a
12 population that's over three percent a part of Illinois
13 and yet is deeply underrepresented.

14 So we are asking for three things. Do not push
15 the responsibility back to 2030 to provide
16 representation to critical communities who have zero
17 representation in this state currently.

18 Number two, understand that the census data, as
19 important as it is, will conflate Arab communities with
20 white. And as our Arab community residents say that --
21 we get none of the privileges of being identified as
22 white, and yet we're counted as white so that that
23 population is stronger.

24 Number three, ensure the maps reflect the

1 diversity of race, ethnicity, and faiths across
2 Illinois, and all of these wonderful partners and allies
3 of ours across the screen that you see today are here,
4 along with us, to support that. We are part of
5 coalitions such as CHANGE Illinois and others to work
6 together to help you do this as well.

7 I'd like to have Deena share what it feels like
8 to be a Muslim who identifies of diverse racial
9 background, and Elam Ibrahim to share what it is like to
10 be a South Chicago south side American Muslim
11 African-American leader. He's one of my mentors as
12 well.

13 Elam Ibrahim. Oh, you're on mute, sir.

14 MR. IBRAHIM: Am I unmuted?

15 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: There you go.

16 MS. SAYEED: Yes.

17 MR. IBRAHIM: Greetings, everyone, Madam Chair.

18 I've been impressed with the tremendous amount
19 of information that has been gathered to strengthen the
20 position of each of the presenters.

21 I became a Muslim in 1971, after I was a
22 politically active young African-American. Having been
23 involved so long, I've always seen that you can be
24 unrepresented, underrepresented, and even

1 misrepresented.

2 What we hope to do in our participation is to
3 raise our hand and say, "Here we are. Here we are.
4 Include us, share the assets of this great land with us,
5 just like you take advantage of us as citizens."

6 Over the last 10 years, there have been a number
7 of Muslims that come to America from Ghana, Mali, Kenya,
8 Sudan, Ethiopia, Senegal, Nigeria, Somalia, Morocco, The
9 Gambia, all over Africa. There are 54 countries in
10 Africa. I personally represent African-Americans,
11 Muslim Americans, and I have to speak up for the Muslim
12 Africans.

13 Hypocrisy is rampant in the American political
14 system. I've sat in many rooms at many of tables and
15 listened to many promises, but as Sister -- Dr. Dilara
16 is asking, don't set this aside to 2030. Much can be
17 done right now to improve the neighborhoods of Roseland,
18 West Pullman, Morgan Park, Ashburn, Englewood. All of
19 these are thriving communities within the south side of
20 Chicago that want to be included, who want a piece of
21 the pie. We're hungry. Include us. We're ready,
22 willing, and able to do whatever needs to be done.

23 Thank you for the opportunity to participate,
24 and we hope that the results of these hearings benefit

1 all participants just like a family should. Thank you.

2 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Mr. Ibrahim, can I ask
3 you if you can spell your name so we have it on the
4 record.

5 MR. IBRAHIM: Sure. I apologize.

6 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Sure. No problem.

7 MR. IBRAHIM: First name Seth, S-e-t-h, last
8 name Ibrahim. The I's sound like E's. I-b-r-a-h-i-m.

9 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you.

10 MR. IBRAHIM: Thank you.

11 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Deena? Do we have Deena
12 Habbal?

13 MS. HABBAL: Yes, I'm here.

14 Hi. My name is Deena Habbal, spelled D-e-e-n-a
15 H-a-b-b-a-l. I'm here with the Illinois Muslim Civic
16 Coalition.

17 Thank you, Madam Chair and members of the
18 Committee, for having me here today.

19 My husband and I were both raised in Dupage
20 County but now live in the city of Chicago. This past
21 year we worked together as community organizers with the
22 coalition to get out to vote and to get people to fill
23 out the census. We also completed the census together
24 as a family for the first time.

1 I was always told that Illinois has one of the
2 most diverse populations in this country, but while
3 working in the field, I actually got to see it. But I
4 also saw challenges that were faced by marginalized
5 communities who are also considered white by the census,
6 such as newly arrived Syrian refugees. Some challenges
7 they faced are affordable housing, language access, and
8 transportation.

9 The solutions to these problems are funded on
10 the basis of census data. This was just one example of
11 the many communities who are considered white, but not
12 afforded the same perks as noninvisible communities who
13 are also considered white by the census.

14 Together, my husband and I are Syrian,
15 Jordanian, white, Irish, and Native American, so we want
16 to see a fair representation of our communities so we
17 can help -- so we can have people who look and are like
18 us in office to represent us. Thank you very much.

19 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Deena.

20 Next, we'll have Georgia Logothetis. I hope I
21 said that right.

22 MS. LOGOTHETIS: You did. Thank you.

23 Good afternoon, Madam Chair, Representative
24 Butler, members of the Committee on Redistricting.

1 Thank you for the opportunity to discuss such an
2 important topic.

3 My name is Georgia Logothetis, G-e-o-r-g-i-a
4 L-o-g-o-t-h-e-t-i-s -- a long Greek last name -- and I'm
5 the assistant director of Common Cause Illinois.

6 Common Cause has been actively involved in
7 redistricting on multiple levels throughout the country,
8 including educating people on the redistricting process,
9 teaching them how communities can participate,
10 advocating on the importance of creating transparent and
11 inclusive processes, and then, of course, advocating or
12 suing when that process doesn't happen.

13 As we know, every 10 years our state gets the
14 data from the U.S. Census Bureau, and that aids you in
15 drawing Congressional, legislative, and representative
16 districts.

17 Now, of course, this year we're not experiencing
18 a normal redistricting process because of those
19 extraordinary delays in the gathering, analysis, and
20 dissemination of the census data that we need to draw
21 those new boundaries in our districts.

22 As we heard in Illinois -- like many other
23 states, Colorado, Oregon, North Carolina, Texas -- we're
24 presented with a conundrum. Our state constitution

1 contains that firm deadline of June 30th for approval of
2 a map, and if that deadline passes, then the duty falls
3 to the partisan split commission.

4 So we know the Census Bureau has indicated that
5 it will provide states with the apportionment numbers
6 for Congress by April 30th, and anticipates those final
7 census block data sometime before September. I know
8 that we heard earlier the latest -- hopefully, fingers
9 crossed -- time period is mid-August.

10 So we're at a crossroads. Whatever the date is,
11 that June 30th deadline is probably going to fly by;
12 right? And so the General Assembly may choose to create
13 a map by that deadline using outdated and less accurate
14 data, and obviously it can expect that such a map will
15 likely be challenged by negatively affected communities
16 in court; it can allow that deadline to pass and trigger
17 the creation of that partisan split committee; or it can
18 attempt to delay the June 30th deadline or adopt an
19 alternative mapmaking process.

20 Now, what's our position? Our stance at Common
21 Cause is clear: Whatever course this body charts, a
22 final map must be a fair map.

23 And what does that mean? That means that any
24 map must accurately reflect our state today, especially

1 those communities of color and other demographic groups
2 that have traditionally been underrepresented at all
3 level of government.

4 In our view, such a fair map cannot be drafted
5 without the comprehensive and highly accurate data
6 provided by the 2020 census. We all know Illinois is
7 changing, demographically, socioeconomically. Every
8 day, week, and month brings changes to our communities,
9 whether through gentrification, people leaving the
10 state, people moving here, people moving within the
11 state's boundaries.

12 Now, we understand that some are proposing using
13 ACS data instead of the 2020 census to draw a map by the
14 deadline, but I think the facts are clear that that 2020
15 census data is the only method by which our state can
16 obtain a highly accurate snapshot of those changing
17 communities.

18 I think to better understand why the census data
19 is so highly superior to the ACS data for redistricting
20 purposes, it's important to understand the limitations
21 of the ACS data.

22 We heard from that excellent presentation that
23 ACS data relates to populations in block groups. It's
24 by in nature -- by its nature meant to represent a

1 broader data set. Block groups, we've heard that term
2 tossed around a lot. To quantify it, they generally
3 contain between 600 and 3,000 people.

4 And so the fuzziness of the ACS data matters in
5 drawing district boundaries because I think especially
6 in our state where we've mentioned, you know, Illinois
7 being one of the most diverse states in the country, one
8 can easily imagine a scenario where 3,000 people living
9 in a district boundary may swing the composition of that
10 given district wildly one way or another. That's far
11 less likely to happen when mapmakers can analyze data at
12 the block-by-block level, as is the case by using the
13 data provided by the census.

14 We heard how ACS works best for communities over
15 65,000, and less so for smaller populations, rural
16 areas. The data gets a lot more fuzzy and the margin or
17 error is greatly increased.

18 One year estimates are substantially less
19 reliable than three or five year estimates, but the
20 five-year data, of course, is the least current data.
21 We heard in the beginning that, you know, it roughly
22 averages out to what our state looked like in 2017, and
23 we all know how much our state has changed just in a few
24 years.

1 So here we already have a data set, the 2020
2 census data, that is both exceptionally current and
3 incredibly reliable, and there's no reason why the
4 General Assembly should try to kind of fashion a map
5 from a mix of ACS estimates and projections, when just
6 by waiting a little bit we can have that superior data
7 available.

8 Now, of course, the question becomes: When will
9 it be available? Again, Illinois is not in a unique
10 position. Several other states are grappling with the
11 same type of looming redistricting deadlines, and I
12 their actions -- as well as the NCSL recommendations are
13 -- is that there are options available to us today to
14 help delay those deadlines.

15 Delaying the remap would allow Illinois to
16 receive and work with the most accurate data. It would
17 obviously allow candidates certainty about the districts
18 that they're seeking to represent. But I think above
19 all and most importantly for a nonpartisan grassroots
20 group like ours, it gives us a chance to give confidence
21 in the process, to let Illinoisans know that the
22 redistricting process is a deliberate one, taking the
23 time to ensure that standards of fairness, transparency,
24 and, of course, compliance with all state and federal

1 laws are met.

2 So our closing message to you is a simple one:
3 The census data is worth the wait. So, once again,
4 thank you for the opportunity to discuss this important
5 topic, and I look forward to answering your questions.

6 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Georgia.
7 Madeleine Doubek.

8 MS. DOUBEK: Thank you, Chair Hernandez, for the
9 opportunity to speak this afternoon.

10 My name is Madeleine Doubek. It's a long one.
11 M-a-d-e-l-e-i-n-e, last name D-o-u-b-e-k. I'm the
12 executive director of CHANGE Illinois and the CHANGE
13 Illinois Action Fund, both are nonpartisan nonprofits
14 that educate, engage, and advocate for ethics and
15 efficiency in government and elections.

16 CHANGE Illinois is a coalition and alongside our
17 diverse partners in more than 30 organizations, many of
18 whom have testified here today. We have long advocated
19 for an independent and transparent redistricting process
20 that results in equitable maps.

21 There's now been two weeks of Senate hearings
22 that have covered almost half of the counties of
23 Illinois, and although much of the State has been
24 covered, participation by the general public at these

1 hearings has not been nearly enough to ensure that maps
2 will accurately reflect the many diverse communities all
3 over Illinois.

4 There were a number of community and good
5 government organizations whose representatives have
6 testified and all of us independently said the House and
7 Senate Committee hearings need more transparency. Many
8 of our questions remain unanswered.

9 We appreciate the effort by the House to post
10 their upcoming hearings early with more notice, but
11 still we continue to have concerns about the lack of
12 transparency in detail about the subject matter, how
13 people should know who should show up to which Committee
14 hearings based on vague geographic areas, and how
15 testimony will be reflected in the map proposals.

16 There's been no indication of what the process
17 looks like after April 9th when the last House committee
18 hearing is scheduled to take place. A fair map doesn't
19 result from simply holding hearings, and to suggest
20 otherwise would be false. There has to be much more
21 robust outreach to communities across the state to give
22 people ample time to plan to attend.

23 In the past few years, the state spent millions
24 of dollars to ensure widespread participation in the

1 2020 census, as Wendy Underhill mentioned. Currently,
2 the State isn't doing a fraction of that to ensure that
3 people are aware of the opportunities to participate in
4 these redistricting hearings that will influence how
5 they are represented for the next decade.

6 Posting notice on government websites is clearly
7 insufficient to chief the broad public participation
8 that's needed. Good government groups and community
9 organizations are doing their part to notify residents,
10 but it is challenging they cannot answer basic
11 questions. The people of Illinois need more public
12 outreach. They need this Committee to respond to their
13 input and explain how it will be used in the map
14 proposals.

15 People absolutely need to see map proposals
16 weeks before votes are taken, and they need to have the
17 opportunity to weigh in at additional public hearings
18 after the maps are made public.

19 To date, partisan bickering has overshadowed any
20 effort to provide meaningful participation. Rather than
21 attempting to delve deeper into understanding witness
22 testimony, Republicans have attempted to lead witnesses
23 into saying that census data quality means we must
24 weight and we'll let the backup commission take over the

1 redistricting process, while Democrats have tried to
2 lead witnesses who are using American Community Survey
3 data for their admissions to say that it's acceptable
4 for the General Assembly to do the same.

5 Since the General Assembly has decided to push
6 forward with map drawing, community members are left
7 with no choice but to use ACS sampling data for their
8 testimony.

9 We have been presented with two options by
10 lawmakers, either give up our democracy to a random
11 draw, giving Republicans a shot at having unilateral
12 control over mapmaking, or allow for maps to be pushed
13 through by the Democratic majority using ACS data that
14 never was intended to be used for drawing legislative
15 maps. These are not and should not be our only options.

16 As the employees from the National Conference of
17 State Legislatures testified today and on March 17th,
18 the Illinois General Assembly could appeal to courts to
19 grant a delay in constitutional deadlines to wait for
20 census data. Elected officials could pass a law to push
21 back our primary election date and the petition filing
22 period to ensure map drawers have enough time to draw
23 maps before election filing deadlines.

24 As has been mentioned, this is being done in

1 other states, such as California and Oregon. The
2 Chicago Tribune Editorial Board this week reported that
3 sources told them the Senate already has its tentative
4 map drawn, raising additional questions about whether
5 public input will be used. If they already are drawn,
6 how can anyone be assured public input will be reflected
7 in these maps that form the foundation of our democracy
8 for the next 10 years?

9 If maps already exist, are they going to be made
10 available now so the public can weigh in on the proposals
11 at upcoming hearings? If they are being devised and not
12 made public, then that raises the question of what
13 purposes these public hearings actually serve.

14 We need more accountability in this
15 redistricting process. We need to ensure that the maps
16 produced prioritize federal and state Voting Rights Acts
17 and protect communities of interest. The people of
18 Illinois need and want lawmakers to make it clear in
19 state law that districts will be created without
20 prioritizing incumbents or candidates from one party,
21 whether that's for their benefit or harm.

22 A compliance report is needed, explaining how
23 maps meet these shared values along with the value of
24 prioritizing communities of colors and those for whom

1 English is not their primary language. Non-English
2 speakers continue to face impediments to participating
3 in this process because accommodations haven't been made
4 for them.

5 It's imperative that more information be
6 provided about how these hearings will be conducted and
7 how these maps will be drawn. We ask this Committee and
8 the House to meet the challenges ahead so Illinoisans
9 can get a map that puts power in their hands.

10 Illinois districts belong to the people. They
11 expect an independent and transparent process that
12 values and responds to their input. They expect maps to
13 be created that aren't based on politics, but are based
14 on the needs of their communities. We urge you to meet
15 their clear expectations. Thank you.

16 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Ms. Doubek.

17 We will move on to Paula Lawson from the League
18 of Women Voters.

19 (Brief recess.)

20 (The following proceedings were transcribed
21 from an electronic audio recording and not
22 from live, stenographically-taken notes.)

23 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. We will resume.
24 We had a bit of a hiccup. We are on our last witness.

1 So, Paula, if you can -- I'm sorry for the wait.

2 So just -- you can go on.

3 MS. LAWSON: All right. Thank you, Chair
4 Hernandez and the House Redistricting Committee members,
5 for the opportunity to testify.

6 I am Paula Lawson, P-a-u-l-a L-a-w-s-o-n, and
7 I'm the redistricting issue specialist for the League of
8 Women Voters of Illinois. I am speaking on behalf of
9 President Allyson Haut and the league.

10 The League of Women Voters of Illinois has
11 worked for reforms to the state redistricting process
12 since the 1990s. For the past decade, efforts have
13 focused on an amendment to the Illinois Constitution to
14 provide for a more transparent process and community
15 input through an independent commission. The league
16 believes responsibility for redistricting preferably
17 should be investigated in an independent special
18 commission.

19 Additionally, League supports redistricting
20 processes and enforceable standards that promote fair
21 and effective representation at all levels of government
22 with maximum opportunity for public participation.

23 Prior to the last redistricting in 2011, the
24 Illinois General Assembly passed a bill protecting the

1 voting rights of racial and linguistic minority
2 communities and requiring the legislature to hold a
3 minimum of four public hearings before passing
4 redistricting plans.

5 However, there was no time for incorporating
6 public input after maps were proposed. The 2011 process
7 will not be enough for 2021. This year, complete census
8 data will not be available until well past the date by
9 which the Illinois General Assembly or a backup
10 commission is constitutionally required to draw maps.
11 Therefore, it is crucial that the General Assembly pass
12 legislation like House Bill 3581 that will provide
13 transparency and allow for more public input into the
14 process.

15 As stated in the bill, there should be at least
16 35 public redistricting hearings; most importantly, a
17 public hearing after the introduction of a final map
18 that will allow for adjustments to be made before the
19 General Assembly or back up commission votes; a website
20 for map submissions for the public and relevant records
21 from the general assemblies work on the remap; and,
22 lastly, written evidence the final proposed maps meet
23 the Federal Voting Rights Act and the Illinois Voting
24 Rights Act standards, ensures effective representation

1 of racial and linguistic minorities, and provides for
2 preservation and protection of community stakeholders.

3 Additionally, if the General Assembly is not
4 using 2021 Census Bureau data to draw the initial maps,
5 they should appropriate adjustments to the maps after
6 the new data is available to better represent racially
7 and linguistic minorities and other communities of
8 interest.

9 To enable the public to participate in the
10 redistricting process, it is imperative that more
11 information be provided about how hearings will be
12 conducted, what will be discussed, and that the areas
13 involved for regional hearings be better defined.
14 Communication from local league members indicates
15 they're confused about what hearing they should be
16 testifying at.

17 Thank you for considering legislation that will
18 make the redistricting process more accessible,
19 equitable, and transparent and providing the League of
20 Women Voters the opportunity to testify.

21 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you Ms. Lawson.

22 And with that, I'm going to open it up for
23 questions from the members.

24 I believe, Leader Hoffman, do you have a

1 question?

2 REPRESENTATIVE HOFFMAN: Yes. Thank you, Madam
3 Chairman -- Chairperson.

4 I really appreciate everyone's testimony today.
5 My question is, I guess, directed to the individual from
6 Common Cause concerning your testimony, and I guess it
7 relates to some of the other testimony that we heard
8 today.

9 I would just ask you if you're familiar with the
10 Illinois Constitution, specifically Article IV, Section
11 3, Subsection B, which has to do with the redistricting
12 of the Illinois General Assembly.

13 MS. LOGOTHETIS: Thank you for your question.
14 I've read it previously. I can't recite it to you
15 chapter and verse unless I open up a tab on my computer,
16 but happy to answer any questions relating to it.

17 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Well, in your testimony,
18 you had indicated that we should go to -- I believe you
19 said some type of a bipartisan commission, yet if you
20 read Section 3 of Article IV, Subsection B is very
21 specific. This is the Illinois Constitution as it
22 stands.

23 Now, you may wish that the Illinois Constitution
24 would have been changed, but it hasn't. So we take an

1 oath when we get sworn in to abide by the Illinois
2 Constitution, and here's what it specifically says. It
3 says the General Assembly by law shall redistrict the
4 legislative districts and the representative districts.
5 Would you have us violate our constitutional oath?

6 MS. LOGOTHETIS: Absolutely not, and I -- I'm
7 sorry if you misinterpreted my remarks. We absolutely
8 are saying that the options before the General Assembly
9 are to comply with that provision, which provides as was
10 referenced earlier with that back up option, right, if
11 that June 30th deadline passes for that partisan split
12 commission.

13 And I think what we're emphasizing is that if
14 the General Assembly truly wants to follow that
15 constitution and most --

16 REPRESENTATIVE HOFFMAN: Well, I think --

17 MS. LOGOTHETIS: -- importantly follow federal
18 and --

19 REPRESENTATIVE HOFFMAN: It has nothing to do if
20 we want to. We take an oath to do it.

21 MS. LOGOTHETIS: Oh, absolutely. But --

22 REPRESENTATIVE HOFFMAN: So we don't have -- you
23 should not ask whether we want to follow the
24 constitution or don't want to follow the constitution.

1 You should be asking us do we want to follow the oath
2 that we took when we were sworn in to the Illinois
3 General Assembly, which was to follow the Constitution.

4 MS. LOGOTHETIS: Absolutely, and I think that
5 the --

6 REPRESENTATIVE HOFFMAN: Now, you wouldn't have
7 us violate that oath, would you? You wouldn't have us
8 violate that oath?

9 MS. LOGOTHETIS: Of course, and I reject the
10 premise of that question because I think what really is
11 at stake here is the way to honor the oath both through
12 the Illinois Constitution, the Federal Constitution, and
13 the applicable Voting Rights laws is to take a step
14 back, take a breath, and make the process as transparent
15 as possible so that we can fully comply with peoples'
16 rights in this state.

17 REPRESENTATIVE HOFFMAN: And I'm not arguing
18 against the issue of transparency. We have 23 hearings,
19 I believe, that are set in the House, and between the
20 House and the Senate they'll be over 50 hearings
21 that will -- right at 50 hearings that will be had
22 throughout the entire state of Illinois.

23 My point to you, though, is this: If we don't
24 follow our oath, if we don't follow the Constitution

1 under Article IV, Section 3, Subsection B, here's how it
2 plays out -- and in my time in the Illinois General
3 Assembly, it has played out twice in this fashion, and I
4 don't believe this is what your organization would
5 intend.

6 Here's how it plays out: A bipartisan commission
7 is appointed. Every time that I know that the
8 bipartisan commission -- if a map is not passed by June
9 30th, if a law is not passed by June 30th -- or made by
10 June 30th, a bipartisan commission is appointed, four
11 members are Republicans, four members that will be
12 Democrats.

13 Now, that has happened twice since I've been in
14 the Illinois General Assembly. Each time -- each time
15 that eight member board was not able to reach a
16 consensus or an agreement. So what happened? And if we
17 don't do that -- if there is not a consensus or
18 agreement by August the 10th, August the 10th of this
19 year, what happens? Do you know what happens?

20 MS. LOGOTHETIS: Yes. That triggers the
21 creation of that back up commission that I mentioned
22 previously --

23 REPRESENTATIVE HOFFMAN: Right.

24 MS. LOGOTHETIS: -- and if there's a --

1 REPRESENTATIVE HOFFMAN: It triggers an
2 additional member. And how is that additional member --
3 how is that additional member chosen? Do you know?

4 MS. LOGOTHETIS: It's by chance is my
5 understanding.

6 REPRESENTATIVE HOFFMAN: Right. And so the
7 additional member would be pulled out of a hat. I think
8 it was -- in the past it's been out of Lincoln's top
9 hat.

10 MS. LOGOTHETIS: Yep.

11 REPRESENTATIVE HOFFMAN: So do -- it is not my
12 belief that the people of Illinois would rather us have
13 our redistricting and the determinations regarding
14 redistricting to whose name, Republican or Democrat, is
15 pulled out of Lincoln's top hat.

16 I would think that they would want us to ensure
17 that we go through a process -- a transparent process --
18 that we use the data that is available. And no one has
19 indicated that the data that's available is not -- in my
20 mind -- cannot be used to meet the constitutional
21 mandates of the courts, the Voting Rights Act, or other
22 court decisions. There's nothing in our constitution
23 that says that the final census must be used.

24 We're in unprecedented times; times where we're

1 facing historic pandemic; times where the previous
2 administration in Washington, I believe, slow walked the
3 census process; and now we're in a situation where we
4 want to comply with our constitutional mandate, which we
5 took an oath to comply with, and we don't want to just
6 leave the drawing of the maps to chance, period.

7 MS. LOGOTHETIS: If I may take a moment to
8 answer -- the important point --

9 REPRESENTATIVE HOFFMAN: No. That really wasn't
10 a question. So...

11 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Leader
12 Hoffman.

13 Representative Spain, you have a question?

14 REPRESENTATIVE SPAIN: Thank you, Madam Chair.
15 Some questions for Ms. Doubek through CHANGE Illinois.

16 And, Ms. Doubek, we've had the opportunity to
17 work together for a number of years, and I've always
18 enjoyed doing so. But I want to understand better your
19 testimony because a comment that really catches my
20 attention and, quite frankly, takes me quite a bit
21 aback.

22 I take strong exception to a claim that
23 Republicans have attempted to lead witnesses into saying
24 that census data quality means we must wait and let the

1 backup commission take over, giving Republicans a shot
2 at unilateral control over mapmaking.

3 Is your -- is it your assertion that the
4 Republicans of this Committee have coached witnesses to
5 which we've had no role in procuring for today to
6 invalidate a certain data method?

7 MS. DOUBEK: Thank you, Representative Spain,
8 and, no, that's not my assertion, please allow me to
9 clarify.

10 I would never suggest such a thing. But what
11 clearly is happening here is the Republicans are pushing
12 for the back up commission to be put in place and
13 Democrats are pushing to use ACS data, which is sampling
14 that is not as accurate or as granular as what is
15 typically used for redistricting purposes.

16 My frustration has been -- and our frustration
17 has been -- that there is a third option here, which is
18 to seek out relief from the courts so that we can wait
19 for the complete census data and do this with full
20 transparency and accountability and make sure that every
21 voice is heard and every person counted.

22 REPRESENTATIVE SPAIN: So thank you for that
23 clarification. I appreciate it. But simply changing
24 the dates through the courts -- at least in my

1 opinion -- is not enough. I'd like to understand your
2 opinion.

3 The fundamental problem that we have with our
4 redistricting activities in the state of Illinois is
5 that they're conducted by partisan incumbent
6 legislators, and so the date has no bearing on changing
7 that reality.

8 And as you know -- and this is where our good
9 work together began -- I, and many other members of the
10 General Assembly on both sides of the aisle, for years
11 and years have worked to amend the state constitution so
12 that we don't arrive in this situation where partisan
13 incumbents are drawing maps to protect themselves and
14 select their own voters for which they would represent.

15 That's the fundamental problem here in the state
16 of Illinois, and fundamentally has delivered us such bad
17 outcomes in terms of our government, our bipartisanship,
18 our total success as a state. So that remains as the
19 underlying problem. And if you look back to the work
20 that CHANGE Illinois has done to develop a different
21 way, that is still the important thing that needs to be
22 accomplished here.

23 So we can have different dates. We can have
24 different deadlines. The Republicans are not out to

1 deliver a coin flip in this process, leaving the fate of
2 our entire state up to -- as Leader Hoffman pointed
3 out -- drawing a name out of Lincoln's hat is not a
4 preferred outcome and is not a functional way to run a
5 state representing more than 12 million people.

6 We have to find a way to come together and
7 actually develop a mapmaking process that can deliver
8 different outcomes that protect our communities of
9 interest, our diversity of our state, making sure that
10 everyone can be represented. But that we not use
11 partisan ideology as the primary motivation for how we
12 draw out maps.

13 Now, my colleague to my right, Leader Butler,
14 one of our colleagues across the rotunda in Springfield,
15 Senator Barickman -- Leader Barickman, have introduced
16 that let's take the principles of independent maps -- of
17 the Fair Maps Amendment, which CHANGE Illinois was such
18 a great advocate for, and let's use them to move forward
19 here.

20 And while we have now missed the deadline, year
21 after year we tried to amend the state constitution.
22 Year after year we were blocked by the majority and the
23 previous Speaker. Some of those principles may be
24 important.

1 So, Madeleine, I'd like to understand from your
2 perspective how we can think about some of the
3 independence principles from the Fair Maps Amendment and
4 how they could be applicable in how we move forward
5 because just changing the dates and allowing the
6 majority to jam through a map a little bit later on in
7 the year is, in my opinion, equally problematic as the
8 current deadline.

9 MS. DOUBEK: I agree, Representative Spain,
10 whole-heartedly that we need a more independent process
11 that removes partisan perspective from the drawing of
12 the maps. That is something that CHANGE Illinois and
13 the CHANGE Illinois Action Fund have sought and pursued
14 for years, well before my time with the organization.
15 It is clearly what the people of Illinois have said in
16 scientific survey after scientific survey that they want
17 and that they expect.

18 Unfortunately, we find ourselves in an
19 extraordinary situation this year, and while I certainly
20 agree with everything that was outlined in the language
21 from the previous Fair Maps Amendment that was
22 introduced in the legislation you refer to, we do remain
23 concerned that there will not be enough time to work
24 through the process of having an independent commission

1 get this census data perhaps in August, but then some
2 crunching of those numbers will need to be done. It may
3 not be until September that there is -- or the end of
4 September that there is truly data this is ready to use
5 to draw maps. So we have concerns about that timeline.

6 So, you know, the best possible way forward
7 would seem to me to be to seek some relief from the
8 courts so that these constitutional deadlines can be set
9 aside in this extraordinary circumstance so that we
10 could pursue drawing independent maps with the most
11 accurate data possible.

12 REPRESENTATIVE SPAIN: Thanks, Madeleine.

13 And my only point is that any of these other
14 options that are on the table -- and the reason that I
15 asked our witness from NCSL about what California did in
16 seeking remedy through their courts is they have a very,
17 very different system for how they draw maps. One,
18 again, that we have attempted to change for year after
19 year so we didn't arrive at this moment.

20 We have to have independence in the mapmaking
21 process, and until we deliver that, all of the
22 testimony, all of the way forward is going to deliver
23 the same type of result for the state of Illinois. And
24 if you like how that's gone, be my guest, but most

1 people do not.

2 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you.

3 Representative Butler.

4 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: Thank you, Madam Chair.

5 And I just want to say before -- when I get done
6 with this, before we close, I also wouldn't mind adding
7 a few questions for you once we get done.

8 But just to follow on Representative Spain, you
9 know, what we've heard today and what I've heard from
10 the Senate hearings is not Republicans leading witnesses
11 about their concerns on the data. It's witnesses across
12 the State representing a broad variety of groups who are
13 questioning the use of the data that seems to -- that
14 is -- that is potentially going to be used if the
15 majority moves forward with the maps by the end of June.

16 And it is -- these are -- these are a wide
17 variety of organizations who are expressing serious
18 concerns about the data that is before us, and I
19 think -- I think we share those concerns about using ACS
20 data when we know that the complete data is coming down
21 the pipe. Now, not in September it sounds like, but
22 most likely in mid to late August, which would be in a
23 format that we could use, I believe, to draw the maps.

24 The other thing is I take exception to a couple

1 characterizations of calling this a "back up commission"
2 that's outline in the constitution. This is a
3 constitutionally mandated and outlined function to
4 ensure that we get maps drawn in this state.

5 It doesn't -- there's no qualifications for it.
6 It doesn't say that -- you know, I assume 50 years ago
7 when this constitution was drafted they didn't
8 anticipate problems such as this, but they new there
9 could be problems. It isn't just because it was a
10 partisan -- partisan split General Assembly or the
11 governor's mansion and the General Assembly were of
12 different offices. They don't delineate that in the
13 constitution. That isn't defined.

14 But what they did anticipate was the fact that
15 there could be problems with the General Assembly
16 drawing maps by the end of June, so they lay out a
17 process, a very well organized and straightforward
18 process that by the way is the only option we have on
19 the table currently that would allow citizens
20 themselves, the public, to actually have a hand in
21 drawing the legislative maps that represent them.

22 To say that it is a partisan commission is a
23 fallacy because the partisan body is this one and the
24 Senate. That is much more partisan than a commission

1 that's outlined in the constitution.

2 And I would add that if the four leaders of the
3 General Assembly would work together and have the idea
4 that they all believe, in my mind, Speaker Welch has
5 voted for a commission, Leader Durkin has sponsored
6 legislation and voted for a commission, Leader McConchie
7 has sponsored legislation.

8 If the four leaders are committed to those
9 principles, then I think a commission such as the one
10 that's spelled out in the constitution would be a good
11 thing because maybe we could finally get to a place
12 where we create fair maps -- however those are
13 defined -- that actually has citizens involved in the
14 good process.

15 What we've heard today are -- from Ms. Habbal,
16 her going out and making sure, participating in the
17 census to make sure that everyone is counted. We've
18 heard from Georgia the concerns that they have about
19 using the data. We've heard great people from these
20 people that I think we have to take seriously.

21 We can't just say this is a transparent process
22 because we've got 50-some committee hearings scheduled.
23 We actually have to listen to these people that are
24 coming forward to their legislature, demanding a new way

1 to do business. That's what people want, is a new way
2 to do business.

3 I've cosponsored legislation since I walked in
4 the door six years ago about going to a commission
5 format. I supported the 2016 constitutional amendment
6 that was kicked off the ballot. I've introduced my own
7 legislation. I've done it a variety of ways to try to
8 drive the ball forward.

9 30 -- over 30 members of the majority party in
10 this body voted for a constitutional amendment in 2016
11 to support the commission. I would hope that we would
12 all work towards that and not just get a map out by the
13 end of June because the majority can draw it by then and
14 be done with it. We need to respect the will of the
15 people.

16 Madam Chair, I would have a couple of questions
17 whenever we get around to closing. Thank you.

18 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Did you say you have a
19 couple of questions?

20 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: I just have a couple of
21 questions about the process moving forward with these
22 hearings, not for this panel.

23 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Sure. Gotcha.

24 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you,

1 Representative.

2 So is there any further questions for members?

3 I will just say that based on your remarks,
4 Representative Butler, the purpose of these hearings is
5 to gather input directly from the residents throughout
6 the state to assist us in drawing the maps. Regardless
7 of the data available, this public testimony can give us
8 valuable insight into the interest of the local
9 communities, which can be used to draw new districts.

10 I also want to add that we're really looking for
11 grand participation from the community, so I want to
12 remind the public that there is a more easier way. You
13 can submit a witness slip on the same day if need to be.
14 We have 23 total hearings on the House end to give you
15 that opportunity. So I just encourage that
16 participation from the community. It's extremely
17 valuable and to take advantage of the setup that we
18 have.

19 So with that, if there is no further questions,
20 I -- oh, sure. Sure.

21 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: Thank you, Madam Chair.

22 Let me just -- I have a couple of questions, but
23 just to follow-up. We heard testimony today that ACS
24 data is not nearly as good for communities under 65,000.

1 That's what we heard in testimony today. I have a
2 district that has over 50 communities in it, and only
3 one of them is over 65,000 people. So as a downstate,
4 rural -- somebody who represents a downstate, rural
5 district, I have real concerns about that that my
6 communities won't be represented if we used ACS data.

7 So a couple of questions moving forward. I --
8 one's a thought, and one's a question. One is I have
9 heard a lot of concerns from local and county officials
10 about redistricting because there are statutory
11 deadlines for -- for especially county redistricting
12 coming up for county board seats and things like that.
13 There are concerns about using ACS data.

14 I'm wondering if one of these 20-some Committee
15 meetings that we have if we could focus on local and
16 county redistricting possibly and ask some questions
17 about that and find out if there's any plans from the
18 majority to maybe address that situation statutorily.

19 And then my question is also is it -- is it the
20 plan of the majority to be looking at judicial
21 redistricting as well?

22 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: So, Representative, I
23 think our focus is going to be having the communities --
24 the opportunities to give their input. I think that's

1 the priority of these hearings, and that's what I see us
2 moving forward and doing and respecting that communities
3 have input.

4 I will add that in those conversations if anyone
5 wants to give input in those areas, they are free to do
6 that.

7 Okay. Is that it? Is that all we have in
8 questions? Okay. Well, if there is no further
9 business, the Committee is recessed to the call of the
10 chair.

11 (Hearing concluded.)

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1 STATE OF ILLINOIS)
) SS.
 2 COUNTY OF COOK)

3

4 CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

5 Isaiah Roberts, being first duly sworn, on
 6 oath says that he is a Certified Shorthand Reporter,
 7 Registered Professional Reporter doing business in the
 8 City of Chicago, County of Cook and the State of
 9 Illinois;

10 That he reported in shorthand the proceedings
 11 had at the foregoing Redistricting Committee Meeting,
 12 except where otherwise stated;

13 And that the foregoing is a true and correct
 14 transcript of his shorthand notes so taken as aforesaid
 15 and contains all the proceedings had at the said
 16 Redistricting Committee Meeting.

17

18

19 _____
 Isaiah Roberts, CSR, RPR
 Illinois CSR #084-004890

20

21 SUBSTRIBED AND SWORN TO
 before me this 12th day of
 22 May, 2021.

23

24 _____
 NOTARY PUBLIC

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