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ILLINOIS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE

Hearing of the Redistricting  
Committee for the Illinois House of Representatives held  
virtually via Zoom videoconference on the 24th day of  
April, A.D., 2021, commencing at the hour of 3:00 p.m.

CHAIRWOMAN:

REPRESENTATIVE LISA HERNANDEZ

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5	(Illinois House of Representatives Employee)	
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1 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Good afternoon, Members.  
2 The House Committee on Redistricting shall come to  
3 order.

4 My name is State Representative Lisa Hernandez.  
5 I'm from the 24th District. I am a member of the  
6 Redistricting Committee and will be chairing today's  
7 hearing.

8 I'd like to start by recognizing that -- I don't  
9 think we have local members. And I -- I'm just going to  
10 have Leader Butler acknowledge his members.

11 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: Thank you, Leader  
12 Hernandez.

13 Tim Butler, I'm a state representative from the  
14 87th District. I live in Springfield. I'm joined today  
15 by a couple representatives on the Committee,  
16 Representative Avery Bourne from Morrisonville;  
17 Representative Dave Severin, who continues to wear his  
18 Cardinals hat today, from Benton. I see we have  
19 Representative Tom Bennett on here from Gibson City.  
20 This is the second committee he's been on today. And  
21 Representative Jackie Haas, who represents a district in  
22 the Kankakee area, so we're glad to have her on today.

23 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you, Leader  
24 Butler.

1           So let me begin just to explain what we are  
2 going -- what sort of the plan is. I'm going to start  
3 with a statement. I'm going to ask Leader Butler to  
4 also offer a statement. Then we will go to a short  
5 video, and then from there we will then start taking  
6 testimony.

7           So let me begin -- I'm just double-checking. Do  
8 we have any witnesses on? Okay. Just to give -- before  
9 I start the statement, I just wanted to let you know,  
10 Leader Butler, I was told there were two panels -- two  
11 panels and a total of three people testifying. However,  
12 one has had an emergency, so we're going to only have  
13 panel two.

14           REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: Okay.

15           CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: And I hope they're there.

16           Well, let me start with my statement. So I want  
17 to start by that I everyone that has chosen to part in  
18 today's hearing. Your insight and participation is as  
19 important as ever as we begin the redistricting process  
20 under unprecedented circumstances.

21           The United States and Illinois constitutions  
22 require the general assembly to redraw political  
23 boundaries every 10 years to account for population  
24 shifts. These hearings are a part of that process.

1           House Democrats are dedicated to transparency  
2           and public participation in the redistricting process,  
3           while state law requires a minimum of four public  
4           hearings throughout the State, our Committee intends to  
5           hold -- and has been holding far more and present  
6           additional avenues for public participation.

7           Our goal is to hear from as many people as  
8           possible and to gain as much information as possible  
9           about the diverse communities of our state. Our staff  
10          have been making many, many calls to encourage  
11          participation in these upcoming hearings. Those who  
12          wish to participate should be given the opportunity.

13          We have been holding a series of virtual and  
14          in-person hearings throughout the State. Early last  
15          month we announced a schedule of 23. This committee  
16          makes it 27. For comparison, in 2011, the House  
17          Redistricting Committee held 17 hearings in total, so we  
18          have held more by far this time around.

19          While we are guided in this endeavor by the  
20          United States constitution, the Federal Voting Rights  
21          Act, the Illinois constitution, and the Illinois Voting  
22          Rights Act, we are also interested in any relevant  
23          demographic information such as social, political,  
24          economic, religious, or any other characteristics that

1 are unique to your community.

2 We want to hear your specific views on any  
3 social, political, economic, or religious interests  
4 commonly held in the community, any specific -- specific  
5 interest groups that exist, any concerns you have  
6 regarding the current boundaries, or alternatively what  
7 works well about the current boundaries and suggestions  
8 for the drawing the new boundaries. In short, we want  
9 to hear any testimony that is relevant to the drawing of  
10 our new political boundaries.

11 This year, for the first time, Illinois  
12 residents will be able to participate in the process  
13 from the comfort of their own homes, including through  
14 remote participation in these hearings and by drawing  
15 their own maps via a website. The Public Draw Portal is  
16 available at [ILHouseDems.com/Redistricting](http://ILHouseDems.com/Redistricting). This will  
17 allow any Illinois resident to draw districts and share  
18 those maps with the Committee for consideration.

19 The public may also submit written testimony or  
20 other public comment to the Committee by email at  
21 [RedistrictingCommittee@HDS.ILGA.Gov](mailto:RedistrictingCommittee@HDS.ILGA.Gov). All written  
22 testimony, public comments, and maps submitted to the  
23 Committee will be made publicly available at [ILGA.Gov](http://ILGA.Gov)  
24 and [ILHouseDems.com/Redistricting](http://ILHouseDems.com/Redistricting). Transcripts of the

1 Committee's hearings will also be uploaded to those  
2 sites.

3 As for today, we will begin a short slide show  
4 presentation. Following that presentation, we have a  
5 few witnesses who have indicated a desire to testify.  
6 If you have any written testimony prepared, we would ask  
7 that you submit your testimony to us and just briefly  
8 summarize it in your oral presentation.

9 So, Leader Butler, if you have any words to say.

10 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: Thank you, Leader  
11 Hernandez.

12 Just a couple of questions. I know we talked  
13 about this before we begin, but this is the last  
14 scheduled hearing for the Redistricting Committee. I  
15 assume we just don't know at this point if more may or  
16 may not be scheduled?

17 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: That is correct. As far  
18 as I know, this is it, but I don't want to really --

19 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: I -- I totally  
20 understand.

21 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: -- say that this is it.

22 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: I know things can get  
23 scheduled quickly.

24 My other question is: Do we have a time frame

1 as to when the majority might plan to role out potential  
2 maps after these hearings?

3 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: I don't have that  
4 information available; but as soon as we do, Leader  
5 Butler, we will share that with you as well.

6 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: Okay. I appreciate it.

7 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. All right. So  
8 let's start with the short presentation, and then we'll  
9 -- we will next hear the testimony. I'm not sure which  
10 staffer is doing the presentation.

11 Darrin. Go ahead.

12 STAFF MEMBER REINHARDT: Hi, everyone. My name  
13 is Darrin Reinhardt. I'm an employee with the Illinois  
14 House of Representatives, and I am here to give a brief  
15 overview of the state's redistricting procedure.

16 I'll be briefly discussing the background of  
17 redistricting and the redistricting process in Illinois,  
18 and I'll also be going over federal and state  
19 restrictions -- or redistricting requirements and  
20 guidelines. Finally, we'll be looking at what  
21 preliminary data reveals about population trends in the  
22 state and the region.

23 Redistricting is the process that ensures all  
24 Illinois residents are afforded equal representation in



1 the State Legislature and Federal Congress as guaranteed  
2 by the United States Constitution.

3 The U.S. Supreme Court held a series of rulings  
4 in the 1960s that Congressional and state legislative  
5 districts in each state must be of approximately equal  
6 population, establishing the principle of one person,  
7 one vote. As a result, state's redraw their  
8 Congressional and state districts every 10 years to  
9 reflect changes in population.

10 The timeline for redrawing the legislative maps  
11 are based on the Illinois constitution. The  
12 constitution gives the Illinois Legislature the initial  
13 responsibility of passing the new legislative map. Both  
14 the State House and State Senate must pass a plan which  
15 then must be signed by the Governor.

16 If a new map does not go into effect by the  
17 constitutional deadline of June 30th, responsibility for  
18 creating a new map passes from the Legislature to a  
19 legislative redistricting commission. The commission  
20 would consist of eight members, with two each appointed  
21 by the legislative leaders and no more than four from  
22 the same political party. A majority vote of five or  
23 more commission members will constitute final approval  
24 of a new map.

1           However, if the commission does not agree to a  
2 map by September 1st, the Illinois Supreme Court will  
3 submit two names, one from each party, to the Illinois  
4 Secretary of State who will then choose one name at  
5 random to serve as the ninth member of the commission.  
6 Five of the nine members of the commission must agree to  
7 a plan no later than October 5th.

8           In order to understand the redistricting -- the  
9 process of creating new districts, we must have some legal  
10 guiding principles.

11           First among these is equal population.  
12 Congressional districts must be nearly equal in  
13 population while state districts must be  
14 substantially equal.

15           Federal and state law also require all districts  
16 be contiguous which means that all parts of a district  
17 must be next to each other unless connected by water.  
18 Annexations, unincorporated areas, and municipalities  
19 and counties sometimes means that communities are  
20 discontinuous. However, Congressional and state  
21 districts must be adjacent or connected at all points.

22           A more difficult requirement to define is  
23 compactness. There are at least 30 different scientific  
24 ways to measure how compact a district is, but no

1 statute or court precedent identifies a standard  
2 criteria of compactness.

3 In theory, compactness focuses on the shape of a  
4 district's boundaries, how spread out a district is from  
5 a central core, or where the district's population  
6 center of gravity is. In practice, compactness is  
7 hindered by geography and on-the-ground realities, so  
8 often the interpretation of compactness involves more  
9 than a visual test.

10 Illinois is one of 14 states that nests House  
11 districts -- also called representative districts --  
12 inside one of its senate districts -- also called  
13 legislative districts. Mapmakers will look wherever  
14 possible to follow existing political and geographical  
15 boundaries in ways that maximize a community's  
16 opportunities to have its interests represented.

17 As you know, however, county, municipality,  
18 township, and natural geographic boundaries are not  
19 always compact or contiguous. By studying population  
20 data and holding hearings like this to listen to the  
21 thoughts of residents across the state, legislators look  
22 to identify what are known as communities of interest.

23 A community of interest is a group of people  
24 concentrated in a geographic area where socially,

1 culturally, ethnically, economically, religiously, are  
2 otherwise alike and can be joined in a district to most  
3 effectively have their voices heard. The factors  
4 contributing to any particular community of interest  
5 will vary throughout the State.

6 Federal law requires redistricting plans to  
7 represent -- or to respect minority representation.  
8 The principles of the Federal Voting Rights Act are in  
9 place to prevent the reduction of opportunities for  
10 minority population to participate equally in the  
11 electoral process. However, districts cannot be drawn  
12 solely on the basis of race.

13 Illinois law also protects representation of  
14 language minority groups. The Illinois Voting Rights  
15 Act helps prevent minority fracturing or dividing of  
16 concentration of minorities among two or more districts  
17 by requiring mapmakers to consider creating crossover  
18 districts, coalition districts, or influence districts.

19 A crossover district is one in which which large  
20 minority groups may elect the candidate of its choice  
21 with the help of voters from the majority group.

22 A coalition district brings multiple language or  
23 minority groups together to elect a candidate of their  
24 choice.

1           An influence district allows a group to  
2 influence an election outcome without being the majority  
3 population in a district. The state law requirements  
4 come into play only after compliance with federal law  
5 and U.S. and state constitutional requirements on  
6 redistricting.

7           In addition, the law ensures transparency and  
8 public participation by requiring public hearings across  
9 the State, one of which we're having right now. At the  
10 end of the presentation, we'll display an email address  
11 on the screen that Chair Hernandez provided where you  
12 can submit your ideas. The Committee is also submitting  
13 written testimony today.

14           Now that we've covered the redistricting  
15 process, let us discuss what the data shows about  
16 Illinois population. The U.S. Census Bureau has delayed  
17 much of the release of the decennial census data by more  
18 than six months until this fall. However, the U.S.  
19 Census Bureau's annual population estimates show some  
20 trends that can help inform the work ahead.

21           The census data 2019 population estimate shows  
22 an overall decline in state population over the past  
23 decade. There are, however, areas that project to have  
24 population gains. Communities with the largest

1 population percentage increase since 2010 are Kendall,  
2 Monroe, Champaign, and Kane Counties.

3 Demographically speaking, the State's white  
4 population is projected to decline, while  
5 African-American population statewide will likely see an  
6 overall smaller -- smaller overall decline. The  
7 Hispanic and Asian population across Illinois are  
8 projected to see growth.

9 Locally, population in Kankakee County is  
10 projected to decrease. The county's white and  
11 African-American population stands to decline, while  
12 Asian and Hispanic populations will likely increase.

13 Thank you all so much for your attention and for  
14 coming out to share your thought today. As the Chair  
15 mentioned, you will be able to find testimony from this  
16 and other hearings from ILGA.Gov and  
17 ILHouseDems.com/redistricting.

18 The redistricting website offers additional ways  
19 to engage with the process, including our Public Drawing  
20 Portal where you can draw and submit your own district  
21 maps. You can send further written testimony and  
22 suggestions to the Committee any time by e-mailing  
23 RedistrictingCommittee@HDS.ILGA.Gov. Thank you so  
24 much.

1 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Darrin.

2 Leader Butler, I have some unfortunate news.

3 Our witnesses don't seem to be here.

4 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: I don't see anybody  
5 waiting to get on as witnesses. If you could --

6 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Let me -- I was going to  
7 say let me just for the sake of the record -- let me  
8 just name them only because we did get word from one of  
9 them they had an emergency, and so that's why -- I just  
10 don't know if we're going to have another -- another  
11 committee. So let me just read in the names at least.

12 So for the first panel we have Ms. Antoinette  
13 Ratliff. She was speaking on behalf of the Celestial  
14 Ministries Association.

15 Panel two had two -- two individuals; Larry  
16 Kerkstra, Kankakee Board Member, and Kimberly Hudson  
17 also from thing Kankakee Board.

18 So we did try to reach out and no contacts. So  
19 I don't know if you want to wait a little bit or if we  
20 just want to --

21 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: Yeah. A couple things.  
22 One, I wouldn't mind -- so there was one of the members  
23 of the Momence City Counsel, Alderman Jake Salomone, who  
24 submitted written -- very short written testimony. If

1 you don't mind, I wouldn't mind reading that into the  
2 record from the alderman -- a couple of snippets.

3 "As an elected official for Ward One in the City  
4 of Momence, I would like to propose modifying the  
5 boundaries of the Illinois House Representative District  
6 79 to include the entire city of Momence. Census 2020  
7 was of great importance to our city, and we made  
8 significant efforts to provide an accurate count, so  
9 utilizing the results of those counts to modify the  
10 boundaries of our representation to include our entire  
11 city in District 79 will be of great benefit to our  
12 community."

13 "As the Committee convenes to discuss, please  
14 consider modifying the boundaries of the Illinois House  
15 of Representatives District 79 to include the entire  
16 city of Momence. Our representative's primary focus is  
17 on Chicago -- has very different strategies and goals  
18 than our community, including all of the city of Momence  
19 in District 79 will better align and meet our needs of  
20 the community."

21 And I guess that -- the 34th District, which  
22 comes down from Chicago to Momence, is one that I've  
23 pointed out is one that seems to have been gerrymandered  
24 pretty heavily under the last map.



1           And I know -- it's nice to have Representative  
2 Bennett on. Representative Bennett represents a  
3 district just to the south of Kankakee. Part of his  
4 district goes from the Indiana border all the way over  
5 to the Peoria Metro area and from Dwight down to almost  
6 Danville. So, I mean, the Kankakee area is pretty  
7 interesting when we start looking at the map, and I just  
8 wanted to make sure that all of this was on the record  
9 there.

10           So I appreciate the opportunity. I don't know  
11 if -- I see Representative Bennett wanted have wanted to  
12 add something to that.

13           Thank you, Madam Chair.

14           CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Yes, of course. One more  
15 thing, Leader Butler, do you mind spelling out his name?

16           REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: Sure.

17           CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: I appreciate it.

18           REPRESENTATIVE: Sorry about that.

19           CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Don't worry.

20           REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: It's Alderman Jake,  
21 J-a-k-e, Salomone, S-a-l-o-m-o-n-e, and he's an alderman  
22 with the City of Momence, M-o-m-e-n-c-e.

23           CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you. I appreciate  
24 that.

1           And, Representative Bennett, do you want to say  
2 a few words?

3           REPRESENTATIVE BENNETT: Just a moment, if I  
4 may, Chair. Thank you so much.

5           CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Sure.

6           REPRESENTATIVE BENNETT: And I got the same note  
7 that Representative Butler got, and it's a great letter.  
8 Mومence, I have family there. My wife was born and  
9 raised there, so a lot of good people there. And I know  
10 that's the southeast corner -- that Representative Haas  
11 has, and I see that she's online also. I just wanted to  
12 give a shout out to her as well. Thank you for having  
13 this meeting today.

14           THE COURT: Thank you, Representative Bennett.

15           I do want to acknowledge that Representative  
16 Kelly Burke did jump on. Happy to have you.

17           I see I have a hand up from Representative  
18 Severin, and then we'll go to Representative Haas.

19           REPRESENTATIVE SEVERIN: Thank you. I  
20 appreciate it that, Leader.

21           I just wanted to say that having been on almost  
22 all 27 of these hearings, I appreciate the participation  
23 statewide. And also there's one thing that has  
24 definitely been throughout each one of these, that

1 people want transparency statewide and they also want  
2 fair maps. But the thing is a fair map to you and fair  
3 map to someone else is completely different.

4 So I appreciate the opportunity for people to  
5 participate and look forward to seeing what's going to  
6 come to fruition from these hearings and hopefully your  
7 side of the aisle will listen to what has been spoken  
8 statewide. Again, I appreciate the participation, and I  
9 appreciate your work on this and Leader Butler and the  
10 rest of the Committee.

11 So, again, I just wanted to say that it's been  
12 an interesting and very enlightening, but I think it's  
13 been consistent, the message across the State, that  
14 people want transparency and they want these to be fair.  
15 But the question is: What is fair?

16 Thank you. I appreciate it. Thank you.

17 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Representative  
18 Severin.

19 Representative Haas, do you have a few words?

20 REPRESENTATIVE HAAS: Yeah. Thank you very  
21 much.

22 I really just want to reiterate what  
23 Mr. Salomone had to say and to -- you know, if you look  
24 at the map of the 79th District as, again, as Mr. -- or

1 Representative Bennett said as well, it's very -- an  
2 interesting cut out.

3 And as Mr. Salomone said, portions of the  
4 District are cut very unusual, and Momence is one of  
5 those districts or areas, communities that is cut very  
6 strange. It would certainly serve that community much  
7 better -- be better represented if it were included in  
8 the full 79th as well as some of the other surrounding  
9 communities.

10 Momence happens to be where I was born and  
11 raised, and I'm very familiar with that community. I  
12 certainly feel like that area could be better  
13 represented by someone from this area as well.

14 So thank you for your time today and the input  
15 from the community.

16 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Representative  
17 Hass.

18 Okay. Representative Bennett, do you have  
19 anything further?

20 REPRESENTATIVE BENNETT: Sorry, Madam Chair.  
21 Thank you for your patience. Forgive me, I got off here  
22 for just a moment and got back on. But was there  
23 anything said about the kind of data that we're looking  
24 at, the ACS data versus the Census in our meeting today?

1 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: No. We're just going  
2 to -- and compile -- we're going to wait. As soon as we  
3 get information, we will share this with all of you, we  
4 just don't have it yet.

5 REPRESENTATIVE BENNETT: Sure.

6 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay.

7 REPRESENTATIVE BENNETT: Thank you.

8 CHAIRWOMAN HERNANDEZ: All right. With no  
9 further witnesses I will recess -- we will recess to the  
10 call of the chair. Thank you very much. Take care now.

11 (3:25 p.m., hearing concluded.)

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

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\_\_\_\_\_  
Isaiah Roberts, CSR, RPR  
Illinois CSR #084-004890

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21 SUBSTRIBED AND SWORN TO  
22 before me this 14th day of  
23 April A.D., 2021.

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24

**HEARING 4/24/2021**

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