

PUBLIC HEARING
AD HOC REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE

held at the Richmond County Board of Education,
864 Broad Street, Augusta, Georgia,
on the 13th day of October, 2011,
commencing at approximately 6:00 p.m.

JUNE S. O'CONNOR
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APPEARANCES

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Mr. Alvin Mason, Chairman
Richmond County Commissioner, District 4

Mr. Jack Padgett, Vice Chairman
School Board Commissioner, District 6

Mr. Wayne Howard
Representative, House District 121

Mr. Quincy Murphy
Representative, House District 120

Mr. Bill Lockett
Richmond County Commissioner, District 5

Ms. Venus Cain
School Board Commissioner, District 9

ALSO PRESENT

Ms. Lynn Bailey
Executive Director, Richmond County Board of Elections

Ms. Linda Meggers
Redistricting Consultant

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AGENDA

1. Call Meeting to Order
2. Statement of Purpose of Meeting - Chairman, Alvin Mason
3. Introduction of Committee Members - Chairman, Alvin Mason
4. Explanation of Meeting Format and Resources
5. Introduction of Linda Meggers, Redistricting Consultant - Chairman,
Alvin Mason
6. Presentation of the Initial Draft of Plan 1 - Linda Meggers
7. Public Comments
8. Adjourn

1 PROCEEDINGS

2 MR. MASON: Good evening. First of all we would like
3 to thank each and every one of you for coming out to this
4 public hearing here tonight. I'm Commissioner Mason, I am
5 the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Redistricting Committee, and
6 it's a pleasure to have those that saw fit to come out
7 tonight and be a part of this public hearing process.

8 The purpose of our meeting here tonight is to give
9 you a look. Each one of you should have had an
10 opportunity to grab a map and maybe there is some other
11 documents on the outside out there. If you have not,
12 please do so or I think maybe Mtesa is going to get some
13 of that, but there are little small maps on the outside
14 that will give you an idea of what it is that we're going
15 through here tonight. Also, tonight will be a feedback --
16 well, actually there will be suggestions from the
17 audience. This is a public hearing so this is the
18 opportunity for you, any one of you, to give any type of
19 input that you would have on this process as we go through
20 it.

21 Before I go any further though, I would like to
22 introduce our committee members, and to my right we have
23 Ms. Venus Cain, who is the District -- Super District 9
24 School Board Representative for Richmond County. And we
25 also have to my right Mr. Bill Lockett. He is the

1 Commissioner for District 5, and he's also a member of
2 this committee. And to my left, we have our State
3 Representative, Mr. Quincy Murphy. And we also have the
4 head of the State Delegation and Representative, Mr. Wayne
5 Howard. And those are our committee members that are in
6 attendance for tonight. We appreciate any elected
7 officials that may have come out tonight and each and
8 every one of you that have come out to be a part of this
9 process.

10 Let me kind of explain the meeting format that we are
11 going to go through here tonight. If you have a comment,
12 concern, or issue, we ask that you come up to the mike on
13 either side, right or left. Make sure that you state your
14 name because this is a recorded meeting and we do have a
15 court reporter to my left -- a court recorder to my left,
16 who will record all of this data that we'll receive from
17 you tonight. And we'll have a future meeting of this
18 committee where we will look to try to see if it's
19 feasible to input some of the things that may have been
20 said. I do want to make you aware that we are under the
21 guidelines of criteria and priorities that are already set
22 that we must follow. So if there is a suggestion, an
23 idea, or a concern that does not meet the criteria that we
24 are bound to go by, then, of course, we cannot input that;
25 but we will take that down for record and it will be a

1 part of the record that will move on through the --
2 through the steps in this process, which will eventually
3 end up at the Department of Justice to make sure that
4 we've done what is right and to make sure that we've
5 included the public. This is the first of three public
6 hearings. We will also have another one, I believe it is
7 next Tuesday.

8 MS. BAILEY: Monday.

9 MR. MASON: Monday at Pine Hill Middle School or is
10 it elementary?

11 MS. BAILEY: Middle.

12 MR. MASON: The middle school. That's out in the
13 south Augusta, Hephzibah area; and then our next one after
14 that is --

15 MS. BAILEY: Thursday.

16 MR. MASON: -- Thursday, and I believe that's at Sue
17 Reynolds Elementary, and that's on the west -- western
18 portion of the county. And you're welcome to come to any
19 one or all of the public hearings that we have. Those
20 will be the three public hearings that we will have to
21 give you an opportunity to speak to whatever issue or
22 concern that you may have in terms of redistricting. So
23 do understand that this is not an opportunity for debate
24 or feedback from the committee. We're basically here to
25 hear from you and also to hear from Ms. Linda Meggers, who

1 I will bring forth here in just a second.

2 We're glad to have District 6 School Board
3 Representative Jack Padgett, and he's also the Vice Chair
4 of this Ad Hoc Redistricting Committee. We're glad to
5 have him aboard as well.

6 So again, we have mikes to the right and we have
7 mikes to the left at the podium there, and you would feel
8 free to use those for those who want to have an active
9 voice in this particular process. Ensure that you state
10 your name for the record so that we can have it, and then
11 I think we'll be in order.

12 Does any of the committee members have anything to
13 add at this particular point?

14 (No response.)

15 MR. MASON: No. Okay, at this point then what we
16 will do is we'll bring forth our redistricting
17 extraordinaire. I don't know what terms and names to use
18 for her, but she is well versed and well experienced in
19 this process. In fact, she was brought out of retirement
20 to help, not only us, but several other counties around
21 the state to make this happen. She is renownly known as
22 the redistricting guru for the state and has a great
23 amount of expertise in this particular area and has done a
24 fantastic job thus far in putting together the maps as you
25 will see. So I will introduce to some and present to

1 others our consultant for redistricting, Ms. Linda
2 Meggers.

3 MS. MEGGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good evening,
4 everybody.

5 What I'd like to do to begin with is to give you some
6 background, a little bit about why we're here. Most of
7 you know, but to give you some of the legal background and
8 then the issues, et cetera, and to walk you through where
9 -- what we've done up to this point where the committee
10 stands.

11 Everybody knows that after each decennial census
12 that, you know, everybody takes a look at these and to see
13 about equal population. But behind that, a little bit of
14 a legal thing is that we all know that congressional house
15 and senate have to be done and that's come over a series.
16 Congressional has always been done, that's the one
17 constitutional reason that they take the census is for
18 allocation of congressional seats among all of the states.
19 Over the years, beginning particularly in the '60s, they
20 began to apply this idea of one-person, one-vote to all
21 districts, the legislative districts, and then on down the
22 line to local government, whether it be a commission, a
23 school board, a city council. If you lived in Bibb
24 County, your water and sewer districts would have to be
25 redone because they are -- have district lines drawn and

1 the members from those districts are elected by the
2 population within that. So the court said that one
3 person's vote should count about the same as another
4 person's vote. And if a district gets too much out of
5 alignment from that idea, for example, it was one
6 jurisdiction I did this summer where the district was 40
7 percent short in population. Well, that gives that
8 district a whole lot more power than that district that
9 was over by 30 percent. So they're saying, you know,
10 after the decennial census we have to take a look at the
11 numbers to see where we stand, and if the districts need
12 to be adjusted then that has to be done. The question
13 that you could ask me next then was okay, this -- you say
14 one-person, one-vote equal protection, equal votes, does
15 that mean that every district has to be the same number of
16 people. You know, because we all understand that the
17 average or ideal size is Richmond County divided by
18 however many districts, the eight districts. And that
19 gives you your average district size now, which is going
20 to be 25,069. Does it have to be right at that 25,069?
21 Well, the courts have said for congress, yes.

22 They have to have zero deviation, and the reason they
23 have said this is that first of all, those districts are
24 very, very large and a tenth of a percent of a
25 congressional district is still a lot of people. And

1 they're saying also, you know, we have a formula that we
2 have applied for congressional redistricting that makes
3 the congressional seats throughout the country as equal --
4 you know, so that a district in Georgia is about the same
5 size as a congressional district in West Virginia or the
6 state of Washington. If we allow a lot of deviation among
7 the states, that's really going to get out of hand and
8 that won't be the case.

9 But when we look at the local, we're going to allow
10 you a little larger deviation, and the court's had -- have
11 come up with a standard of plus five percent over that
12 25,000 or five percent below that. And they gave these
13 reasons for doing so. They said, first of all, you have
14 to deal with the census geography, a census block.

15 Now, a lot of us think when we say a block, we have
16 in our mind this neat little square or rectangle or
17 something that's bound by your streets and everybody knows
18 what that block looks like. In the cities that's pretty
19 much the same, that concept of a block applies. But once
20 you get out into the subdivisions and the more rural parts
21 of an area, it's any area that you can bound on all the
22 sides by a visible ground feature. So they're saying, you
23 know, you have some limitations. In the smaller, the
24 average district size, you can pick up a census block that
25 may have four or five thousand people in it if it has a

1 couple of big subdivisions or if it has a big housing
2 development or big apartment complexes or something like
3 this.

4 So they said, okay, you've got to deal with the
5 census so we need to give you a little leeway there. But
6 you also may want to follow some other good redistricting
7 principals as you're redrawing your lines. You may want
8 to stick with your voting precinct lines to save
9 confusion, to save -- to make it easier to tell someone
10 where they vote. You might want to, let's say that if we
11 have to divide a voting precinct, you may want to be able
12 to stay on a very major thoroughfare that everybody knows
13 which side of that road they live on and not go meandering
14 through a neighborhood.

15 So you may want to go a little bit larger deviation
16 than zero to keep your incumbents in place. So they're
17 saying there's a lot of good redistricting principles that
18 you might want to follow and go a little bit larger than
19 the zero deviation. So they have given us that leeway.

20 The second legal requirement is just as important and
21 it came along just about the same time. You had the early
22 '60s, you had all the one-person, one-vote cases; 1964,
23 '65, you had the Voting Rights Act, and that has given us
24 a -- that's much more complicated and has given us a lot
25 more case law to follow, but that's the other legal

1 requirement for redistricting. And what we're doing is a
2 southern state, that the whole state, the Voting Rights
3 Act applies to all of Georgia or all of Alabama or all of
4 Mississippi, and the part that we're particularly
5 interested in tonight is that -- the Section 5. It says
6 that any time we make any kind of a change that affects
7 elections, before we can implement that change, put it
8 into effect, it has to be precleared with the United
9 States Department of Justice to be sure that it has no
10 negative effects on African American voting strength. So
11 whatever we go into, we need to come out with at least
12 that or better, and if not -- and sometimes it's not
13 possible, there's been changes in demographics where
14 people live, they've moved. Then if you can't do that,
15 then you have to be able to explain to them why the plan
16 you came out with is not quite as good as the plan that
17 was current right now. So that's Section 5 of review and
18 it's -- they're looking for non-retrogression is the
19 technical term. Redistricting, you know, in order for us
20 experts to earn our money, we have to have our own set of
21 jargon to make it really sound good, but what they're
22 saying for non-retrogression is that your plan that you
23 draw should be about the same or better than what you have
24 presently when you -- after you equalize the population.
25 So those are the two legal concepts.

1 The other part of the Voting Rights Act that applies
2 is Section 2 which says the plan cannot have the effect
3 nor the purpose of diluting minority voting rights. That
4 is a separate section and it really doesn't apply to
5 Section 5 review pretty much. That's supposed to be a
6 separate issue, but it all kind of gets rolled in and we
7 all -- we have to think about that as we go through and
8 draw the new lines. So that's what we were looking at as
9 we started to review the current plan.

10 Now, the first thing that we -- that I did before I
11 ever met with the committee was to take the current plan
12 and apply the 2010 census numbers to that plan to see
13 where they stood. District 1 was the district that was --
14 had the biggest shortfall as far as population, it was
15 short almost 17 percent in population. The next district
16 that had the biggest shortfall as far as population was
17 District 2, and it was short about 11 percent. Then on
18 the plus side, the biggest plus we had was in District 3,
19 it had grown to -- it was almost a -- it was a plus 19
20 percent. And then District 4 was the next biggest minus
21 at almost a minus 13 percent. Six -- let's see, 5, 6, 7,
22 8, those next ones were all closer to being close to 5
23 percent; but it was those first four that had the biggest
24 shortfalls that we were going to have to adjust. So when
25 we say a plus five or a minus five, the court said a plus

1 or minus five or overall ten; and when you hear that
2 terminology it means the court said take your biggest
3 minus and your biggest plus and add them together and it
4 shouldn't be bigger than ten. Well, in this case you have
5 an overall deviation for your districts right at 36
6 percent. So we knew we had to do some adjustment for that
7 reason. Now, after the first meeting of the committee
8 what they asked me to do was to come up with a working
9 proposal, just a beginning point for discussion, which is
10 what you're going to be looking at tonight. And the --
11 the -- kind of the guidelines they gave me were, first of
12 all, maintain cores of the existing district, try to pay
13 attention to precinct lines as a beginning part of not
14 splitting too many of those, keeping the incumbents in
15 place, putting it back in line for one-person, one-vote,
16 complying with the Voting Rights Act. That was about it.

17 Now, one question before I go on, many of you are
18 going to ask well, legally do I have to pay attention to
19 incumbency. In Georgia state law, the only incumbents
20 that have to be protected going forward are those whose
21 term is not over in 2012, because this is when this plan
22 goes into effect is with the 2012 election cycle. If
23 you've got -- you've got staggered terms and if you have
24 somebody that's -- his term -- his or her term is not up
25 until 2014, well, then we've got to leave them in the

1 district where they can run. We cannot shorten that term.
2 Otherwise, you know, we don't have to legally protect the
3 incumbents; but once you protect a couple of them, it's
4 easier to go through and try to keep the ones in the
5 existing district, which is what I was trying to do. Then
6 as we get through, if there's something that has to be
7 done that disturbed some of that, then that is a choice
8 that the committee can make in their studies.

9 So what we did was come up with a working plan. And
10 I want to go a little bit district by district and up here
11 on the screen you'll see. Now, the color shaded areas are
12 the new proposed working plan. These heavy black lines
13 that you see are the existing boundaries, so that you can
14 very quickly see where I made a change by, for example,
15 this one down here for District 6, the yellow is the new
16 proposed. It was short of population. I picked up this
17 precinct down here so you can see that it went outside
18 this black line.

19 So let's go in and just very quickly, District 1 is
20 -- remember, is the one that is the most short in
21 population. Even though it has this dogleg that comes
22 down toward the airport, that is not much population. It
23 is basically what I call a downtown Augusta district. So
24 I wanted to keep the core of that district and I went in
25 and picked up these additional precincts to take care of

1 the population for District 1. District 1 now, under this
2 proposed plan, is a minus 2.29 percent; and at the
3 beginning it was 66 percent total black, and under this
4 one it's right at 65 percent total black. So it's not
5 much of a change.

6 District 2, remember, was the one that was the next
7 shortest one, and I made it a little shorter because I had
8 to borrow population from it to pick up the shortfall from
9 1. So we went out here and picked up this area and these
10 -- it picked up these three precincts here. So it took
11 this population from District 5, which was not that far
12 from being off. And this is part of what you see is a
13 domino effect. District 5 was pretty much going to be
14 okay, but it sits there in the middle and once you start
15 fixing one district and you take, it keeps like dominos
16 start falling; and it affects more and more of the
17 districts in order to come around and do the adjustment
18 for everything. So this is 2.

19 MR. MASON: Linda.

20 MS. MEGGERS: Yes.

21 MR. MASON: Before you go on if -- I think it would
22 be kind of helpful for some of the ones out in the
23 audience, you mentioned about percentages, but maybe if
24 you gave a real number in terms of District 1 was short --

25 MS. MEGGERS: Okay.

1 MR. MASON: -- 3,200 or 4,200 or whatever. That -- I
2 think that's --

3 MS. MEGGERS: That would be helpful.

4 MR. MASON: -- going to help some of the ones out in
5 the audience. We know what you're talking about, but they
6 haven't --

7 MS. MEGGERS: They don't have the sheet in front of
8 them.

9 MR. MASON: -- been a part of that. Thank you.

10 MS. MEGGERS: Okay. District 1, as we were starting
11 I said was minus 17 percent, but that was 4,100 people,
12 4,168, to be precise, that I had to find to make up that.
13 Now, obviously, I didn't bring in quite that much because
14 I still left it at a minus 2.29, but it's within that
15 allowable five percent, and it was with whole precincts.
16 To probably get it any smaller than that, I would have to
17 split a precinct. So that's what we moved for District 1.

18 District 2, when we began I said was a minus 11
19 percent. That was a minus of 2,700 people in round
20 numbers. And then I had made it a little shorter than
21 that when I began because I had taken these two precincts.
22 So that was 2.

23 District 3, remember, is your biggest plus. This
24 district stretches from here all the way out across Bobby
25 Jones along the Columbia line to Fort -- Fort Gordon, and

1 it was -- as we started it was over by 4,840 people, which
2 was a plus almost 20 percent. So this, when I dropped off
3 this precinct here, is a very large precinct and in this
4 working plan I -- this one precinct has about 8,000 people
5 in it; but we took a portion of that, and I think that is
6 -- I'm going to zoom in and give you some streets here.
7 So that's Belair Road and then it becomes, I think it's --
8 I can't remember.

9 MS. BAILEY: That's Wrights --

10 MS. MEGGARS: Wrightsboro.

11 MS. BAILEY: Wrightsboro Road to Belair Road and then
12 down Dyes Parkway towards Fort Gordon.

13 MS. MEGGERS: Yeah. So 5 had given up these two -- I
14 mean, yeah. Five had given up these two precincts to help
15 the shortfall of population in District 2. District 3 was
16 very much over in population and so it got the whole
17 shortfall -- overage from 3 went into 5 on this working
18 plan.

19 District 4, to begin with, was a plus almost 13
20 percent, which was 3,200 people, so it was over to begin
21 with; and we just took this one precinct away from that
22 and into 5. So that was -- the fix for 4 was just one
23 precinct.

24 Then you can see 4 and 5, we've talked about that.
25 Six down here, you kind of saw that as we began. District

1 6 was short by 7.87 percent, which was 2,000 people. I
2 picked up this one precinct here from District 8. And it
3 was a perfect balance because District 8 was over by the
4 same amount that District 6 was short. District 6 was
5 over by 1,900 people, which was a plus 7.63 percent, so
6 that balanced both of those when I just moved that one
7 precinct. Eight.

8 Let me see if there's one other I missed. Okay, 7.
9 Now, District 7 is the one -- it sits up here in the
10 corner, and it was the one district that from a deviation
11 standpoint that did not have to be touched in that it was
12 within the 5 percent. It was -- it was a plus 2.41. When
13 we first began the committee asked me to keep the
14 districts within two percent deviation, and this is one
15 where I have come back and asked for a little bit of
16 guidance. I could take this one area out here across
17 Bobby Jones, this little triangle along the Columbia
18 County line that would balance it; but then it would be
19 landlocked and no growth because it can't go into Columbia
20 County, it can't go across the Savannah River, et cetera.
21 So this is an area of concern that the committee is still
22 working on; but -- so right now District 7, on the working
23 plan, is exactly as it is presently as the current
24 district lines.

25 Okay. Does that pretty much cover it, Mr. Chairman?

1 MR. MASON: If you could just give us the -- because
2 you talk about retrogression, if you could give us the
3 numbers of African American votes of each district before
4 and then where we ended up afterwards, I think that'll
5 kind of help as well.

6 MS. MEGGERS: Okay. Let me do two things. Let me
7 talk about the deviation range now. Under this plan,
8 remember, I told you that the other one ranged from a
9 minus 16.61 percent to a plus 19.31, which was overall 36
10 percent. Now, this working plan is a minus 2.29, is the
11 smallest one, and the largest one is a plus 2.41, which is
12 an overall 4.69, half -- less than half of what is allowed
13 by the courts. From the minority standpoint, really from
14 the idea of incumbency, the cores of districts, et cetera,
15 and basically with the precincts within the existing
16 districts, this is what I call a maintenance plan. I have
17 maintained exactly what is on the ground today. So for
18 District 1 in the beginning under the current plan, that
19 district is now 64.89 total black. Under this proposed
20 plan, it goes to 66.41. District 2 was originally 77
21 percent total black, under this one it is 75 percent total
22 black. Under District 3, the district on the ground
23 today, is 42 percent total black, under the proposed
24 working plan it is 38 percent. Under District 4,
25 presently it is 78.76, and on the working plan it's 78.52,

1 just almost exactly the same. District 5 currently is
2 75.78, and under the proposed working plan it is 77
3 percent. District 6 currently is 52.97, and under the
4 working proposal it is 52.99, two hundredths of a percent
5 difference. District 7, as we were talking about, remains
6 unchanged at 29 percent total black. And District 8
7 presently is 32.94, and under the working proposal it is
8 31.51. So essentially all of those numbers are maintained
9 within a percentage point of what they presently are.

10 MR. MURPHY: Mr. Chairman.

11 MR. MASON: Yes.

12 MR. MURPHY: This probably should be directed to
13 Lynn, but do you have the statistics from ten years ago in
14 terms of the percentages for each one of these districts?
15 We're working from the census report here; am I correct?

16 MS. BAILEY: We are. We are. The population summary
17 report in your notebook that you received initially under
18 Tab F, it gives the existing districts with the new census
19 figures applied to the existing districts.

20 MR. MURPHY: All right.

21 MS. BAILEY: Is that what you were asking for?

22 MR. MURPHY: No, no, no. I was interested to compare
23 the percentages --

24 MS. BAILEY: From ten year --

25 MR. MURPHY: -- from ten years ago.

1 MS. BAILEY: I do have that information. I don't
2 have it with me.

3 MS. MEGGERS: I have it.

4 MR. MASON: Very good.

5 MS. MEGGERS: In 2002, when the lines were redrawn,
6 District 1 is -- result of that plan was -- let me see --
7 was 60.13 percent total black, and then it had moved to
8 64.89 with the 2010 census. District 2 had been 67.80
9 when it was drawn and had moved to 77.02 with the new
10 census. District 3 had been 28.60, and had increased to
11 42.30. District 4 had been 73 and a half, and had
12 increased somewhat to 78.76. District 5 had been 65.38 in
13 2002, and under -- by 2010 census it had increased to
14 75.78. District 6 originally in 2002 had been 36.39
15 percent total black.

16 MS. CAIN: What was that again?

17 MS. MEGGERS: District 6 in 2002 was 36.39 and had
18 increased to 52.97. And District 7 had been 18.82 and is
19 now 29.07. And District 8 had been 23.93, and had
20 increased slightly up to 32.94.

21 MR. MURPHY: Thank you.

22 MR. MASON: Are there any questions at this point
23 from the public over anything that she's gone over?
24 Anyone have any questions or comments in reference to the
25 information that's been put out thus far? Please come up

1 to either the right or left mike if you have a comment and
2 we'll recognize you. We ask that you state your name for
3 the record and then go ahead, Doc.

4 DR. CHARLES SMITH: Good evening, Brother Chairman
5 and committee and to the audience. I'm Dr. Charles Smith,
6 President of the Augusta branch NAACP. I just have one
7 question at this juncture. Based on losses and numbers
8 from various districts, what procedure do you use to close
9 the gap or to balance out those losses based on trying to
10 stay within that two percents -- two percent margin? Say
11 for instance, I saw you blow up the section, I think,
12 District 2 and then you pulled from District 5. What
13 technique do you use to determine what section of a
14 district to pull from to balance out getting to that two
15 percent or even when there's a loss? How do you
16 contemplate or what's your mechanism for adjusting that to
17 keep that within the framework of the law that's
18 constitutional that must be reviewed by the U.S. Justice
19 Department, if I'm in order or if that's an appropriate
20 question?

21 MS. MEGGERS: It is appropriate. I guess it's like a
22 ball of string that you start pulling the string -- a ball
23 and you have a piece of string that's loose and you start
24 pulling. In like for District 1, I started with it
25 because it had the biggest shortfall in population, and I

1 tried to think of, you know, where -- first of all, I was
2 trying to use whole precincts as a beginning point and
3 also something that was close to the core of the present
4 district that would be, I thought, most like the
5 population that was already in District 1 to add to it.
6 So that was the beginning point, and in so doing District
7 2 was also short; but I made it even shorter, but I had to
8 borrow from someplace. So that was the beginning point,
9 and then you just start moving out a little bit at a time
10 trying to, in the best that I knew, and I don't know
11 everything about Augusta Richmond, you know, and the
12 committee will pull me up short and say at the next
13 working meeting after they listen to you and say, okay,
14 these are some areas where, you know, it needs to be
15 refined and some of these areas need to be shifted back
16 and another area found. But I tried to then pick
17 precincts that I thought were more like the ones that were
18 already there to move into the districts that were
19 shortfall. And then sometimes just by the shapes of the
20 districts and where they are, sometimes there's not a lot
21 of choices that you can make as to where you pull from.
22 One of the things that is very limiting in doing Richmond
23 Augusta is you have Fort Gordon. Fort Gordon is a very
24 important part of this community. I think that it would
25 be very, very difficult if somebody were to open the paper

1 tomorrow and find out that Fort Gordon was going to go
2 away. That would be horrible; but on the other hand, even
3 though they are a very important part, so many of them do
4 not vote. They come and go, they're transient because
5 they're military so they are here for a period of time and
6 they move on. So if you put all of those into one
7 commission or school board district or whatever, you put a
8 lot of population in there, but it's a nonvoting
9 population. It's not to say that they don't have needs,
10 that they aren't part of the community, but they're a
11 nonvoting community. So I always try to keep Fort Gordon
12 disbursed among two or three districts so that no one
13 district -- it would almost be unfair for one commissioner
14 or one school board member to have only four or five
15 thousand voters because they had Fort Gordon where another
16 district had fifteen or sixteen thousand voters. So those
17 are the kinds of things that I'm constantly keeping in
18 mind as I'm shifting. And then as I said, this is a
19 working plan, a working proposal to start from. I've
20 learned that a picture is worth a thousand words, so if
21 you do something and you put it out there and these -- the
22 committee members look at that; they're going to
23 immediately say, oh, well, that was a good move or that's
24 not a good move, and then we'll be working on it, they'll
25 work on to refine that and perfect it.

1 DR. CHARLES SMITH: Thank you, and the next question
2 --

3 MR. MASON: Dr. Smith, hold on. Let me add something
4 to that because it will help you understand also, and
5 Linda, you can expand on this if you want to. There is
6 some criteria that binds us when we're pulling
7 individuals. In other words, a district must be
8 contiguous to another district. District 1, for instance,
9 had to gain some 4,000, District 4 had to lose some 3,000,
10 almost 4,000, but District 1 does not touch District 4.
11 So you can't pull from District 4 to go into District 1
12 because it does not touch each other. So that's one of
13 the criteria. It touched 3, but 3 did not have the
14 demographics necessary to pull into 1, otherwise you would
15 have replaced or retrogressed, which is what she's talking
16 about, by putting a different racial group into 1 and it
17 would have changed the deviation more than the 2 percent.
18 So 2 was the very likely one and it touches 8, but 8 has a
19 lot of land, but it does not have a lot of population. So
20 the only thing that could be done in that particular case
21 was to pull from 2 because it had like individuals in 2
22 and that's how the domino effect came. So I thought it
23 was important to note that being contiguous is one of the
24 things that we had to look at as we're -- started pulling
25 from one district or another. Even though District 3 had

1 to lose 4,000 and they touch 1, we couldn't pull all 4,000
2 from 3 because the demographics didn't match up.

3 DR. CHARLES SMITH: That's exactly what we wanted to
4 find out tonight, what was the mechanism to make those
5 adjustments.

6 And the final question at this juncture: Once all
7 hearings are held and made public and this committee
8 submits a recommendation to the U.S. Justice Department,
9 as you know, there are three bodies that will be watching
10 this process, the NAACP, the Democratic Party as well, we
11 just wanted to make sure that once these lines are drawn,
12 will the statistical data from the ten-year census be
13 correlated into where we are now with the current census
14 to make sure that there's a balance and the whole process
15 is fair.

16 MS. MEGGERS: Once the committee, the Ad Hoc
17 Committee, finishes -- Mr. Chairman, do you want to
18 answer?

19 MR. MASON: No, go right ahead.

20 MS. MEGGERS: Once the Ad Hoc Committee completes
21 their work and they come up with a plan that they want to
22 recommend to each of the boards, the school board and the
23 board of commissioners, those two boards will then have a
24 chance to look at it and then adopt that plan or, I guess,
25 maybe modify it. I'm not sure what -- what the decision

1 will be on that, but that's not the end of the process.
2 Then it goes to the legislature. That's one of reasons
3 that it's -- the key component of the Ad Hoc Committee is
4 your legislative component. It goes to Atlanta in January
5 and it has to be passed as a local bill, it has to be
6 signed by the Governor. And once that bill is signed,
7 then it comes back here and the county attorneys and the
8 school board attorneys submit that to justice. As part of
9 that submission process at justice, we send the maps of
10 the current districts, we send the numbers as they were in
11 2002 when we adopted the plan, we send the 2010 census
12 numbers for that plan. And then we send the numbers, the
13 stat sheets and the maps for all of the proposed plan
14 including the one that's adopted so that the Justice
15 Department will have all of that data as they do their
16 analysis. We also send an electronic copy to Justice
17 Department. They pull that into their computers and so
18 that they can do analysis and to be sure what has got
19 shifted and why and to thoroughly study it. And of
20 course, they're open for comment.

21 DR. CHARLES SMITH: Thank you, ma'am, and thank you,
22 Mr. Chairman, and thank you, committee.

23 MA. MASON: Thank you, Dr. Smith.

24 MR. BILL FORNOY: Bill Fornoy. And my question is:
25 What percentage of the total population does African

1 Americans makeup in Richmond County and does the division
2 in the different districts reflect that number? What I
3 mean, if minorities make up 60 percent of the population,
4 then will 60 percent of the district be African American?

5 MS. MEGGERS: Okay. Under the 2010 census, Richmond
6 County is -- for total black population is 55.84 percent,
7 slightly over 50 percent. It's the majority. Richmond
8 Augusta is now majority African American in population.
9 Out of that number is the voter age population, the total
10 African American voter age population in Augusta Richmond
11 is 52 percent. So it's just slightly more than half.
12 Now, out of that you've got one, two, three, four, five,
13 six -- six out of twelve -- no, six out of ten of majority
14 black seats. When I say that, it doesn't particularly
15 have to have an African American sitting at the board; but
16 African Americans control the vote and decide who is going
17 to be elected from that district because they're a strong
18 majority in each of the districts -- those six districts.
19 So they have slightly over half of the population, but
20 they have a little bit more than that as far as
21 districting is concerned. So they are more than fairly
22 represented in the plan as it is on the ground today and
23 in the working proposal.

24 MR. MASON: Thank you, Mr. Forno. Is there any
25 other questions from anyone in the audience at this time?

1 All right, Ms. Mtesa.

2 MS. MTESA WRIGHT: Good evening. Mtesa Wright,
3 Second Vice Chair of Democratic Party of Richmond County.
4 I just want to applaud the work that you guys have done,
5 but I do have a concern I just want to clarify. For
6 District 3, you said the census population was 44 percent,
7 but the district population for the commission line will
8 be 37. Is that what I heard?

9 MS. MEGGERS: Yes.

10 MS. MTESA WRIGHT: So out of all of them, there's
11 probably not much you can do, but most of them were within
12 a zero point something percent, but that one's got the
13 biggest deviation of about five or six points.

14 MS. MEGGERS: Right.

15 MS. MTESA WRIGHT: So it's not -- is there anything
16 there to tweak that a little bit so it's closer in line
17 with the census population? I guess that's something for
18 the board to consider.

19 MS. MEGGERS: That's --

20 MR. MASON: Can we clarify the disparity in the
21 percentage because I think I wrote down earlier it was 42
22 and it went down to 38. So I just want to make sure that
23 we're --

24 MS. MTESA WRIGHT: I have 44 to 37, but that's what I
25 was trying to clarify.

1 MR. MASON: Still, it's bigger than any of the
2 others.

3 MS. MTESA WRIGHT: It's still bigger than the others.

4 MS. MEGGERS: It went from 42.30 to 37.83, and so
5 that's -- yes, so -- but it's also the district that had
6 the greatest --

7 MS MTESA WRIGHT: Over.

8 MS. MEGGERS: Yes. Nineteen percent. So that went
9 about the shifting. Now, this Justice Department looks
10 more particularly at the districts that are majority
11 minority. This is an influence district and it's -- it's
12 important, but in -- this is -- you know, it's not over
13 45, it's not 48 or anything like that. We're still
14 keeping it in that range of a very strong influence
15 district, and you know, it will probably -- I don't know
16 the demographics of how things are going to change in
17 this next ten years because of the economic situation.
18 There's not as much movement as far as people moving and
19 buying houses as there has been in the last ten years.
20 But we can take a look at it, but from a -- from a
21 non-retrogression standpoint, this is still a very strong
22 district and within the acceptable --

23 MS. MTESA WRIGHT: Range.

24 MS. MEGGERS: Yes. Also, I need to correct myself.
25 When Mr. Murphy asked me about the 2002 numbers, I read

1 you the column from black voter age population rather than
2 the total black, so I need to correct myself there.

3 MS. MTESA WRIGHT: Well, before you go on.

4 MS. MEGGERS: Yes, ma'am, I'm sorry.

5 MS. MTESA WRIGHT: This is for our school board, but
6 -- so it might be too early to answer this question; but
7 when the lines change for the school, you know,
8 redistricting, the schools go with the school board lines,
9 so does that mean if you're in a new school board district
10 that you might be in a new school? I was just trying to
11 see how that works.

12 MS. CAIN: No.

13 MS. MTESA WRIGHT: Okay.

14 MS. CAIN: No.

15 MS. MTESA WRIGHT: So your school -- so where your
16 district lines are for what school you attend is different
17 from --

18 MR. PADGETT: District lines and -- district election
19 lines have no bearing on school district lines.

20 MS. MTESA WRIGHT: Okay. That's a separate process.

21 MR. PADGETT: They have to be done based on
22 population.

23 MS. MTESA WRIGHT: Thank you.

24 MR. MASON: And Ms. Wright, that question that you
25 bring up has been recorded and annotated as a concern and

1 an issue, and that's something that we will take a look at
2 at our next committee meeting in terms of seeing if there
3 is anything that we can do to -- within our guidelines to
4 see if we can bring that a little bit more closer like the
5 rest of them are without taking away necessarily from the
6 rest of them. So we'll take that definitely into
7 consideration.

8 MS. MTESA WRIGHT: Thank you.

9 MS. MEGGERS: All right. Let me correct myself on
10 those numbers for Mr. Murphy. In 2002, District 1 total
11 black was 65.39, it was 66.41 when the census came out --
12 I mean, 64.89 when the census came out, and the proposed
13 working plan has it at 66.41. District 2 in 2002, was
14 71.55 total, it had moved to 77.02 with the new census,
15 and the working plan has 74.82. District 3 had been 30.33
16 total, it had moved to 42.30, and the working plan has it
17 at 37.83. District 4 had been at 75.39, it had moved to
18 78.76, and is 78.52 under the working plan. District 5
19 had been 69.71, it had moved to 75.78 -- yeah, 75.78, and
20 it's 77.03 on the working plan. District 6 had been
21 40.63, it was 52.97 under the new census, and the working
22 plan has it at 52.99. District 7 had been 20.53 total, it
23 had moved to 29.07 and remains there on the working plan.
24 And District 8 had been 25.38, it had moved to 32.94, and
25 is 31.51 under the working plan.

1 MR. MASON: Okay.

2 MS. BAILEY: Mr. Chair.

3 MR. MASON: Yes, ma'am.

4 MS. BAILEY: I just might add that I do have a copy
5 of that report, so I will get that scanned in and email it
6 to the committee members tomorrow so you'll have it for
7 your packet.

8 MR. MASON: Great. Thank you, Lynn, we appreciate
9 that.

10 MS. CAIN: Ms. Bailey, those numbers that she just
11 quoted off, where we started from, where we ended up and
12 where we're moving to, can you make sure the board get a
13 copy of that so we can ensure what we wrote down is
14 correct.

15 MS. BAILEY: Yes, I'll get that to you tomorrow.

16 MS. CAIN: Thank you.

17 MS. BAILEY: You're welcome.

18 MS. MASON: Mr. Sias.

19 MR. SAMMIE SIAS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My name
20 is Sammie Sias and to the Chairman and committee members,
21 thank you.

22 Mr. Chair, I just have a question for this evening.
23 You know our issue is with our neighborhood, Sand Ridge,
24 and we're talking about unifying Sand Ridge. We -- it is
25 our intention to make a presentation on -- at the Pine

1 Hill meeting, but I do want to know if I can get one piece
2 of information tonight that will assist us in our
3 presentation. And as you know, when y'all reviewed the
4 maps one of the considerations was to -- was District 807,
5 which is adjacent to our neighborhood. Can -- are we
6 allowed tonight to ask if what that percentage of Precinct
7 807 is added to District 4, what will those deviation
8 numbers be in the plus or minus column for District 8 and
9 District 4? Are we allowed to ask that?

10 MR. MASON: I think she could give that to you fairly
11 quickly if -- I think we did that. I don't think you were
12 here, but I think we -- Jack and I looked at that at our
13 last meeting.

14 Linda, you understand the request there, which
15 includes New Carlene, all of Sand Ridge?

16 MR. SAMMIE SIAS: I think it's 807, I believe.

17 MR. PADGETT: 803 is Fort Gordon.

18 MR. MASON: 803 is Fort Gordon; isn't it?

19 MR. PADGETT: Yes.

20 MS. MTESA WRIGHT: 807.

21 MR. MASON: 807, okay.

22 MS. MEGGERS: Okay. We're talking about this area in
23 here, taking --

24 MR. MASON: Do you see that circle?

25 MS. MEGGERS: We're talking about at the committee

1 meeting moving this section right here. Can you see where
2 the cursor is moving?

3 MR. MASON: Right. I remember when you highlighted
4 it, it took a big chunk. It was almost like 4,000 people,
5 if I wasn't mistaken.

6 MS. MEGGERS: Just go in -- and he needs to know how
7 many total people and what the makeup of that area is.

8 MR. MASON: Yes. And where that will put us,
9 deviation wise, if it was put into 4.

10 MS. MEGGERS: Okay. That area contains 1,014 people.
11 It would take District 4 to a plus 5.29 and bring District
12 8 down to a minus 3.53. So District 4 would be slightly
13 over the 5 percent. So the total number is 1,014 people
14 that would move from 8 to 4. Does that answer your
15 question?

16 MR. SAMMIE SIAS: Yes, ma'am. We'll still be pushing
17 for that, maybe there may be some adjustment could be made
18 or something there, but we'll still be pushing for that.
19 Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That answers my question.

20 MR. MASON: Yes. Mr. Padgett.

21 MR. PADGETT: And the numbers of the section, we're
22 looking at 803's population, 27 -- 2,288 and of that you
23 would only have 666 minority there; so that would really
24 change the percentage of votes, that district into a
25 non-supportive minority district.

1 MR. MASON: Right, exactly. Thank you.

2 MS. BAILEY: And just as an interesting note on
3 Precinct 803 just to give an idea of how things work, 803
4 is one of the Fort Gordon precincts, so we said how many
5 people population wise?

6 MR. PADGETT: 2,288.

7 MS. BAILEY: Well, and we have 71 people registered
8 to vote.

9 MR. MASON: And also we currently have a Fort Gordon
10 district under 4, I believe.

11 MS. BAILEY: And then we also have one under 3, and
12 if you look at those, 304, 402 and then 803, but you can
13 look at each of those precincts and see in terms of voter
14 registration the number is very low, but in terms of total
15 population the number is very high because the census
16 reports in excess of 10,000 people at Fort Gordon. But
17 yet we probably don't have more than two to three hundred
18 people total registered to vote from that area. So just
19 food for thought.

20 MR. PADGETT: And the numbers for 807, also that was
21 one of the precincts we were looking at. It is 2,314,
22 total black population 1,207, which is barely a little
23 over 50 percent, but total minority over 18 is only 831.

24 MR. MASON: Thank you, Mr. Padgett.

25 Are there any other questions, concerns, issues at

1 this particular time that we can get down on the record as
2 we move forward? Going once, twice.

3 (No response.)

4 Committee members have any other questions, concerns,
5 issues? Ms. Bailey.

6 MS. BAILEY: May I just say to the interested people,
7 particularly the public that's here, you -- if you're
8 interested in more details as far as statistics and maps
9 and whatnot, you may visit the Augusta, Georgia
10 government's main web site. It's augustaga.gov and right
11 in the middle of the screen there's a link built in for
12 local redistricting and there is a whole lot of
13 information out there, printable maps and et cetera that
14 are very easily accessed through that web site, so there's
15 some good information out there that you can look. Also,
16 at that web site there's an area for public comment and so
17 if you get to looking at things later and have something
18 you would like to say, you can send it through that
19 electronic mechanism as well.

20 MR. MASON: Great, thank you.

21 Ms. Meggers, I know that the last time we discussed
22 the situation that Mr. Sias has brought forward, I think
23 we also looked at moving that District 4's personnel to
24 District 8 versus District 8 to District 4 and maybe
25 that's something to look at, too. I think we looked at

1 that, and I think it took a bigger block or bigger chunk
2 out and really changed District 8 quite a bit when we took
3 -- what is the -- Jamestown is the precinct.

4 MS. BAILEY: 406.

5 MR. MASON: Is it 406, 405?

6 MS. BAILEY: 406.

7 MR. MASON: 406.

8 MS. MEGGERS: Actually the change that we were
9 looking at while ago is probably the one that might be the
10 most workable.

11 MR. MASON: Right. And I just wanted to put that out
12 there so that those that were concerned -- and if we could
13 go one way or the other, the workable way potentially
14 would be bringing it into 4 versus taking it out to 8 with
15 the type of numbers that we were looking at.

16 MS. MEGGERS: Is this -- if we went to District 8,
17 would we be talking about this area over in here? How
18 would you want to define the community? Oh, I think --
19 here's the issue for that one is that if we went the other
20 direction is contiguity. That's the bridge through -- for
21 the remainder of 4, so you -- it's not a numbers issue
22 from going the other direction, it's contiguity, so that
23 the only workable way was taking it from 8 into 4 and then
24 finding a way to adjust those numbers down. Let me show
25 you.

1 MR. MASON: Okay.

2 MS. MEGGERS: If we take this area right here, which
3 is the rest of that neighborhood or that community, as I
4 understand it, and move it into 8 then that -- that's our
5 -- a land bridge to keep the rest of 4 together, and we
6 have closed it off. I mean, you and I had a discussion in
7 --

8 MR. MASON: Right.

9 MS. MEGGERS: -- another area the other day about
10 contiguity, and so you have this area here and it comes
11 around. And if I take this area there's no way to get
12 these people connected with these people unless we do a
13 major restructuring of the rest of the plan, which is up
14 to the committee, but I mean, it's a major restructure.

15 MR. MASON: Understand, understand.

16 Yes, sir.

17 MR. WILLIAM GILIARD: It's William Giliard. I've got
18 a question in terms of your data sheet here, and I guess I
19 just for clarification for my -- I hear you were talking
20 about, let's say, District 8 and including Fort Gordon.
21 And we include Fort Gordon, you were saying that there
22 were probably what, 10,000 people out at Fort Gordon, but
23 only about --

24 MS. MEGGERS: Two to three hundred voters.

25 MR. WILLIAM GILIARD: -- two or three hundred voting

1 now. When you came up with your population total here,
2 which is we're talking about the 25,000 people, is that
3 including that 10,000 people?

4 MS. MEGGERS: Yes. When you take the total
5 population within Richmond County, everybody that's living
6 within Richmond County to get that total because they're
7 residents here and they're here; but when you start
8 juggling the districts what becomes a concern to me is
9 they're not registered at the rate that the remainder of
10 Augusta Richmond is. But they are a part of the total
11 population and they're a part of that average district
12 size.

13 MR. WILLIAM GILIARD: Okay. I guess in that, herein
14 lies the concern that I have, you know, because you now
15 have a district which is you're trying to balance them out
16 and come up with approximately 25,000 people and here is a
17 known factor, and I'm saying known from historical factor,
18 that in that district, even though you have 25,000 people,
19 there really -- and you're talking about the voting age
20 population is -- I think what's down here says 18 to 18
21 and a half thousand, you're really only talking about of
22 that population that you have here is that that population
23 really is only about 15,000; is that correct?

24 MS. MEGGERS: No. The population really --

25 MR. WILLIAM GILIARD: What I'm talking about -- no,

1 no, no, I'm talking about the population that actually
2 from a historical standpoint will register to vote in the
3 county.

4 MS. MEGGERS: At any given time though -- let's think
5 about it this way. Let's go back to 1965 and 1970, when
6 we were doing redistricting after the Voting Rights Act.
7 We did big majorities or whatever because we allowed for
8 the fact that at that time there were many African
9 Americans that were not registered to vote because they
10 had been kept from voting or had been intimidated and
11 didn't feel like it made a difference, and it's taken a
12 good while to get that voter registration up. Just -- if
13 we had done it just based on the number of voters, we
14 would never have gotten it. They would have not been
15 represented. Well, the U.S.D.O.J. and congress, if we
16 went into court, would say those people live here, they're
17 military, and at any given time -- let's say for school
18 board, this is one of the things that usually
19 traditionally get military folks really involved is let's
20 say they had a big school board issue and that they felt
21 like the schools out there around Fort Gordon were not
22 doing right or whatever. Let's just say that they were
23 sending their kids to those schools. They could get a big
24 registration drive, there's nothing to keep them from
25 registering to vote. They're there, they're potential

1 voters. It's just that right now they don't vote, but
2 they could at any given time. I don't think that we can
3 leave them out.

4 Now, there's a case to be made for leaving out prison
5 population. For example, if you're in Tatnall County in
6 Reidsville, but that is a different situation. Those
7 people don't have any voting rights while they are in
8 jail, and they are not from the area, et cetera, et
9 cetera. So those counties take their prison population
10 out from local redistricting. But I'm not sure we could
11 take the military out. That's something we'd have to
12 research.

13 MR. WILLIAM GILIARD: Well, it's something that I'm
14 really concerned about because, you know, when you really
15 look at this when you're talking about the balancing of
16 the district; I'm saying this is not anything where we
17 tell folk that you can't vote when we talk about the issue
18 when you're talking about the African American population
19 back during segregation time. This is an issue here by
20 choice.

21 MS. MEGGERS: But if we --

22 MR. WILLIAM GILIARD: And because it's by choice and
23 we know that most of those people, even if they're at Fort
24 Gordon, I'm saying because I'm proud military, too, most
25 of the time they have been registered in other states, you

1 know, and they voted in the other states. They haven't
2 been -- you know, they're just not nonvoting people, they
3 are people that vote elsewhere, and that's what we know.
4 I mean, that's historical. So -- but my concern is in
5 terms of your juggling in here, what do you do with that
6 population from that standpoint, if you're understanding
7 what I'm saying?

8 MS. MEGGERS: I understand what you're saying, sir.
9 I guess the way I have approached it is the -- is why I've
10 been pretty adamant of taking that population and
11 disbursing it among three commission districts, so that it
12 doesn't have a big impact on any one district. So it's
13 disbursed among three commissioner districts to alleviate
14 some of that effect of a large number of nonvoting
15 population.

16 MR. WILLIAM GILIARD: Okay. Because you're saying as
17 if you get a voting district down and it's so thinly
18 populated, sparsely populated -- that's sparsely populated
19 in terms of what you know that is actual at that time,
20 then that normally gives a -- an advantage to whoever is
21 the majority in terms of those that do register to vote
22 because of -- not circumstances that came to bear upon
23 them that they -- they'd have no control under -- over.

24 MS. MEGGERS: Right. And I think, you know -- and
25 the committee will have to decide what -- how they feel

1 about this, but I think one of the things that makes this
2 important is that they may choose not to vote here; but
3 they live here, they drive on your streets, they -- you
4 know, they -- they're affected by Richmond Augusta
5 policies. If we excluded them, they would have nobody to
6 speak for their concerns. So it's -- how -- it's a
7 dilemma.

8 MR. WILLIAM GILIARD: Well, I see it as --

9 MS. MEGGERS: And I see what you're saying.

10 MR. WILLIAM GILIARD: But I see it as an issue when
11 you start talking about unionization, that when you start
12 talking about those that would have been a body in unities
13 even if the person does not join, they still must be
14 represented by the union when the union vote for that
15 population.

16 MR. MASON: And I think one of the things that you've
17 articulated, Ms. Meggers, is the fact that it does touch
18 three districts, District 8, District 3 and District 4,
19 and one of the reasons why that you talk about not placing
20 that precinct into District 4 was because now you've taken
21 it out of 8 and you put that amount in 4 and you've kind
22 of unbalanced what she was trying to balance it between
23 three districts. Now, you've unbalanced it and you've put
24 the majority in District 4, a little bit in 3 and took out
25 8, and now District 4 stands to lose because, again, they

1 don't have the voting population out there. So the way
2 that it's been done, if we're going to include it, I think
3 has been done fairly in that it's been split between the
4 three that it touches. We can't put it in 1 because it
5 doesn't touch 1. We can't put it in all eight and split
6 it out where it would be even amongst all eight because it
7 doesn't touch all eight. So it's, you know, half a dozen
8 of one, six of another. This is -- if it's going to be
9 kept in then -- and I'm certainly an advocate of it being
10 kept in having served and I know he served as well. But I
11 clearly hear what you're saying, and we're trying to make
12 the best of the situation that we have and to encompass
13 one district with many of them certainly will dilute your
14 voting strength. There's no doubt about that. So to have
15 it split between three, if it's going to remain in, is the
16 best way to keep it at this particular juncture unless
17 you're planning on taking it all out.

18 MR. PADGETT: Mr. Chairman.

19 MR. MASON: Yes, sir.

20 MR. PADGETT: To address that question, there's no
21 way in the world you could take it out. It is the census
22 tract --

23 MR. MASON: And there you go.

24 MR. PADGETT: -- of Richmond County and the numbers
25 have to be counted the way the federal government says

1 they are counted. So I don't think that's any what of an
2 option.

3 MR. MASON: And you're right, Mr. Vice Chair, and
4 that's the reason why I say it's done the most -- the most
5 fairest way that it can be done in terms of being split
6 between three instead overloading one or the other, and
7 truly diluting your voting power. Yes, sir.

8 MR. BILL FORNOY: Bill Fornoy again. How is this
9 process done in Fort Jackson or Fort Campbell or other
10 military installations, if you know?

11 MS. MEGGERS: I can't speak to Fort Campbell or
12 those, but I can tell you that Fort Benning does it just
13 like we're doing it.

14 MR. MASON: Fort McPhearson as well.

15 MS. MEGGERS: And Fort Stewart does it just like
16 we're doing it.

17 MR. PADGETT: Fort McPhearson and all of them. It's
18 the U.S. regulation. We don't have any choice in Georgia.

19 MR. MASON: Ms. Bailey.

20 MS. BAILEY: I was just going to add just as
21 piggybacking on what others have said, it is a dynamic
22 that communities with military institutions in their
23 community face and -- or have to deal with. The way
24 things are split up right now under the working plan, we
25 have about 3,100 citizens going into District 3, we have

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C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF GEORGIA
COUNTY OF JENKINS

I, JUNE S. O'CONNOR, being a Certified Court Reporter, hereby certify that the foregoing public hearing transcript was taken down and was transcribed by me; that the foregoing pages, 1 through 48, represent, to the best of my ability, a true, correct, and complete transcript of the proceedings.

I further certify that I am neither related to or counsel to the parties herein nor have any interest in the outcome of the above-styled proceeding.

Witness my hand and official seal this 20th day of October, 2011.

June S. O'Connor, CCR
Certificate Number 2786