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2011 ILLINOIS STATE SENATE REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON REDISTRICTING II

PUBLIC HEARING

April 28, 2011
10:00 a.m.
Governors State
One University Parkway
Sherman Hall
University Park, Illinois

Sullivan Reporting Company, by
Tracy L. Overocker, CSR
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1 PRESENT:

2 SENATOR KWAME RAOUL, Chairperson

3 SENATOR MATTIE HUNTER, Member

4 SENATOR KIRK W. DILLARD, Minority Spokesperson

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I N D E X

NAME

PAGE

Ms. Jan Czarnik

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Ms. Barbara Pasquinelli

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Ms. Nareman Taha

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Ms. Reema Ahmad

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Mr. Rick Reinbold

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1 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: The Committee on the
2 Redistricting will be called to order.

3 Will the clerk please take the roll.

4 MR. DREW HILL: Senator Hutchinson?

5 (No response.)

6 MR. DREW HILL: Senator Collins?

7 (No response.)

8 MR. DREW HILL: Senator Maloney?

9 (No response.)

10 MR. DREW HILL: Senator Hunter?

11 SENATOR HUNTER: Here.

12 MR. DREW HILL: Senator Raoul?

13 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: Here.

14 MR. DREW HILL: Senator Dillard?

15 SENATOR DILLARD: Here. Proud to be in the
16 Southland.

17 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: Thank you.

18 This is, I believe, about No. 9 of a
19 number of hearings that we've had across the state as
20 the Senate Redistricting Committee. Simultaneously
21 the House of Representatives is having district -- is
22 having hearings throughout the state as well. What
23 we've tried to do is -- after we became aware of the
24 House's schedules prior -- to target areas that the

1 House may not have covered with their hearings in
2 order for us to collectively get as much input from
3 the public as possible. We've had hearings in the
4 City of Chicago, Springfield, Peoria, Kankakee,
5 Cicero, Elmhurst, Yorkville and Carbondale and today,
6 a different Subcommittee of the Senate Redistricting
7 Committee will be in Macomb conducting a hearing as
8 well.

9 You know, we're doing this in order to
10 get as much input as possible. At some of our
11 hearings, we've had people come forth with maps of
12 particular regions explaining communities of interest
13 they'd like to have held together, explaining what
14 their neighborhood boundaries are and in getting this
15 testimony, we realize that much of it is conflicting
16 and naturally so. There are different communities of
17 interest that have different interests that may not
18 all be consistent. At our very first hearing, there
19 was one witness that suggested and insisted and
20 challenged us to have a hearing in the south suburbs
21 and here we are today at University Park and we're
22 thankful to Governors State University for hosting
23 us.

24 We want to make sure that anybody who

1 wishes to testify fills out a witness slip and, you
2 know, we are -- you know, we're not going to cut off
3 anybody's testimony -- we're going to allow you to
4 say as much as you want -- and if people have maps
5 that they want to put forth for the record, what we
6 try to do is we try to post everything that we
7 receive on the Web site. We'll -- as we approve
8 minutes for the Committee -- we try to do that
9 through full Committee hearings -- we post the
10 minutes on the Web site and we have other helpful
11 links on the Web site as well which is
12 www.ilsenateredistricting.com.

13 One other thing that was asked for and
14 suggested, both in our first hearing as well as
15 through a series of hearings we had a year, year and
16 a half ago, was that we provide technology for the
17 public to be able to come in and use and we've done
18 so. There's a public workstation both in Springfield
19 as well as in the City of Chicago that's available
20 for the public to use. And at one of our recent
21 hearings, I think it was Senator Righter also made
22 clear that the Senate Republicans also have a public
23 workstation that they're making available to the
24 public to use and that's -- is that -- that's in the

1 Thompson Center? Yeah, that's in the Thompson
2 Center.

3 So collectively, we're providing the
4 public an opportunity to have access to the
5 technology that's far more advanced than it may have
6 been 10 years ago or 20 years ago to allow the public
7 to have input.

8 Senator Hunter -- let me do this
9 first, I'd like to give the Minority Spokesperson an
10 opportunity to address.

11 MINORITY SPOKESPERSON DILLARD: Thank you. I
12 want to thank everyone who is here today. We've had
13 many hearings and we are greatly appreciative of that
14 and we need your input. The mapmaking process is
15 highly complicated and sometimes it will become quite
16 partisan, but we want input and we clearly want to
17 learn about the different regions of the state.

18 The south suburbs are a very important
19 economic development region. I think the future for
20 the south suburbs can be very bright economic
21 development-wise, and we want to make sure that this
22 area is represented well, that communities of
23 interest are held together.

24 And I think all three of us, Senator

1 Hunter, the Chairman and myself, are all here as well
2 as our staffs to learn and I thank you. Clearly,
3 this is democracy at its finest and, you know, I'm
4 very happy that you're here and I kidded at the
5 outset that I'm glad to be here in the Southland; but
6 I truly am glad to be in the Southland and want to
7 make sure that this area of the State, which I
8 believe has been underutilized, has the best
9 representatives representing it for the next decade
10 in Springfield. So I'm here to learn and I thank you
11 very much for being here.

12 Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

13 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: Thank you.

14 Senator Hunter, please.

15 SENATOR HUNTER: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
16 I move that this hearing be transcribed by the court
17 reporter so that the Committee can have a full
18 transcript of this hearing, which the Committee can
19 approve at a future hearing once members and staff
20 have had their time to review the transcripts and
21 make any needed changes.

22 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: Is there a second?

23 MINORITY SPOKESPERSON DILLARD: Second.

24 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: Seconded by Senator

1 Dillard.

2 Is there leave.

3 Leave is granted for the court
4 reporter to transcribe the hearings.

5 SENATOR HUNTER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

6 I also would like to move that the
7 Committee allow any Media present to take still
8 photos and record the proceedings.

9 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: Seconded by Senator
10 Dillard.

11 Is there leave?

12 MINORITY SPOKESPERSON DILLARD: (Nonverbal
13 response.)

14 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: Leave is granted for Media
15 to take still and video photography.

16 SENATOR HUNTER: And, also, Mr. Chairman, in
17 keeping with our past practice, I move that the
18 Committee allow members of the public to take any
19 photos of the proceedings so long as they do not
20 disrupt the proceedings.

21 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: Seconded by Senator
22 Dillard.

23 Is there leave?

24 MINORITY SPOKESPERSON DILLARD: (Nonverbal

1 response.)

2 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: Leave is granted for the
3 public to take still photos.

4 All right. I'm going to read all of
5 the witness slips and then we'll call -- there's
6 Barbara Pasquinelli, League of Women Voters; Jan
7 Czarnik, League of Women Voters; Nareman Taha, Arab
8 American Family Services; Reema Ahmad, Project
9 Mobilize --

10 MS. REEMA AHMAD: Mobilize.

11 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: -- Rana Matariyeh, Arab
12 American Family Services -- and I apologize if I'm
13 butchering any names here -- if it's any consolation,
14 my name has been butchered plenty of times in
15 history -- and Rick Reinbold, Village of Richton
16 Park.

17 Why don't we start with the two
18 witnesses from the League of Women Voters, Barbara
19 Pasquinelli and Jan Czarnik.

20 TESTIMONY

21 BY

22 MS. JAN CZARNIK:

23 Senator Raoul, it's nice to see you
24 again.

1 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: Good seeing you as well.

2 MS. JAN CZARNIK: Senator Dillard, Senator
3 Hunter, my name is Jan Czarnik. I'm the executive
4 director of the League of Women Voters of Illinois.

5 And if I could just personally thank
6 you, as someone who lives actually two suburbs north
7 of here, I'm so glad to see all of you come visit the
8 south suburbs. We do sometimes feel out here like
9 we're in competition with the folks in the Quincy
10 area. You know how they claim that they're forb
11 estonia (phonetic.) Well, we feel like we're in
12 competition for that title. So we're very glad to
13 see you all here today.

14 Again, my name is Jan Czarnik. I'm
15 the executive director of the League of Women Voters
16 of Illinois. Thank you for this opportunity to share
17 some thoughts with you about the League and the 2011
18 redistricting process of the Illinois General
19 Assembly.

20 As you all know, redistricting is an
21 important and vital democratic process and one that
22 should not be taken lightly by all of us. The League
23 of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political
24 organization that encourages informed and active

1 participation in government; works to increase
2 understanding of major public policy issues; and
3 influences public policy through education and
4 advocacy. We neither support nor oppose any
5 political party or candidate for public office.

6 The League has a longstanding position
7 about what we think redistricting should be, a set of
8 principles as well as process that we would like to
9 see that is timely and orderly and includes the
10 following elements: a formal announced timetable,
11 the availability of information and related data to
12 all who wish to participate in the redistricting
13 process, ample opportunities for expert testimony,
14 public reaction and input into the proposed maps,
15 compromise among partisan representatives; no
16 partisan stalemates and we would like to see, in the
17 end, a map which offers voters a choice of candidates
18 in elections.

19 We do wish to echo the testimony that
20 I know you've heard from many, many other witnesses
21 around the state, that the public should be allowed
22 to see and comment on any new maps that are drawn by
23 the General Assembly.

24 And thank you, Senator Raoul, for --

1 it's my understanding that you have announced that
2 you will be affording the public that opportunity.
3 So thank you.

4 We also -- here's a new demand from
5 us. We'd like to see those of you who are producing
6 the map give us a rationale for the choices you have
7 made in drawing the districts the way that you draw
8 them.

9 You have heard testimony from around
10 the state and, of course, we'll hear testimony today
11 about keeping communities of interest intact. We
12 have a long working relationship with the Brennan
13 Center for Justice and our work on redistricting has
14 been greatly influenced by their work. And I do want
15 to put into the record today their definition of what
16 constitutes a community of interest, which we
17 strongly support, which is, and I quote, from the
18 Brennan Center, A group of people concentrated in a
19 geographic area who share similar interests and
20 priorities, whether social, cultural, ethnic,
21 economic, religion or political, unquote.

22 In our view, maps should not
23 intentionally or unnecessarily split communities of
24 interest. All too frequently, voters do not have a

1 clear sense of who represents them in the General
2 Assembly. Communities too often are split
3 unnecessarily for -- as we all know in the past, to
4 either protect or punish incumbents so that people in
5 very small communities -- for instance, Effingham,
6 they have numerous Representatives and Senators.
7 It's a tiny community -- that I realize none of us
8 represented -- and I was stunned to find this out
9 when I was downstate last year in Effingham: That
10 was their biggest complaint, You know, we have 14,000
11 people, why do we have three Senators?

12 Closer to home and right here in the
13 southwest suburbs -- and I have with me Barbara
14 Pasquinelli who is the president of our Palos Women
15 League. Many members of that League are represented
16 by two State House, two State Senate and two
17 Congressional Districts. The population of Palos
18 Heights is only 13,100 people and she distributed
19 what the map looks like from her district and now
20 I'll turn the mic over to her.

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1 TESTIMONY

2 BY

3 MS. BARBARA PASQUINELLI:

4 Thank you. I had a blowup, but I
5 picked up the wrong bag but you can see --

6 SENATOR HUNTER: Can you identify yourself,
7 please.

8 MS. BARBARA PASQUINELLI: Barbara Pasquinelli,
9 president of the Palos/Orland Area League of Women
10 Voters, and I'm a resident of Palos Heights and Palos
11 Heights is divided -- we're 2 square miles
12 approximately, 13,000 people, we're divided into two
13 Representative Districts, two Senatorial Districts
14 and two Congressional Districts. That makes no
15 sense.

16 Our Representative District and
17 Senatorial District both have their beginning in the
18 City of Chicago, moving across to the west in a
19 relatively narrow band -- at one point, only four
20 blocks wide -- out to part of Palos Park.

21 The mapmakers, I can't think what they
22 were thinking that day because if you look at where I
23 start my little red line on the eastern side --
24 that's Route 83 -- that runs along the Cal-Sag

1 Canal -- a really logical kind of boundary, I
2 thought -- but then all of a sudden, it stops at a
3 little tiny side street, 68th Court -- it's not even
4 an avenue, it's a court -- it goes up two blocks and
5 then cuts back one block to Oak Park Avenue -- and
6 Oak Park Avenue at that point is a nothing street --
7 it is not anything of any -- no stop signs, traffic
8 signals -- it goes to 123rd Street -- another street
9 of no consequence except to those who live on it --
10 it cuts across five or six blocks -- it doesn't go
11 all the way to Harlem, which is a major street, but
12 stops one block short of that and goes back north
13 again to 121st Street, then goes the one little block
14 to Harlem Avenue and then up one block on Harlem
15 Avenue to 122nd Street across two blocks, up one
16 block and then it continues for another -- not quite
17 a mile or so. That is ridiculous.

18 The 27th District office is in the --
19 not the Beverly area, the area directly to the east
20 of that -- I forget what it's called -- across the
21 street from the old Longwood High School, that's
22 where I go if I have district business. If I have to
23 see my senator, I have to go all the way over to
24 probably 111th Street near State or Michigan. There

1 are no satellite offices anyplace at all. The
2 community of interest simply is not there. These are
3 Chicago districts and I have no problem with Chicago,
4 I lived there forever, some of my best friends live
5 in Chicago, but there is no community of interest.
6 The interest of our State Senator and our State
7 Representative are Chicago interests. We have whole
8 separate things, education, transportation that are
9 unique to our area and what I would propose is
10 something very much like we used to have. You could
11 look that up. It was more of a rectangular shape.
12 It included suburbs such as Evergreen Park, Oak Lawn,
13 Chicago Ridge, Worth, Palos Heights, Palos Park --
14 there's a community of interest, especially now that
15 we're talking about school consolidation, somebody
16 has it in their heads that all of that should be
17 consolidated into one.

18 So I would say if you would, please,
19 consider the community of interest -- that's a
20 buzzword now -- I never heard of it before all this
21 started. We need to be part of a community of
22 interest. We need to have representation that makes
23 some sense. We need to have boundaries that follow
24 some sort of natural logic, not a jigsaw puzzle-type

1 of boundary. Nobody really knows who their
2 representatives are and, frankly, if I have an issue,
3 if I have a question, I bypass -- because I have to
4 bypass -- the people that represent me because I
5 don't get any response. I go to Senator Maloney and
6 I go to Representative Cunningham. They don't
7 represent me, but they do.

8 So thank you.

9 Are there any questions?

10 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: Yeah. I feel your pain.

11 MS. BARBARA PASQUINELLI: Good. Good.

12 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: I've got a confession. In
13 1996, I ran for State Senate and I got trounced. And
14 I was asked to run -- like I said, in 1996 I ran for
15 State Senate and -- unsuccessfully and I was asked to
16 run and at the time, a gentleman by the name of
17 Barack Obama was running for State Senate in the 13th
18 Legislative District, which is -- I lived in the Hyde
19 Park neighborhood and I thought to myself, well,
20 there's no way I'm going to run against that guy.

21 And my confession is, I was ignorant
22 to the fact that I actually lived in the 12th
23 Legislative District and the 13th Legislative
24 District was across the street from me to the east

1 and the 3rd Legislative District was across the
2 street to the north. And I thought to myself, oh,
3 this is crazy, why -- you know, why do they have it
4 drawn this way? And I didn't have the answer. A
5 block to the west of me is Washington Park. And I
6 thought, well, Cottage Grove would be a more logical
7 boundary for the business district, but somebody drew
8 the district line there.

9 You know, later on as I listened to
10 testimony on communities of interest -- and Jan can
11 tell you, we did -- we had a lot of conversation
12 about communities of interest over the last couple of
13 years -- what I've learned since is that there are
14 all sorts of different communities of interest with
15 interests that are inconsistent with one another.

16 We heard testimony at one of our
17 earlier hearings about the North Side of Chicago and
18 we had testimony from people within the
19 Asian-American community that talked about their
20 community -- their population that is on both sides
21 of the boundary of Chicago, Skokie or
22 Chicago/Evanston. Then we also heard from people in
23 neighborhoods that would say, Well, cut it off at
24 Howard Street. Cut it off at the Evanston/Chicago

1 boundary.

2 I guess my point is, I don't know...

3 I have no idea about why the line is drawn --

4 MS. BARBARA PASQUINELLI: It is odd, isn't it?

5 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: It is. And it could be and
6 I take your word for it that it is; but if you look
7 at my district that I represent right now, you can
8 look at it and there are strips of it that are just
9 four blocks wide or so and maybe a little bit more
10 and if you look at it from -- looking down at a map,
11 it doesn't -- it looks like it doesn't make sense;
12 but if you go to the community, it does.

13 And I trust your testimony that in
14 your case it does not and I don't know whether
15 there's -- you know, there was a comment made earlier
16 that these lines are drawn this way to protect
17 incumbents or to punish incumbents. I don't know
18 whether there's -- is there a state legislator that
19 lives anywhere near the line that you're talking
20 about?

21 MS. JAN CZARNIK: Well, you know, that would
22 have been ten years ago so, frankly, I'm even a
23 little hazy on who was getting pushed out when the
24 lines were drawn that way. Sorry.

1 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: I guess my --

2 MS. BARBARA PASQUINELLI: At that time, our
3 Senator was Pat O'Malley, Palos Park, and the
4 Representative, I think it was Maureen Murphy,
5 Evergreen Park.

6 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: I guess my point is -- and
7 this is my first go around. So I don't know, but
8 some- --

9 MS. BARBARA PASQUINELLI: That's why we're here
10 to help.

11 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: But sometimes it could be
12 arbitrary and sometimes it could be trying to get
13 population, you know, trying to get close as possible
14 to equality and -- population and there --
15 inevitably, there's -- you know, I guarantee you no
16 matter how noble the attempt may be, there's going to
17 be somewhere -- somebody somewhere in the State of
18 Illinois that's going to say, Why is this line drawn
19 in a funny way?

20 And I'm not at all dismissing your
21 complaints. I think you've got a -- it sounds like a
22 legitimate one without me knowing more; but I just
23 wanted your thoughts on the complexity of trying to
24 make this jigsaw puzzle with all the redistricting

1 principles that we have to observe, including the
2 Voting Rights Act and equality and population and
3 contiguity and all these things and the competing
4 communities of interest. I wonder if you have an
5 appreciation for the complexity of it all and then
6 making it all fit within the boundary of the State of
7 Illinois.

8 MS. BARBARA PASQUINELLI: I do and if I had any
9 kind of expertise or anything, you know, I'd make a
10 nice map, but I don't at this time. I'd have to
11 really, really sit down and I'm -- I don't get paid
12 for that, other people do.

13 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: No, and absolutely.

14 The other thing you mentioned is a
15 nice square district. We heard a lot of --

16 MS. BARBARA PASQUINELLI: Kind of. Not
17 exactly --

18 MS. JAN CZARNIK: It's true she did say "kind
19 of."

20 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: The interesting thing --
21 and we've had a lot of discussion about squares and
22 rectangles. I don't know many cities in the state of
23 Illinois that are squares. I don't know many --

24 MS. BARBARA PASQUINELLI: Only townships. They

1 manage, but don't start in one corner of the city and
2 then come across in a narrow band out west through
3 the suburbs. That doesn't make any sense. I don't
4 think that's correct and I think that is protecting
5 political incumbents. They can run anywhere they
6 want, but don't draw it like that. The two districts
7 that serve Palos Heights are both that way.

8 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: Now, who represents that
9 district that you just described?

10 MS. BARBARA PASQUINELLI: My district on the
11 south side of the red lines would be Monique Davis
12 and Emil Jones and on the other side still in Palos
13 Heights would be Bill Cunningham and Ed Maloney.

14 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: And the narrow one -- are
15 they both long and narrow or -- which one?

16 MS. BARBARA PASQUINELLI: Not quite. Well,
17 they both start in Chicago and pretty much come
18 straight out west. In fact, the 35th goes all the
19 way to Burr Ridge to the county line. I mean,
20 that's -- that's way far away from the beginning of
21 the district all the way out to Burr Ridge. I didn't
22 know that until the last election when one candidate
23 was from Beverly and one was from Burr Ridge and
24 that's one representative district. That -- not

1 good.

2 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: Anybody else?

3 Senator Dillard.

4 MINORITY SPOKESPERSON DILLARD: Thank you. And
5 thank you for being here and thanks for what the
6 League has done.

7 Obviously, our caucus, Senate
8 Republicans, have worked closely with the League on
9 redistricting on a lot of matters and we clearly
10 believe your philosophy and I certainly like your new
11 call for reasoning to come along with hearings --
12 multiple hearings after we see a proposed map from
13 the Democratic majority.

14 Is one of your points then, Barb, just
15 so I'm clear, you want to keep Chicago districts
16 clearly in the City of Chicago?

17 MS. JAN CZARNIK: Well, let me just say, the
18 Palos/Orland League is one of the poster children, as
19 is Effingham and others -- and forgive me, it's been
20 a while since I was traveling around the state as
21 Senator Raoul, my frequent companion, has continued
22 these travels -- it's not just Palos/Orland and
23 Effingham.

24 There are other areas as well that are

1 really relatively concentrated small populations that
2 have split up into numerous districts and it's purely
3 for political reasons then, with all due respect to
4 those of you who are public officials up there. Both
5 your parties, as you know, have done this in the past
6 and I know that you haven't been guilty of that
7 because you weren't even there and if it weren't for
8 you, Senator Raoul, we wouldn't even be here today,
9 nor would we have a commitment to see these maps, the
10 maps that are being previewed before they're voted
11 on. So we are extremely grateful for that.

12 We -- if I may, without inciting a
13 fire storm here, talk about the fair map principles,
14 which we worked on last year. Our first priority was
15 protecting and promoting voting rights. Further down
16 on the list was respecting municipal boundaries.
17 And, if I could actually, I'd rather talk about where
18 I live which is Matteson, which is much different
19 from the Palos/Orland situation.

20 I live in a part of the south suburbs
21 which is very, very, very diverse, where a lot of
22 people who live in the neighborhoods where I live
23 have moved out from the City of Chicago and so,
24 really, are a community of interest with -- you have

1 the far South Side of Chicago and the south suburbs
2 of Chicago.

3 And those of us who live in the south
4 suburbs of Chicago do feel much more a community of
5 interest with the South Side of Chicago, which may be
6 especially true for me because I grew up in the 19th
7 Ward; but for those people who live in Palos/Orland
8 and Hickory Hills and Oak Lawn and those areas, which
9 have so little in common with the City of Chicago,
10 particularly on subjects like transportation and
11 education -- and I have to tell you, even in my
12 little suburb, when you -- if the City of Chicago
13 were suffering, you know, with not having your
14 streets plowed, et cetera, et cetera, I got to tell
15 you, in the Village of Matteson, those folks were out
16 there all night getting those streets plowed. So we
17 don't have complete, you know, community of interest
18 with the city people, but we have more -- so you have
19 more in some suburbs than you do in others, some
20 suburbs are much more urban than others are.

21 So we're not talking about always, you
22 know, having it be some huge line that can't be
23 crossed, a municipal boundary; but where it makes
24 sense, yeah, the municipal boundary should be

1 respected and we believe that in that case, yes, it
2 should be respected.

3 And, Senator Raoul, if I may, you made
4 a comment about how you've heard already from people
5 who -- about their conflicting interests and why
6 their community of interest should be respected. I'm
7 sure that you're going to be hearing much more of
8 that when the actual maps are introduced; but the big
9 difference will be that you are giving people the
10 opportunity, both ahead of time and then when the
11 maps come out to say what they see about what you've
12 done and that's why what I said earlier about our new
13 demand.

14 Was now, you know, please, give us the
15 rationale for what you've done because one thing I've
16 found out, when I was going around the state
17 promoting the fair map, everywhere we went, people
18 would bring up -- and I'm forgetting the number of --
19 I called it the Luis Guiterez's district, whatever
20 the number of his district is -- that's the big
21 example of gerrymandering.

22 And I would have to say, Hold on.
23 Hold on. Hold on. We're for this because this
24 created a Congressional seat for a Latino and that's

1 a voting rights issue, we have enough Latino
2 population to justify Congressional representation,
3 so that funny shape we're for and I think that
4 people -- I mean, hearing that Harlem is a major
5 thoroughfare, why would you stop a block away from
6 Harlem?

7 So just given the geographic
8 boundaries, she's right about how the sensible
9 rational district is kind of squarish in this area,
10 but I found going around the state, if I could
11 explain the reason for a funny looking district,
12 people were okay with that, people do understand
13 competing interests and people do understand the
14 Voting Rights Act.

15 What they don't like and I -- you may
16 not want to hear this -- I realize you're all now
17 incumbents, but I'm going to say this again,
18 something I said to the press a million times, you
19 need to know, as you go through this process, the
20 only reason we didn't get enough signatures to get
21 the fair map amendment on the ballot, was we ran out
22 of time.

23 The public doesn't like the idea of
24 legislatures drawing their own districts, so my

1 gratuitous advice to you is if you're going to
2 produce a map, you know, that you can explain how
3 you've weighed fairly everyone's interests, even if
4 it looks funny. The public will support that; but
5 what they don't want to see is any more of this de,
6 de, de, de, de, de, reward this person and punish
7 that person. They don't feel that that leaves them
8 choices about who they're electing into office,
9 frankly.

10 SENATOR HUNTER: So, Barbara, you mentioned
11 that you'd like to see the district the way it used
12 to be?

13 MS. BARBARA PASQUINELLI: Similar to that.

14 SENATOR HUNTER: So what's that, is that like
15 Palos and Worth together?

16 MS. BARBARA PASQUINELLI: Yeah, going down to
17 Oak Lawn, Evergreen Park.

18 SENATOR HUNTER: Keeping all of those
19 communities intact.

20 MS. BARBARA PASQUINELLI: Yeah. Yeah. Those
21 are the municipal boundaries I'm kind of talking
22 about. I don't have a problem going into the city
23 for part of it, that's fine, but the city can't be
24 the guiding light for the district, it's got to be

1 focused on the community of interest -- I love that
2 phrase -- I'm just going to throw it in there
3 everywhere I can from now on.

4 MINORITY SPOKESPERSON DILLARD: One of the
5 things I think you're going to have to watch for in
6 this map, as opposed to previous maps, is -- on this
7 topic, the City of Chicago is down in population in
8 the Census, so they've lost a couple hundred thousand
9 folks. You know, it's always been my guess that the
10 City doesn't want to lose representation in terms of
11 numbers in the legislature, so that's why they go out
12 and they pick up the necessary few thousand people
13 they need to keep that district in the City of
14 Chicago. I mean they're out there fishing so that
15 they get their exact number of people, so when you're
16 watching after the map is released knowing Chicago
17 has lost population, I worry that this syndrome --
18 and I agree with you, Barb -- has the potential for
19 being worse now than it has been in the last two maps
20 because the City of Chicago is down in population.

21 My legal secretary, by the way, lives
22 in Matteson, so I'm -- is a native and she travels
23 into the City of Chicago to work, so I understand
24 that, you know, the Palos/Worth situation is

1 different than Matteson.

2 One question for you -- and maybe you
3 two aren't the ones to answer it and maybe other
4 witnesses are -- as the south suburbs grow, how do
5 you view a suburban district down here versus a more
6 rural area? There's still farmers in rural Will
7 County. How do you balance or suggest that the
8 mapmakers balance a suburban area down here that
9 might go out into the -- you know, the more rural
10 areas?

11 I just remember discussions over
12 dinner with Senator Halvorson about the diversity of
13 her district and boom, she suddenly has a number of
14 agriculture people; same with Senator Radogno, my
15 leader, who lives in Lemont and goes into some of the
16 rural areas of Will County. How do you envision that
17 and is that an issue that we need to be thinking
18 about as we look at the south and far southwest
19 suburbs.

20 MS. JAN CZARNIK: You know, with Will County
21 growing especially quickly -- although I live close
22 to the border of Will County, I don't live in Will
23 County, so I don't want to try to speak for them,
24 I -- it is true that the people who live --

1 particularly in the far south suburbs -- are really
2 pretty urban folks and, of course, we have a much
3 different sensibility and really much different
4 interests than rural.

5 MINORITY SPOKESPERSON DILLARD: Gun control,
6 that would be one issue --

7 MS. JAN CZARNIK: For instance --

8 MINORITY SPOKESPERSON DILLARD: -- where
9 Senator Radogno would have a very diverse district
10 based on the topic of gun control.

11 MS. JAN CZARNIK: So I would imagine that if I
12 were someone rural and I found myself dominated by
13 the people who live in the south suburbs, I'd be
14 mighty unhappy; but, you know, I can't -- I really
15 can only speak for the folks I know, which is folks
16 like us, but I -- you know, believe me, living out
17 here, I've come -- you know, you go a little bit
18 south on 57 and you're definitely in the part of the
19 state where those signs are appearing about how guns
20 save lives which is so ungrammatical.

21 MINORITY SPOKESPERSON DILLARD: We'll save that
22 for another judiciary committee hearing.

23 MS. JAN CZARNIK: Yes.

24 MINORITY SPOKESPERSON DILLARD: Just continuing

1 on the south suburbs for a second, I'd be remiss if I
2 didn't say -- my in-laws were at my house this
3 morning. My in-laws, We used to live in Park Forest
4 and they kidded my wife that she was probably
5 conceived in Park Forest, so, you know, my ties are
6 down here.

7 And I told Phil Kadner every time I
8 come in here -- when Paula Wolfe was president, she
9 would bring us down here a lot, so -- but, you know,
10 in terms of this area, Aldo Deangelis, Debbie
11 Halvorson and Toi Hutchinson is an up-and-comer in
12 the Senate, you know, from our Senate colleague
13 perspective, you know, you've had, from this area,
14 not necessarily as far as west as you are, but really
15 strong representatives in the State Senate.

16 MS. JAN CZARNIK: Oh, sure. Tony Spariano
17 (phonetic) who was --

18 MINORITY SPOKESPERSON DILLARD: Tony Spariano
19 was my --

20 MS. JAN CZARNIK: -- before that, right.

21 MINORITY SPOKESPERSON DILLARD: -- I had him
22 for two case classes in law school. He moonlighted
23 as a law professor, you know, when he was in the
24 legislature and a very independent man, by the way.

1 MS. JAN CZARNIK: The south suburbs, we've
2 produced -- I'm sorry, we have to stop bragging about
3 the south suburbs, others want to testify. Thank
4 you. We're very proud of a lot of people we elect
5 from out here.

6 MINORITY SPOKESPERSON DILLARD: Thanks.

7 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: Don't go just yet.

8 MS. BARBARA PASQUINELLI: I'm prepared to stay.

9 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: This conversation has made
10 me think a lot about -- again, about my district and
11 this assumed arguendo that my district were to remain
12 exactly the same the boundary, which is impossible
13 because, you know, the population, I would represent
14 a district where it's becoming very close to not
15 having a majority ethnic population and, quite
16 frankly, you know, I think I've got the capacity to
17 represent such a district.

18 My district is a very diverse district
19 all within the City of Chicago that has very
20 different communities of interest. I have amongst
21 the most affluent in the City of Chicago on the Gold
22 Coast in the south loop and in Hyde Park and I have
23 some of the disadvantaged -- economically
24 disadvantaged people in the City of Chicago, whether

1 it be Grant Crossing, Woodlawn, parts of South Shore,
2 South Chicago and guess what? It's healthy. It
3 allows me to have a more robust and comprehensive
4 perspective on acting on public policy in
5 Springfield.

6 So even as we talk about communities
7 of interest and -- there's a continuous balancing
8 act, don't you think?

9 MS. JAN CZARNIK: If I could just flatter you
10 for a moment, but in a deserved way, I'm going to
11 refer back to that Trib article from a couple weeks
12 ago about how your part of the city produces
13 exceptional public officials. You are a great public
14 official. You're smart. You're hardworking. You're
15 responsive. I think that if we had --

16 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: I could have you sit up
17 there all day testifying.

18 MS. JAN CZARNIK: Well, you did earlier say,
19 you know you weren't going to limit anyone's time,
20 but I thought the Trib article -- I thought it was
21 really true and as you know, I mean, really, Senator
22 Raoul and I have spent so much time together, we know
23 each other's life stories by now. I flatter myself
24 that I'm older than I look, but I've spent really 40

1 years in politics in Cook County and know -- knew,
2 really, just about everyone that came out of Hyde
3 Park politics. I think that if the General Assembly
4 were full of people who behave the way you did, the
5 people of the state wouldn't be so frustrated with
6 their government.

7 But Barb actually was polite here in
8 public. I can tell you what the members of the
9 Palos/Orland League have told me privately for years,
10 for years, for years, Monique Davis literally doesn't
11 answer them. I mean, they're not even talking about
12 whether or not she represents them on the issues,
13 they don't even get that far. Whenever they contact
14 her, no matter what way they try, she just doesn't
15 answer.

16 And I'm just using her as an example
17 because that's who their representative is; but when
18 you have people in office who believe that it's okay
19 to behave that way and can continue to get elected
20 because the districts are drawn to re-elect them,
21 that's where the problem is. You're right about what
22 you say, that in your case, that's a good healthy
23 thing and I think -- is it Dick Simpson and Don Rose,
24 I can't remember, one of the great elders of

1 independent politics said about the person who is now
2 the president, that that was one of the ways that he
3 learned even more than he already knew when he came
4 to politics, about how to get along with everyone and
5 to fit in everywhere and to be responsive to everyone
6 that's because that district is so diverse.

7 So it is a good thing if you've got
8 good people running for office and getting elected,
9 so you see we need both parts.

10 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: Thank you so much for your
11 testimony. I do appreciate it.

12 Nareman Taha, Reema Ahmad and Ranna
13 Matariyeh.

14 MS NAREMAN TAHA: She's not going to testify.

15 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: Is she testifying?

16 MS. NAREMAN TAHA: No, she's not.

17 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: Okay. All right. We'll
18 have Nareman Taha and Reema Ahmad.

19 Did I do all right?

20 MS. REEMA AHMAD: Yes, you did. Very good.

21 MS. NAREMAN TAHA: Good morning.

22 MINORITY SPOKESPERSON DILLARD: Good morning.

23 SENATOR HUNTER: Good morning.

24 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: State your name.

1 MS. NAREMAN TAHA: My name is Nareman Taha,
2 that's N-a-r-e-m-a-n, last name is Taha, T-a-h-a.

3 TESTIMONY

4 BY

5 MS. NAREMAN TAHA:

6 Good morning. And thank you for
7 giving us the chance -- to listen to us today. My
8 name is Nareman Taha and I'm the co-founder and
9 director of the Arab-American Family Services.
10 Arab-American Family Services is a nonprofit social
11 service organization founded in 2001. It provides
12 caring, compassionate and multilingual assistance to
13 south suburban Chicagoland residents. AAFS offers
14 support in the area of public benefits, immigration,
15 domestic violence, mental health and elderly services
16 and sponsors outreach programs to build healthier
17 families and communities.

18 As a locally focused, nonpolitical,
19 nonreligious agency, AAFS works to build bridges of
20 respect and understanding between Arab-American and
21 mainstream American cultures. By helping local
22 neighbors overcome personal crises, strengthen their
23 families and live healthier, more successful lives,
24 AAFS is making a profound and positive impact in our

1 community.

2 I am a resident of the city of Palos
3 Park located in the southwest suburbs of Cook County.
4 I have been living in the southwest suburbs for over
5 15 years and I have served the Arab-American
6 community within the southwest suburbs for over
7 11 years. Through my work and day to day of
8 community involvement, I have seen the community
9 significantly grow in population as well as
10 respective institutions.

11 As the community expands and
12 increases, community organizations, businesses,
13 schools, entertainment venues also increase in order
14 to meet the needs of its community members at all
15 levels. One example I would like to share with you
16 is the City of Bridgeview with a population of
17 16,446, there exists a Mosque serving over 4,000
18 members from the surrounding suburbs, two Arabic
19 schools, a food pantry and also part of Arab-American
20 Family Services.

21 In addition, through the work of our
22 social service organization, AAFS in 2010 served
23 19,325 individuals from the following southwest
24 suburbs of Cook County: Oak Lawn, Bridgeview,

1 Chicago Ridge, Burbank, Worth, Justice, Hickory
2 Hills, Palos Hills, Orland Park and Tinley Park and
3 there's an attached demographic at the very end of
4 your report. This is where the community is, in the
5 southwest suburbs of Cook County. In the southwest
6 suburbs, Arab-Americans make up close to 150,000
7 Arab-Americans, both Muslim and Christian,
8 considering this is an undercount since
9 Arab-Americans are classified as white.
10 Arab-Americans originate from 22 Arab countries that
11 share many common concerns, such as the need for
12 linguistically and culturally appropriate social
13 services, as well as concerns about education,
14 healthcare, immigration, discrimination, hate crimes,
15 and racial profiling.

16 As the community grows, and it is
17 spread across multiple elected officials, this makes
18 the work for community organizations like ours very
19 difficult. The reality of multiple officials may
20 differ in opinions or they might not have the
21 community's interest at best. As a result, community
22 issues go unresolved.

23 Overall, sporadic communities have
24 very little impact and have very little power and are

1 not able to influence change.

2 We ask that our elected officials be
3 fair in their redistricting process and keep
4 immigrant communities like ours together. This is
5 the time we encourage groups like Arab-Americans
6 increase their population in Illinois' political
7 life. I hope this redistricting process can be part
8 of that increased participation.

9 Arab American Family Services, Council
10 of Islamic Organizations of Greater Chicago,
11 unfortunately, the representative of that
12 organization couldn't be here today, but she did --
13 we did provide you with her testimony and Project
14 Mobilize, Reema Ahmad today -- testified today with
15 details about our rising population and the
16 devastating harm that we face as a result of unfair
17 votes. The fair representation of our community is a
18 crucial step in having our unique needs effectively
19 addressed.

20 Our respective legislators need to
21 keep Arab-American communities whose residents have
22 common ground in terms of history, ethnicity,
23 language and social concerns who should be kept
24 together in one single district during redistricting.

1 Our recommendation in District 1,
2 Bridgeview, Burbank, Chicago Ridge, Oak Lawn, and
3 Justice. Our second recommendation is that there are
4 clusters that represent a significantly high
5 population of Arab-Americans that share and have
6 common grounds in terms of history, ethnicity,
7 language and cultural and social concerns, which
8 should be kept together in the southwest suburbs of
9 Cook County. Those clusters are Cluster 1: Hickory
10 Hills, Palos Hills and Worth. Cluster 2: Palos
11 Park, Palos Heights and Orland Park.

12 AAFS and the above community
13 organizations will be providing you with maps soon.
14 What we have, demographic, population charts
15 attached, as I said earlier, but finally we ask that
16 you provide us with time to review the maps before
17 they are final and thank you again for your time.

18 TESTIMONY

19 BY

20 MS. REEMA AHMAD:

21 Good morning. Chairman Raoul,
22 Senator Hunter, Senator Dillard. My name is Reema
23 Ahmad, R-e-e-m-a, last name, A-h-m-a-d.

24 Thank you again for taking this time

1 to hear from representatives of communities of
2 interest as we undergo this redistricting process. I
3 commend each of you for seeking to hear from
4 individuals, organizations, and institutions that
5 have a real stake as we've already seen in the course
6 of these redistricting measures.

7 I'm here as executive director of
8 Project Mobilize. We're a nonprofit, nonpartisan
9 political action organization. We're based in the
10 southwest suburbs of Chicago and I'll be speaking
11 about the growing Arab, Middle Eastern and Asian
12 electorate in this geographic area.

13 A little bit about Project M, we seek
14 to develop the political potential in civically
15 marginalized communities. In our current political
16 climate, the diverse sub-communities of the Arab,
17 Middle Eastern and Asian-American populations have
18 been the focus. Within these communities are
19 thousands of registered voters and even more U.S.
20 citizens that have yet to fully assume their civil
21 rights and responsibilities. These are communities
22 of healthcare professionals, business leaders,
23 lawyers, social service providers and more. They are
24 individuals who care about the communities in which

1 they live and raise their families and, therefore,
2 deserve to more fully engage in the political systems
3 that govern us all.

4 Over the past decade, we've seen
5 significant growth in the political participation
6 from the Arab and Asian-American communities of
7 Chicagoland. As these communities have become more
8 and more engaged in the political process, they have
9 come to represent a growing portion of the voting
10 electorate both locally and statewide. This growth
11 comes with increased responsibilities on the part of
12 the individual communities as well as the legislators
13 that seek to accurately represent the concerns and
14 needs of their diverse constituents.

15 Project Mobilize has compiled
16 information on the Arab, Middle Eastern and Asian
17 population -- I'm sorry, Asian-American electorate --
18 through researching voting records released by local
19 election authorities. I want to note that we do not
20 have staff -- Census data on the Arab-American
21 community as Nareman had noted, so this is one of the
22 means by which we gauge how large a community is, but
23 it really is just a representation of a fraction of
24 that community and not representation as a whole.

1 Through this research, the following
2 statistic I have here on my written testimony, we
3 have almost 4,000 Arab and Asian-American voters
4 residing throughout the Bridgeview, Burbank, Chicago
5 Ridge, and Oak Lawn communities alone. We talk about
6 the clusters there. There is significant clusters of
7 Arab-American and Asian-American voters in the
8 Hickory Hills, Palos Hills and Worth communities and
9 then a growing cluster in the Palos Heights, Palos
10 Park and Orland Park communities, that makes up at
11 least 15,000 registered voters. We're still
12 compiling this information based on the most recent
13 election and so that information will be continued to
14 be provided to you as you're going through this
15 redistricting process.

16 Regardless -- as the testimonies from
17 representatives from Arab-American Family Services,
18 and the written one that you have from the Council of
19 Islamic Organizations of Greater Chicago, detail that
20 Arab, Middle Eastern and Asian-American communities
21 have needs that must be serviced by the
22 representative officials. These needs and the
23 increase in the voting population from the Arab and
24 Asian-American communities necessitate greater

1 representation by local elected officials forming the
2 foundation for maintaining the integrity of the
3 concentrations of these communities in single
4 legislative districts.

5 In order to maximize the political
6 potential of these communities, I have provided a
7 couple recommendations from Project Mobilize on the
8 redistricting process. Again, to reiterate what my
9 colleague, Arab-American Family Services said, our
10 hope is to have one district that includes a majority
11 of the Arab-American, Middle Eastern American and
12 Asian-American electorate in the communities of
13 Bridgeview, Burbank, Chicago Ridge, Oak Lawn and
14 Justice and then to maintain the integrity of two
15 clusters, one that would include at least the
16 communities of Hickory Hills, Palos Hills and Worth.
17 The second to include the communities of Palos
18 Heights, Palos Park and Orland Park.

19 In our ever diversifying cities and
20 state, the contributions, needs and concerns of
21 growing communities of interest can no longer go
22 unrepresented. On behalf of Project Mobilize and the
23 thousands of Arab-Americans, Middle Eastern and
24 Asian-American voters we mobilize, I ask that you

1 consider these communities and the potential they
2 have to contribute positively to each of our
3 livelihoods through greater participation and local
4 and statewide government as you determine the new
5 legislative -- I'm sorry, the new districts of
6 Illinois.

7 And I want to add to that, when the
8 maps have finally been drawn by your Committee, if
9 you could allow for at least a two-week period of
10 time to allow for individual organizations,
11 institutions to review these, be able to comment and
12 bring up any other concerns that might arise from the
13 way that the districts have been drawn.

14 At this time, I welcome any questions.
15 Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: So on the last point, we've
17 received -- you know, one of the things that a
18 previous witness said, she said, I've got something
19 new for you and for me, you know, quite frankly, this
20 process has been somewhat frustrating because the
21 line moves, you know, we've done largely just about
22 everything that reform groups have asked for and then
23 the line moves and so we've heard from some people
24 that they'd like a week, some people that, two weeks,

1 I'm curious about the magic of two weeks.

2 MS. REEMA AHMAD: Honestly, I think it's
3 important to allow for -- time for that information
4 to be distributed to the different communities and
5 organizations that would be interested in
6 participating and then depending on how much those --
7 you know, the maps that are drawn differ from the
8 suggestions of these community organizations,
9 institutions, individuals to allow for enough time to
10 kind of collaborate with others and try to come up
11 with something better that's good for everyone and
12 just not for specific communities.

13 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: So the beautiful thing
14 about the process is that there are a lot of
15 different community groups and interest groups that
16 have been collaborating together that have come forth
17 with some maps and some, you know, data about their
18 various community groups and they've been doing a
19 pretty good job of collaborating in their
20 communications.

21 MS. NAREMAN TAHA: Well, the power isn't in
22 collaboration, the power is strategic lines.

23 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: Absolutely. And I imagine
24 when the initial rendition of the proposed map comes

1 out, you know, everybody in the universe in Illinois
2 is going to pretty much know about it. I don't think
3 there will be, you know, we'll be posting it and so
4 with technology today, things will be pretty access
5 able; right?

6 MS. REEMA AHMAD: I think the idea is to
7 provide sufficient time for these community
8 organizations, individuals and institutions to be
9 able to make -- you know, come to their Senators,
10 come to this Committee and make the proper
11 recommendations.

12 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: Right. And so I was
13 wondering what -- you know, since we've had such
14 inconsistent testimony on what sufficient time is and
15 for some they've moved the bar --

16 MS. REEMA AHMAD: Yeah and, I guess for us,
17 we've just noticed that that gives you enough time to
18 collaborate with as many different groups as possible
19 and be able to use the software made available to the
20 different communities to come up with different maps
21 or different lines, but we'll leave that to the
22 judgment of the Committee to determine exactly what
23 that time will be for the --

24 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: So there really isn't any

1 match --

2 MS. REEMA AHMAD: Our recommendation is two
3 weeks. You guys --

4 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: I was just wondering
5 whether there was something scientific about two
6 weeks --

7 MS. REEMA AHMAD: No.

8 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: -- or whether it's just an
9 arbitrary --

10 MS. NAREMAN TAHA: -- the collaboration that
11 you talked about when working with other coalitions
12 and the recommendation with various groups is to give
13 us at least two weeks, so it's really just
14 communication that we've been hearing from others
15 that --

16 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: So that's just a line of
17 that --

18 MS. NAREMAN TAHA: That's just a line of
19 communication --

20 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: -- of communication? So
21 there was no science to it?

22 MS. NAREMAN TAHA: -- no science.

23 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: That's what I'm getting to.

24 MS. NAREMAN TAHA: Yeah, no. You know, just

1 again, just giving us the respect of reviewing those
2 maps and taking into consideration the population
3 and, again, it's through those coalitions that we're
4 all reiterating the same message, at least two weeks
5 to review and just hear from them.

6 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: It's kind of -- Senator
7 Dillard and I would kind of consistently have
8 conversations in the Criminal Law Committee because
9 every year people come forth with enhancement on
10 penalties and I -- you know, Senator Dillard could
11 tell you, I always ask the question, What's the
12 science behind it? And the people really don't have
13 an answer other than, We're doing this because this
14 happened in our community and they don't care whether
15 or not the existing penalty is proportional to the
16 crime.

17 So me asking the question is -- you
18 know, it's nice that there's a coalition that says,
19 okay, our talking point is going to be two weeks --

20 MS. REEMA AHMAD: I think it's -- I mean, that
21 point was made by the different organizations based
22 off of how long it has taken throughout this entire
23 process, throughout these various hearings that we've
24 all attended to put together the information

1 necessary to maintain the lines of communication with
2 these different organizations. So that's really what
3 we've noticed --

4 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: That was two weeks?

5 MS. REEMA AHMAD: About -- yeah, about a couple
6 weeks --

7 MS. NAREMAN TAHA: Some have asked for one
8 week, some have asked for more than two weeks.

9 MS. REEMA AHMAD: Absolutely.

10 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: And I'm just asking --

11 MS. REEMA AHMAD: Yeah, yeah, no.

12 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: -- because, you know, a lot
13 of people are coming with information --

14 MS. REEMA AHMAD: If you give us a month, we'll
15 take it.

16 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: You had a suggestion -- I
17 think both of you had a suggestion of Bridgeview,
18 Burbank, Chicago Ridge, Oak Lawn and Justice, I'm
19 just curious about the respective populations of
20 those municipalities.

21 Are you suggesting that the entire
22 municipality -- each one of those municipalities be
23 in one district or the pockets of population that
24 you're talking about.

1 MS. NAREMAN TAHA: The pockets of populations.
2 We -- we have to be very honest in saying we, as a
3 community, are in this community -- to this line of
4 work, so we also understand that we are restricted
5 with the populations within each district so we
6 understand that they all can't be put in one
7 district, but we're asking for the majority of the
8 population to be in one district.

9 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: And the reason I raise the
10 question is because, you know, we've heard testimony
11 that -- there's been -- there's one rule of thought
12 that, you know, when municipalities, respective
13 municipal boundaries and -- you know, we've heard
14 from redistricting -- national redistricting experts
15 over the course of the last couple years, that
16 sometimes that means packing or cracking ethnic
17 populations and in your case, clearly, you're listing
18 these different municipalities that could be -- if
19 you were to separate, you know, some of the
20 municipalities that you talked about and not keep
21 your community of interest together, that creates
22 that effect of splitting your population.

23 MS. REEMA AHMAD: I think other testimony has
24 indicated that there are -- there are many layers to

1 the communities of interest that are in these areas.
2 I mean, the Arab-American, Middle Eastern,
3 Asian-American communities is just one of them. We
4 talk about having, you know, similar, you know,
5 social needs, talking about transportation or
6 education. So I think that again that there are
7 those different layers and that the integrity of
8 these communities could be maintained while
9 respecting those different communities of interest.

10 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: So you can -- I mean, pick
11 two of these communities that are contiguous that are
12 right next door to one another.

13 MS. REEMA AHMAD: Most of them -- in fact, they
14 are all next to each other. Bridgeview, Burbank,
15 Chicago Ridge, Oak Lawn, they're all --

16 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: So do you have --

17 MS. REEMA AHMAD: They're contiguously --

18 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: So --

19 MS. REEMA AHMAD: I'm not going to say that
20 they're square --

21 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: No, no. That's not where
22 I'm going. So I imagine Bridgeview -- is Bridgeview
23 and Burbank right next door to one another or...

24 MS. REEMA AHMAD: Right --

1 MS. NAREMAN TAHA: Right. Not directly next to
2 each other, but they're adjacent to each other.

3 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: Are there areas where you
4 have an Arab-American population on one side of the
5 boundary and that continues through the municipal
6 boundary?

7 MS. REEMA AHMAD: Could you clarify that? I'm
8 not understanding.

9 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: So, for example, we heard
10 in an earlier hearing about the North Side of Chicago
11 and Skokie and they testified that, you know, the
12 population goes across the municipal boundary and
13 that you'd like to keep that community of interest
14 together. At the same time we're hearing from folks,
15 you know, you have to respect the municipal boundary.

16 MS. REEMA AHMAD: Oh, I see what you're saying,
17 okay.

18 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: And, you know, and my
19 feeling is that it's a whole lot more complex than
20 just this redistricting principle that you have to
21 respect the municipal boundary because there's these
22 other interests of keeping communities of interest
23 together. It may not exist with certain municipal
24 boundaries, but -- and I'm ignorant. I don't know

1 the specifics of Bridgeview, Burbank, Chicago Ridge,
2 Oak Lawn and Justice, but that's what I'm trying to
3 ask about is -- do you have a population that goes
4 across that -- some of those municipal boundaries?

5 MS. REEMA AHMAD: We do. I mean, they do span
6 across that area, the Bridgeview, Burbank -- and,
7 again, these communities are all right by each other,
8 so it shouldn't -- in some of the maps that we've
9 seen through different organizations, it is quite
10 feasible to include these municipalities in a single
11 district and meet the population requirements for
12 those districts. So I believe it's possible to
13 maintain the integrity of both municipal lines and
14 the integrity of communities of interest.

15 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: Are --

16 MS. NAREMAN TAHA: I'm sorry.

17 I think we -- one of the complicated
18 issues with our community is that -- I mentioned
19 earlier that we will be providing you with maps once
20 we're -- we're in the process of currently looking
21 and asking the same question you asked. The issue is
22 it's very hard for us to extract numbers because our
23 community is labeled as white, so in our
24 representation we're -- these numbers that we

1 presented to you are based off of organizations who
2 work in the community and us -- and the visible
3 growth community organizations in schools and Mosques
4 and businesses across the southwest suburbs.

5 Now, for us, as we're doing -- as
6 we're extracting numbers and working with maps,
7 again, Arab-Americans get lumped with white, so when
8 we're able to populate, we don't really have hardcore
9 statistics and when you're asking that question,
10 we're working off of community organizations --

11 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: I gotcha.

12 MS. NAREMAN TAHA: -- but once again, these
13 cities align within each other. I mean, they're all
14 connected to each other and the Arab-American
15 communities goes from a starting point at 75th Street
16 and Cicero all the way extending to Orland Park.

17 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: What, if any, impact -- and
18 if you don't know, that's fine -- we've got a Bible
19 that we all read, it's called the Capital Fax and I
20 was reading the Capital Fax -- you know, many of us
21 legislators rely on the Capital Fax to find out
22 what's going on in the legislature.

23 I say that jokingly, but in one of the
24 recent issues, it talked about advocacy groups for

1 different ethnic communities, the Latino community
2 asking for a certain number of districts, and another
3 advocacy group -- the Latino community taking a
4 different approach because there is also concern
5 about the advocacy groups for the African-American
6 community and so trying to keep one voting rights
7 community of interest together or maximize the
8 representation may have a negative impact on another
9 -- so even the priority that the League of Women
10 Voters identified as their top priority, that can be
11 conflicting at times, you know, which voting right
12 group do you protect.

13 So I'm curious as -- do you run across
14 that with the suggested districts that -- or
15 communities of interest that you enumerated.

16 MS. REEMA AHMAD: As we've been drawing the
17 lines of our suggested maps, we've been very
18 cognizant of the districts, the Illinois Voting
19 Rights Act and these other communities of interest.

20 So I don't know if that necessarily
21 answers your question completely; but it is something
22 we are taking into consideration because, again, we
23 recognize that it's not only the Arab-American,
24 Middle Eastern and Asian-American communities that

1 want to ensure that their voices aren't drowned out
2 through the redistricting process, but all these
3 other communities, too.

4 And so, again, we're very cognizant of
5 that and we're applicable -- working in collaborating
6 with other entities and organizations to ensure that
7 the maps that are drawn and presented are amenable to
8 as many communities as possible.

9 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: So you appreciate the
10 complexity of --

11 MS. REEMA AHMAD: Oh, yeah, yeah.

12 MS. NAREMAN TAHA: Yes.

13 MS. REEMA AHMAD: It's been fun.

14 MINORITY SPOKESPERSON DILLARD: Thank you and
15 thank you for your testimony. I support your
16 clusters in the way you have them set up. Have you
17 looked at Michigan, you know, the way Michigan
18 handles its mapmaking? Obviously, there is a larger
19 population in the Detroit area. I mean, have you
20 give -- have you looked at what other states are
21 doing that might be a guide to us?

22 MS. REEMA AHMAD: I haven't personally.

23 MS. NAREMAN TAHA: In all honesty, we have not.
24 That doesn't mean it's not taking place or it's not

1 been done, but we could go back and do the research
2 and present it to you.

3 MINORITY SPOKESPERSON DILLARD: Yeah, I'd be
4 particularly -- if there is a way you could do it,
5 even if it's just an Internet search just to see
6 what's going on and look at some of their
7 Arab-American or Islamic organizations in the Detroit
8 area and see what, you know, I'd Google
9 Redistricting, Remapping and see what -- because that
10 would be useful for us to know. You know, I'm lucky,
11 I have a rather large and growing Arab population in
12 Bolingbrook and Woodridge --

13 MS. REEMA AHMAD: Yes.

14 MINORITY SPOKESPERSON DILLARD: -- and I attend
15 their events and I'm proud to say that I helped a man
16 named Moon Khan primarily through the Lombard Mosque,
17 elected as a local official in DuPage County, but
18 your clusters, I think, are the right clusters, you
19 know, I would certainly -- and our caucus would
20 certainly support it.

21 Just a point, Mr. Chairman, and
22 Senator Hunter on timing. Obviously, these groups --
23 and it's just not these two women or their
24 organizations -- but interest groups, they don't have

1 the resources or the computer capability that we, the
2 State, does and they also need time to notify their
3 membership which, you know, which if you're doing
4 it -- you probably do it by Internet but, you know,
5 sometimes you need religious services to say, Hey,
6 next week, there's this hearing on the proposed map.
7 We got to give these organizations enough time to get
8 the word out to mobilize their membership so that we
9 can have their input.

10 And I do want to point out, not only
11 for the Media that's here, but also, particularly,
12 the League of Women Voters, the Constitutional
13 deadline in Illinois is June 30th. There is no May
14 30th ironclad deadline to do this map. The reason
15 that the May 30th or May date would be out there
16 would be so that we could have a map that was
17 approved by the legislature with only one political
18 party necessary, but under the constitution of this
19 state, June 30th, is the date that we have to do
20 something.

21 So, you know, I just want to clear up
22 that we have some mythical date that comes in the
23 month of May, the Constitution of this state says
24 it's June 30th. But, again, thanks for your

1 testimony and I think your clusters are the right
2 ones especially for the organizations you represent
3 and I would support them exactly like you want them.

4 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: I appreciate Senator
5 Dillard's comments. I'd like to remind everybody the
6 map is legislation and we have a legislative schedule
7 that we set out, that we set out at the beginning of
8 this general assembly and what we try to do with all
9 legislation is try to pass the legislation within the
10 legislative schedule, so as to give the governor who
11 has to consider the whole array of legislation time
12 to think about it and decide whether he signs it into
13 law or vetos it and so what we are trying to do with
14 the legislation that would come about as a result of
15 all these hearings that we've been having is to try
16 to do it within our legislative schedule that we set
17 out like we do like all General Assemblies have done
18 for decades at the beginning of the General Assembly,
19 not with a map in mind, not with House Bill or Senate
20 Bill 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 or 2000 in mind, but with
21 all of this collectively. It just happens to be that
22 the map is not the only thing we're doing in the
23 legislature. We've got a very difficult budget,
24 we've got workers' compensation reform, we've got

1 education reform, we've got hundreds -- thousands of
2 things that we're considering and so I think it's
3 important to be reminded of that.

4 SENATOR HUNTER: So if you have a map, get it
5 to us.

6 MS. NAREMAN TAHA: Thank you. Thank you for
7 your time.

8 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: Thank you.

9 MS. REEMA AHMAD: Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: Rick Reinbold.

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1 TESTIMONY

2 BY

3 MR. RICK REINBOLD:

4 Senators, thank you for the
5 opportunity to testify. My name is Rick Reinbold.
6 I'm the mayor of Richton Park and I also serve as
7 South Suburban Mayors and Managers Chair for the
8 legislature. I will be extremely brief in my
9 comments.

10 What I would ask the Committee to do
11 is to please give careful consideration when
12 determining the borders to the existing municipal
13 boundaries. In the Village of Richton Park,
14 historically, we've enjoyed multiple representation
15 and we are currently enjoining basically what I call,
16 one Senator, one State representation. That, from my
17 perspective, is much more efficient.

18 If I have an issue, if I'm able to
19 address that issue with one State Representative or
20 one Senator, purely from my perspective, it is much
21 for efficient. That does not prohibit me from having
22 relationships with other Senators and sharing my
23 views with them but I think it's also beneficial to
24 our representation. The Village of Richton Park is

1 approximately a one square mile area, we're a little
2 over 13,000 in population and we can be very
3 effectively represented with one Senator and one
4 Representative.

5 As promised, my comments were very
6 brief and I would like to answer any questions you
7 may have of me.

8 SENATOR HUNTER: It sounds like you're pretty
9 satisfied with your Senator.

10 MAYOR RICK REINBOLD: Yes. Senator Crotty is
11 doing a very good job.

12 SENATOR HUNTER: Thank you for coming today.

13 CHAIRPERSON RAOUL: Thank you so much for your
14 testimony.

15 All right. I have a few
16 announcements. The Senate Redistricting Web site is
17 www.ilsenateredistricting.com. It contains tools and
18 resources for members of the public interested in
19 learning more about the redistricting process. Users
20 can access Census data, view current maps and
21 download testimony received at previous Committee
22 hearings.

23 I should note that there's several
24 transcripts that need to be transcribed and approved

1 by the Committee before we're able to put them on the
2 Web site. The House Redistricting Web site is
3 www.ilhousedems.com/redistricting. It also contains
4 resources and testimony and helpful links about the
5 redistricting process as the House and Senate
6 approach it.

7 With regards to public workstations,
8 computer workstations are available to members of the
9 public who would like to draw and submit maps of
10 their own. One workstation is located at Room 401 of
11 the Straton Building, which is exactly west of the
12 state capital in Springfield. The other work station
13 is located on the 7th Floor of the Bilandic Building
14 in Downtown Chicago. Each workstation is open to the
15 public, Monday through Friday, between 8:30 a.m. and
16 4:30 p.m. Interested parties should call
17 (217) 558-3036 to reserve time at either workstation.

18 I mentioned earlier that the Senate
19 Republicans also have the workstation at the Thompson
20 Center available to the public for use.

21 Individuals or groups who would like
22 to submit maps or testimony but who are unable to
23 attend one of our hearings may do so by contacting
24 the Senate Redistricting Committee via e-mail at

1 redistricting@senatedem.ilga.gov or by contacting the
2 House Redistricting Committee at
3 Ilredistricting@gmail.com. All submissions received
4 via e-mail will also be posted on-line at the
5 Senate's Redistricting Web site.

6 Our next hearings -- we're having one
7 or maybe have one -- we have one that will start in
8 10 minutes in Macomb, so if there were high-speed
9 rail, you'd be able to get there -- but our next
10 hearing will be Saturday, April 30th at 10:00 a.m. at
11 the Streamwood Police Department, 401 East Irving
12 Park Road in Streamwood, Illinois, and also on
13 Saturday at noon at Malcolm X College in the Bruce
14 Hayden Center for Performing Arts, 1900 West Van
15 Buren and then on Monday, May 2nd at noon at the
16 Alton Village Hall, 101 East 3rd Street, Alton,
17 Illinois.

18 If there's no further testimony or
19 anything anybody wants to say, the Senate
20 Redistricting Committee is hereby adjourned.

21 (Which were all the
22 proceedings had.)

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1 the Illinois State Senate and will be made available
2 to the public through the Illinois General Assembly
3 Website after approval by the members of the Illinois
4 State Senate Redistricting Committee. Any
5 reproduction or redistribution of this material in
6 electronic or written form is expressly prohibited by
7 law.***

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1 STATE OF ILLINOIS)
) SS:
2 COUNTY OF WILL)

3 Tracy L. Overocker, being first duly sworn on
4 oath, says that she is a Certified Shorthand
5 Reporter, that she reported in shorthand the
6 proceedings given at the taking of said public
7 hearing, and that the foregoing is a true and correct
8 transcript of her shorthand notes so taken as
9 aforesaid and contains all the proceedings given at
10 said public hearing.

11

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Certified Shorthand Reporter
15 No. 084-004439

16

17

Subscribed and sworn to
before me this ___ day
18 of _____ 2011.

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Notary Public

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