

1 ILLINOIS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
2 SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON REDISTRICTING
3 PUBLIC HEARING
4 MAY 22, 2011
5 STENOGRAPHIC REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS had
6 in the above-entitled matter at Bilandic Building, 160
7 North LaSalle Street, Suite C600, Chicago, Illinois,
8 commencing at 2:00 p.m.

9

10 MEMBERS PRESENT:

11 REPRESENTATIVE BARBARA FLYNN CURRIE

12 REPRESENTATIVE MIKE FORTNER

13 REPRESENTATIVE EDWARD J. ACEVEDO

14 REPRESENTATIVE MARLOW H. COLVIN

15 REPRESENTATIVE JIM DURKIN

16 REPRESENTATIVE LOU LANG

17 REPRESENTATIVE TIMOTHY L. SCHMITZ

18 REPRESENTATIVE JIL TRACY

19 REPRESENTATIVE KAREN A. YARBROUGH

20 REPRESENTATIVE CAMILLE Y. LILLY

21

22 Reported By: Adrienne M. Lightfoot, CSR

23 License No. 084-004276

24

1 MR. LANG: Schmitz, Tracy, Yarbrough.

2 MS. YARBROUGH: Here.

3 MS. CURRIE: We have a forum and we are about
4 to start. At the end of 2010, the United States Census
5 Bureau does, as it does every ten years, provide the
6 state with information about population shifts and
7 changes under the previous statute. Both the United
8 States and the state constitutions require us to redraw
9 boundary zones of Congressional legislative and
10 representative districts to account for population
11 shifts over the previous ten years.

12 To prepare, this committee held numerous
13 public hearings across the state hearing from dozens of
14 witnesses interested in expressing their views. Our
15 own statute requires us to hold four hearings. We in
16 fact, held 15. I'm grateful to the people who took
17 time and effort to attend the hearings or give us
18 written testimony and I certainly thank the members of
19 the committee who were just amazingly committed to
20 making sure that every witness has an opportunity to
21 express his or her views.

22 On Friday, I filed House Amendment I to
23 House Bill 3760. This amendment contains the General
24 Assembly Redistricting plan of 2011. Copies of the

1 plan were shared with members of the minority party.
2 They are available to the public on request, and you
3 can also check out the proposed maps and other
4 information on our website, which is
5 www.ilhousedems.org/redistricting.

6 As the sponsor of the bill, it's my
7 intention to provide details and overview about the
8 plan and allow members of the public as well as members
9 of the committee to comment or ask questions. I do not
10 expect that you will expect -- I do not intend to ask
11 the committee to vote on the amendment to the plan
12 today. And now, I would like to turn the committee
13 over to Representative Lou Lang.

14 MR. LANG: Thank you, Representative Currie.

15 While the representative and the sponsor
16 of the plan is taking her seat, let me ask if anyone in
17 the audience who plans to testify must fill out a
18 witness slip. And when you fill out the witness slip,
19 you will be able to testify. It is our intention to
20 allow everyone the opportunity to speak if they wish.
21 Per the members of the committee, as always, you will
22 have the opportunity to ask questions of the sponsor
23 and any witnesses providing testimony.

24 As a reminder to the witnesses, we are

1 going to limit witnesses to three minutes each. We are
2 going to ask you not to read statements to us. If you
3 are giving us a written statement, which we hope you
4 do, we'll be glad to take that and give a copy to every
5 member of the committee. But we would ask you not to
6 read something that we can read. I would also ask all
7 witnesses to spell your name and clearly and state the
8 organization you represent when you are preparing to
9 testify.

10 Representative Currie.

11 MS. CURRIE: Thank you very much. Chair,
12 Members of the Committee, before I begin, I do want to
13 make the point that drawing a redistricting plan is no
14 easy proposition, no mean feat. And this one was
15 certainly not done to any single person. While I
16 sponsor the bill and I know something about each of the
17 districts, I don't have in depth knowledge. And while
18 I expect that I will be able to answer many of your
19 questions, some might have to be deferred until I can
20 get additional information.

21 I'm of the view that the proposal to
22 Amendment I to this measure is fair and competitive.
23 It represents our best efforts to balance the many
24 factors that must be taken into account when

1 redistricting a state as diverse as Illinois. The
2 population in our state changed significantly over the
3 last decade. For example, ten years ago, Kane, Will
4 and Kendall counties were mostly rural, were mostly
5 open space. Today, each has a substantial population
6 that's likely to grow over the next decade. Chicago,
7 for the first time, has seen a significant drop in
8 population. Some 200,000 people have left due to
9 migration to the south, southwest and western parts of
10 the state.

11 Because of these changes, we have to
12 redistrict. We have to change the composition and the
13 shape of both the Senate districts and the House
14 districts, a change that is minimal in some districts
15 and very substantial in others. This plan was
16 developed to comply with the United States and Illinois
17 Constitutions and applicable federal and state laws.

18 In addition to the constitutions and the
19 laws, we took a lot of different considerations into --
20 issues into consideration when developing individual
21 districts, sections of the state and the overall plan.
22 First and foremost, we have drawn a map that perfectly
23 complies with the one person/one vote requirement of
24 the United States Constitution.

1 Every representative district in the
2 state has been drawn with a population of 108,734
3 people; in a few cases, 735. This is the cardinal rule
4 of redistricting and we have respected it to the
5 letter. We also recognize that our plan has to comply
6 with the United States Constitution and the Federal
7 Voting Rights Act, and we believe that our plan is
8 consistent with both of those documents.

9 We further believe that our districts
10 will satisfy the Illinois Constitution's requirement
11 that districts be compact -- compact and contiguous and
12 our plan is fully complicit with the Illinois Voting
13 Rights Act. Yes, partisanship does play a role in
14 withdrawing of the House and Senate districts, but
15 while we believe this plan is politically fair, we
16 don't deny that partisan concerns from time to time
17 play a role.

18 A number of other redistricting
19 principles were included as we considered the drawing
20 of these lines in balance with one another, the
21 preservation of the core of existing districts,
22 preserving communities of interest, respect for
23 political boundaries, that is, counties, municipalities
24 and so forth, maintenance of incumbent constituent

1 relationships, tracking of the migration of population
2 from one area to another, proposals and testimony from
3 the public, written comments as well as the oral
4 testimony we've heard at those 15 times when the
5 committee met for public participation.

6 Incumbent request, respect for
7 geographic features, like rivers and other natural
8 boundaries and other principles recognized by state and
9 federal court decisions.

10 So in my view, this is a competitive
11 map. It's a fair map, not a perfect map, because
12 there's no such thing as a perfect map. There will be
13 individual members of the assembly. Republicans and
14 democrats will be unhappy with the particulars of their
15 district. There will be members, republicans and
16 democrats, alike who are happy with the results. There
17 will be community groups and other observers who
18 similarly will not be happy with the outcome and there
19 will be others who will be.

20 We believe this map protects minority
21 rights, which is consistent with the federal and state
22 laws governing the protection of voting rights and
23 follows all the appropriate laws and rules. And
24 finally, thanks to the members of the public and to the

1 members of the committee who have participated so
2 enthusiastically in this process, who have given us
3 information and suggestions. To the public, we heard
4 you. And while I can't promise that we incorporated
5 every one of your requests, we certainly considered
6 them. In the end, I believe that this plan for
7 redistricting is fair and competitive, and I hope you
8 will agree.

9 MR. LANG: Thank you, Representative.

10 Again, for all witnesses, please make
11 sure we have a witness slip from you. Please do not
12 read your testimony to us. Please spell your name and
13 announce the organization you are with when you come
14 forward.

15 The Chair recognizes Mr. Fortner.

16 MR. FORTNER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As far
17 as the format, I guess, the first question for the
18 Chair, I understand that the amendment has now been
19 posted to the committee. When did that take place?

20 MR. LANG: No committee met recently,
21 Mr. Fortner. And as you know, we are not voting on
22 this matter today.

23 MR. FORTNER: I understand that. I just --
24 how much time was the minority provided to be able to

1 be present at that rules committee meeting that would
2 have signed that amendment?

3 MR. LANG: I don't know the answer to that
4 question, sir.

5 MR. FORTNER: I think the -- it was very
6 little time. And this is something -- of this manner
7 of importance that, it would have been appropriate to
8 make sure that members of the minority could have been
9 present at the rules committee meeting with a
10 sufficient amount of time given that it's a weekend, it
11 is not a session day, to make sure that we all be
12 present for that.

13 Also, with the -- now that the amendment
14 is before the committee, I note that there are a number
15 of people who have provided witness slips. It's the
16 Chair's preference to have the committee address the
17 sponsor at this time with questions or do you wish to
18 hear other testimony and then have our questions for
19 the sponsor?

20 MR. LANG: What's your preference,
21 Mr. Fortner?

22 MR. FORTNER: I would be happy to ask a few
23 questions of the sponsor.

24 MR. LANG: Please proceed, but let's respect

1 the fact that we do have witnesses to hear from. And
2 why don't you go ahead and ask the sponsor whatever
3 questions you have.

4 MR. FORTNER: Thank you. In the amendment,
5 one of the things that seems to reference something --
6 there's something with a narrative reference in the
7 language of the amendment, has that been filed yet?

8 MS. CURRIE: No. I'm not sure what you are
9 referring to. I haven't seen a narrative myself. I
10 don't believe it's part of the amendment. And if I'm
11 wrong, I'm sure you'll be happy to correct me.

12 MR. FORTNER: Is there -- there is the
13 reference of House Resolution 385.

14 MS. CURRIE: And that has not been filed as
15 yet.

16 MR. FORTNER: So at this point -- is that
17 going to provide some of the specific data in your
18 opening remarks? You talked about various components
19 of fairness and responsiveness to your minority rights.
20 That data is not present on the website. I was
21 wondering if that's going to be part of that
22 resolution.

23 MS. CURRIE: I believe that will be part of
24 that resolution.

1 MR. FORTNER: So will that resolution be
2 coming also before this committee that we then have to
3 question --

4 THE COURT: If the rules committee assigned
5 it here. Would you like us to?

6 MR. FORTNER: I think that will be
7 appropriate.

8 MS. CURRIE: I'll do my best to --

9 MR. FORTNER: You have a way with the rules
10 committee. I think you might be able to manage that.
11 You described the map as fair and competitive. You
12 outline how you can make that claim. Is there a
13 general principle that uses a particular standard of
14 data?

15 MS. CURRIE: I don't have a standard to
16 enable me to answer that question specifically, but
17 just looking at the map and looking at how the
18 populations have shifted and how the districts have
19 shifted, my own sense is that it is a politically
20 competitive map. I'm hopeful we'll have some people
21 who can testify more specifically on that point, but I
22 think that is a map that respects the geographic and
23 the political boundaries of the state. It looks to me
24 as if it ought to be politically fair.

1 MR. FORTNER: You anticipate that that will
2 be at the joint meeting scheduled for Tuesday, or --

3 MS. CURRIE: I don't know.

4 MR. FORTNER: You don't have --

5 MS. CURRIE: I don't.

6 MR. FORTNER: -- a schedule for that? I
7 think one of the things that we are so concerned about
8 is that -- and I imagine many of the public -- you've
9 certainly heard a lot of public testimony asking for
10 sufficient time to review the data. The data was not
11 forthcoming with the map. It puts everyone in the
12 public as well as members of the committee at some
13 disadvantage because we are being asked to weigh in
14 without the benefit of the data that would be used to
15 make the types of determinations that your statement
16 suggested.

17 MS. CURRIE: So my understanding is a total
18 population information, demographic information, that
19 came to the minority caucus and is available to the
20 public on the CD that anyone can access with a written
21 request.

22 MR. FORTNER: And that was only first
23 available on Friday.

24 MS. CURRIE: That's when we unveiled -- the

1 map that included representative district, my
2 understanding is the Senate unveiled the map on
3 Thursday without some of that specificity.

4 MR. FORTNER: I understand that, but I'm
5 speaking about the House version since that is what we
6 are considering here. The -- if someone were to make
7 such a written request after 3:30 on Friday, it would
8 seem to me to be difficult if they, say, wanted to make
9 that request through the mail or any other form of
10 written communication since we have had only weekend
11 days since that first came out.

12 MS. CURRIE: We did respond to all the
13 requests on Friday.

14 MR. FORTNER: But if other people had chosen
15 to send it in writing, it would had to be --

16 MS. CURRIE: We'll get that Monday. And
17 we'll try to get it back to them more quickly than the
18 United States mails are able to get things to us.

19 MR. FORTNER: As far as the Illinois Voting
20 Rights Act, which references three types of districts,
21 influence districts, coalition districts and cross-over
22 districts. With the map, is it the intent to identify
23 where the Illinois Voting Rights Act has been invoked
24 in particular districts? Will you be identifying that

1 either in the House Resolution 385 or in some other
2 documentary --

3 MS. CURRIE: I will not and I can't speak to
4 the question whether any of that identification will
5 happen in the resolution.

6 MR. FORTNER: So the question then would be
7 if I were to look at some of the specific districts in
8 the map, would you be able to identify whether or not,
9 say, for instance, the district that, I believe is
10 District Number 67, is that being sort of an influence
11 district, a crossover district or --

12 MS. CURRIE: First of all, I'm not a lawyer,
13 and I think those terms may have specific legal meaning
14 and consequences. But secondly, I don't think that
15 those terms are retrying in some very specific language
16 that says this is that and that is this. You have
17 access to the numbers. You can tell in any district
18 what the voting age population of African-Americans is
19 at, percentage, or Asians or Hispanics or white people.
20 So your judgment on this question, I would respect as
21 well as my own.

22 MR. FORTNER: I understand that there may not
23 be a percentage scale, but the Illinois Voting Rights
24 Act specifically suggest that there are these three

1 categories. And when they are present in a cluster,
2 that cluster is to be preserved so that it can be used
3 for one of those specific categories. As we look at
4 the map -- now, certainly, you have made the statement
5 that, you know, follow the map. How are we to judge,
6 lacking the standard lacking a description as to where
7 those different types end, the coalition, the
8 crossover, the influence districts might be.

9 MS. CURRIE: Well, first of all, the statute
10 you reference didn't specify what percentages counted
11 for one or the other or the third type of district. So
12 I think that that's sort of a legal question. And I
13 don't know whether there will be any reference to that
14 kind of information in the resolution or not, but I
15 know that it's not a question I can comfortably answer.

16 MR. FORTNER: But since it is a new act, and
17 it provides terminology, I can make -- I can speculate
18 what those are.

19 MS. CURRIE: You can feel free to. You've
20 got the data. Go right ahead.

21 MR. FORTNER: Right now this is a law in the
22 state of Illinois, and it provides for these three
23 categories. So as the response to the amendment, if I
24 were to ask about a district, it would be -- I would

1 think that one should be able to answer if it falls
2 into one of those categories.

3 MS. CURRIE: I can say generally, I think we
4 complied -- I know we complied with the Illinois Voting
5 Rights Act. But I'm not a lawyer, and I'm not in a
6 position, nor is the statute, in a position to say that
7 this is the percentage, this is the number, this is the
8 standard that must be applied.

9 MR. FORTNER: When you -- if we don't have
10 that information, you made a statement that we have
11 complied. Who has told you or how do you judge when
12 you make that statement? You say you complied. On
13 what basis can you make that statement?

14 MS. CURRIE: I believe in looking at the
15 numbers, looking at the maps, I believe we have done a
16 very good job of complying with all the requirements of
17 the law, federal and state and the constitution as well
18 as traditional principles of redistricting.

19 MR. FORTNER: So were you advised by specific
20 experts as to whether or not we were compliant on those
21 points?

22 MS. CURRIE: I certainly talked to people who
23 were involved in the map-making, who seemed to think
24 that we've done exactly what I said. And I think I

1 answered that. I think we answered your question.

2 MR. FORTNER: Will we be getting testimony
3 from any of those experts that you might have been
4 consulted with?

5 MS. CURRIE: I don't think today we plan to
6 have expert testimony.

7 MR. FORTNER: And do you anticipate before
8 this committee will be voting on the amendment whether
9 or not --

10 MS. CURRIE: I don't know. I don't know. We
11 do have experts in the room. They are staff, and they
12 generally don't testify at the hearings, although I'm
13 perfectly happy to ask them to answer questions for me
14 when I don't know the answer.

15 MR. FORTNER: You say you don't know yet if
16 you will be bringing in any other experts perhaps
17 beyond staff that may have been --

18 MS. CURRIE: I don't know.

19 MR. FORTNER: If you are going to do that,
20 will we be able to have some advance notice as to any
21 of those people being brought in or would they just
22 slipping the day off?

23 MS. CURRIE: I don't know. We can talk
24 afterwards and maybe we can get to the bottom of that.

1 MR. FORTNER: Well, I think at this point,
2 barring the -- having lack of the specificity of this
3 resolution that we have not seen yet to know some of
4 the specifics, I'm going to defer some of my other
5 questions, anticipate that we'll get a chance to ask
6 more detailed questions at our next hearing when we
7 actually have the text of the resolution, which seems
8 like maybe has some of the supporting information, but
9 we have no way of judging that.

10 MS. CURRIE: We do not know that now.

11 MR. FORTNER: So at this point, I think I'm
12 going to defer other questions until we have what I
13 hope will be the record that -- the partial record that
14 I see before me at this point.

15 MR. LANG: Thank you, Mr. Fortner.

16 Please add Mr. Durkin and Mr. Acevedo to
17 the attendance roll call. And for the record
18 Representative Howard, who is not a member of the
19 committee, but is certainly welcome to be here is
20 joining us.

21 Are there any other members of the
22 committee that has any questions for Representative
23 Currie? Seeing none, we'll begin with the witnesses.
24 Please witnesses, spell your name, tell us what

1 organization you are from, limit your comments to three
2 minutes and please don't read your testimony. The
3 first one is Juan Rangel.

4 While Mr. Rangel is coming up, if any
5 witness did not hear me before, if somebody is going to
6 testify, we need a witness slip from you. Please fill
7 one out and provide it with staff. Mr. Rangel?

8 MR. RANGEL: Thank you very much Members of
9 the Committee, for having me here. My name is Juan
10 Rangel. I'm the CEO of UNO, United Neighborhood
11 Organization. And I'm here representing the Latino
12 Coalition for Fair Redistricting. And I'm here to
13 express the Latino Coalition for Fair Redistricting
14 supports the map proposed by the Illinois House.

15 We stand by our complicit position that
16 we need to protect the Latino community gains over the
17 past two decades and also expand our representation
18 based on our population growth. After reviewing the
19 proposed map and Hispanic voting age population
20 released today, it appears to do just that. It
21 increases the number of Latino districts to reflect the
22 substantial increase in the Illinois Latino population
23 without losing the current number of Latino districts.

24 The proposed map also respects

1 communities of interest, such as Humbolt Park, Little
2 Village, Pilsen and Chinatown.

3 Additionally, we need to support the
4 proposed map because it adheres to the core
5 constitutional principles, the Federal Voting Rights
6 Act and the new Illinois Voting Rights Act of 2011.

7 Furthermore, we support the proposed map
8 because it also adequately protects minority groups'
9 interests. We are concerned with advancing interest of
10 the Latino community. We recognize and accept that the
11 Illinois Legislation must strike a balance with other
12 minority groups, particularly the African-American
13 community. It may be possible to draw a map with even
14 more Latino districts, however, we believe that that
15 would come at the expense of African-American
16 districts. We believe that the proposed map fairly
17 balances change of the population of the stakes other
18 communities have in the Illinois Legislature.

19 Earlier this week, our district group of
20 Latino coalitions, including the Latino Policy Forum,
21 the Latino Agenda, The Illinois Coalition for
22 Immigration and Refugee Rights and UNO came together in
23 agreement under a set of guiding principles on
24 redistricting. I believe you might have received a

1 copy of that now. And those principles include protect
2 the rights of Latino communities by creating Latino
3 districts commensurate with growth of the Latino
4 population in the state of Illinois. Ensure that
5 districts representing other racial and ethnic minority
6 communities are drawn to maintain these districts
7 intact and ready to preserve African-American
8 districts. It is UNO's belief that these maps
9 presented today or consistent with these principles.

10 Again, revising the current district
11 boundaries is a tremendous assignment with many moving
12 parties. The Latino Coalition for Fair Redistricting
13 supports the proposed map based on its appropriate
14 increase in Latino representation, adherence to
15 constitutional boundaries and balance and diverse
16 interests involved. And there is a number of
17 organizations that have signed on, and you have some
18 letters in your packet, including the Back of the Yards
19 Neighborhood Council who is supporting this -- (Spoke
20 in Spanish) -- and those members including the
21 Hispanic-American Associate Industry Association signed
22 on as well. There will other letters that will be
23 coming your way in the coming days. Thank you.

24 MR. LANG: Thank you, Mr. Rangel.

1 Questions, Mr. Fortner?

2 MR. FORTNER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

3 Good to see you again, Mr. Rangel. You
4 made a statement that you believe that this complied
5 with the Federal Voting Rights Act. Is that just your
6 opinion or have you consulted with -- or has your
7 organization consulted with any experts to confirm that
8 statement?

9 MR. RANGEL: Well, looking at the numbers,
10 and again, based on the census maps that were presented
11 earlier and looking at the maps today, and just looking
12 at these numbers, it appears that they satisfied --

13 MR. FORTNER: So this is really just your
14 statement that it appears -- it's not a legal analysis?

15 MR. RANGEL: It's not a legal analysis, but I
16 would say it's a statement reflecting what the
17 organizations' interest is.

18 MR. FORTNER: And if I make the same
19 statement about the Illinois Voting Rights Act, is it
20 just your opinion looking at the numbers, have you
21 consulted or your organization consulted with any
22 expertise as to whether or not that would comply?

23 MR. RANGEL: This is the position of the
24 organization, yes.

1 MR. FORTNER: So in -- just based on the
2 appearance of the numbers?

3 MR. RANGEL: Correct.

4 MR. FORTNER: One of the things that you also
5 commented on is that you felt that more districts would
6 have been possible, but it would have come at the
7 expense of black districts. What's the basis for that
8 statement?

9 MR. RANGEL: Well, I think from the very
10 beginning when we began this process, we were looking
11 at ensuring that the Latino communities's growth was
12 adhered to, and was respected. What we did not want it
13 to come against other minority groups, in particularly
14 African-American community. We believe that the
15 numbers that are here pretty much reflects the interest
16 of the Latino community, but also like to be mindful of
17 the history of the African-American -- in interest of
18 the African-American community as well. That was the
19 interest of our organization.

20 MR. FORTNER: Were you aware that during
21 testimony that we had last month there were maps
22 presented by coalition organizations that show that you
23 could have in fact, more Latino seats without the
24 expense of any African-American seats?

1 MR. RANGEL: Right. And we disagree with
2 that position.

3 MR. FORTNER: But you are aware those were
4 presented, so it's certainly possible to draw a map
5 that would provide for additional Latino seats without
6 reducing the number of African-American seats?

7 MR. RANGEL: That was their position and we
8 disagreed that that was accurate.

9 MR. FORTNER: So you disagree with that
10 map --

11 MR. RANGEL: That they were inaccurate.

12 MR. FORTNER: Are you saying that you think
13 the map had inaccurate numbers that were used to draw
14 it?

15 MR. RANGEL: We don't agree with their map.

16 MR. FORTNER: Now, I understand you don't
17 support their maps?

18 MR. RANGEL: We don't agree. There is a
19 difference support and -- so we disagree with their
20 maps, yeah. And that's why the statement that we gave
21 you is a statement of principle, is that we agreed in
22 principle, but we couldn't come to an agreement on the
23 maps.

24 MR. FORTNER: Right, I understand you

1 couldn't come to an agreement on the maps, but the fact
2 that such a map could be drawn, they certainly showed a
3 map that could be. I understand that you don't agree
4 with that map, but it certainly wasn't the case that
5 that map could be, so I presented testimony. So that's
6 why it seems strange you would say that it has to come
7 at the expense that you saw a map that could be drawn
8 even if you don't agree with it.

9 MR. RANGEL: I think you will find that there
10 will be organizations, including African-Americans,
11 including very credible organizations that will also
12 agree with us.

13 MR. FORTNER: Thank you.

14 MR. RANGEL: Thank you.

15 MR. LANG: Further questions of the witness?

16 Thank you, Mr. Rangel.

17 We have been joined by Representative
18 Lilly.

19 The next witness is Korge Perez from
20 HACIA. Please spell your name for the court reporter,
21 and limit yourself to three minutes, sir.

22 MR. PEREZ: Thank you. My name is Korge
23 Perez, K-o-r-g-e, P-e-r-e-z. I'm the Executive
24 Director of HACIA, Hispanic American Construction

1 Industry Association. And we are here in support of
2 House Bill 3760. And this map -- as members also of
3 the Latino Coalition for Fair Redistricting, we think
4 this map is representative of the increase of Hispanic
5 community and state. And as an organization that
6 supports Hispanic contractors, we believe that this
7 will accurately begin to reflect our group in the state
8 of Illinois. Thank you.

9 MR. LANG: Questions, Mr. Fortner?

10 MR. FORTNER: When you say you think it
11 reflects the growth, is that again based on any expert
12 analysis or just your impression and your
13 organization's impressions looking at the numbers?

14 MR. PEREZ: For that question, I would
15 actually echo the answers that Juan Rangel had given
16 because we were part of that same coalition.

17 MR. FORTNER: So you would simply adopt all
18 the same answers to the same questions that Mr. Rangel
19 gave?

20 MR. PEREZ: Yes.

21 MR. FORTNER: Thank you very much.

22 MR. LANG: Thank you. Are there further
23 questions of this witness? Thank you very much, sir.

24 MR. PEREZ: Thank you.

1 MR. LANG: Next two gentlemen coming up
2 together, Martin Torres from the Latino Policy Forum
3 and Jose Lopez from LULAC. Please introduce yourselves
4 and spell your names for the court reporter, gentlemen,
5 and please proceed when you are ready.

6 MR. TORRES: Good afternoon, Madam Chairman.
7 My name is Martin Torres, M-a-r-t-i-n, last name,
8 Torres, T-o-r-r-e-s. I'm the policy analyst at the
9 Latino Policy Forum. I would like to start my remarks
10 by thanking the Chairman and distinguished members of
11 the committee for providing us an opportunity to views
12 and comments on the proposed map. After reviewing the
13 Senate and House management leadership in the last 72
14 hours, the Latino Policy Forum is disappointed with the
15 current product. Given the dramatic growth for the
16 Latino population over the last decade, our analysis
17 indicates that Latino residents have been shortchanged
18 by the current proposal.

19 As you can see by the attached chart, my
20 remarks, we have submitted that that would create 13
21 House and Senate districts combined, and a total Latino
22 population no greater than 65 percent compared to 66,
23 put forth by the General Assembly. Through our
24 coordination and collaboration with the United Congress

1 including any religious organizations, we have shown an
2 increase in Latino majority influence and coalition
3 district does not have to come at the expense of
4 African-American majority districts. In fact, in
5 accordance to which incumbence the recommendations put
6 forth by the Illinois Latino Agenda maintains the same
7 number as African-American majority district, in other
8 words, upholding the voting rights of Latino and
9 African-American residents are not visually exclusive
10 goals.

11 In terms of geography, the most
12 egregious act that the legislation both are from our
13 prospective, that will be on the south side of Chicago,
14 we've shown that it's possible to create six Latino
15 majority districts with five at a threshold, 65 percent
16 or greater, are compared to the three districts that
17 the legislature has put forth.

18 In addition, we are concerned about the
19 sustainability of the Latino majority issues on the
20 north side of Chicago with three of the four Latino
21 population thresholds appear to operate in the mid-50s.
22 In the suburbs, it will be a hardening by Latino
23 majority districts have been created in the Franklin
24 Park/Melrose Park area, in the Waukegan and any

1 district that connects Elgin and Carpentersville.
2 However, we think Latino districts that were created in
3 Aurora, we can split our concentration of Latino
4 residents. This is the only area in the suburbs where
5 Latino district could have been gone with the total
6 population, therefore, created greater than 65 percent.

7 Furthermore, a preliminary analysis
8 indicate that additional Latino districts could have
9 been created in the area in the southern suburbs of
10 Chicago. At the beginning of my remarks, I stated
11 these residents have been shortchanged in the
12 redistricting process. And we believe that the
13 legislature can do better. Thank you.

14 MR. LANG: Thank you. Mr. Lopez?

15 MR. LOPEZ: My name is Jose J. Lopez,
16 J-o-s-e, L-o-p-e-z. I am here representing the
17 Illinois State Director of the Leagues of United Latin
18 American Citizens, otherwise known as LULAC. The LULAC
19 was found in 1929 and is the oldest and most widely
20 respected Hispanic civil rights organization in the
21 United States of America. The mission is to advance
22 economic condition, education attainment, political
23 influence, housing, health civil rights for Hispanic in
24 the United States.

1 And we have various chapters throughout
2 the country. Here, in the state of Illinois, we have
3 been active since 1956. And we have various chapters
4 throughout the state. We are here in support of the
5 recommendations of the Latino Policy Forum and the
6 Latino Agenda as opposed to the current proposal
7 HB3760. Thank you.

8 MR. LANG: Thank you. Are there questions?
9 Mr. Fortner.

10 MR. FORTNER: Thank you. Mr. Torres, you
11 repeatedly referenced the number 65 percent. Could you
12 go a little bit further about why that has been an
13 important number for making sure that you have a strong
14 Latino district?

15 MR. TORRES: Representative Fortner, I'm not
16 an attorney. My understanding is that is representing
17 and supporting 65 percent Latino residents.

18 MR. FORTNER: And Mr. Lopez, do you have any
19 comments along the same lines from your experience with
20 LULAC as to --

21 MR. LOPEZ: Well, we pretty much support what
22 has been put together by the policy forum. It's been
23 very active with that committee and the Latino Agenda,
24 so we believe that that is what we think is fair.

1 MR. FORTNER: So you agree that having that
2 kind of threshold would be important to make sure that
3 one could be able to elect candidates of choice from
4 the Latino committee?

5 MR. LOPEZ: Yes, very much, given the fact
6 that the census members have created a big increase in
7 the state of Illinois, we see that -- and it continues
8 to increase -- so we see this as the districts continue
9 to grow in this coming decade. So it's important that
10 we have that coverage.

11 MR. FORTNER: And then -- Mr. Torres, and
12 when you look at an area like -- you commented on
13 Aurora and how elsewhere in the suburbs things were
14 good, but in Aurora the district seem to be weak. So
15 looking at the numbers by not putting together and by
16 dividing the community, would this be a case of
17 dilution of the Latino population from your point of
18 view?

19 MR. TORRES: Throughout this process, we
20 advocated that the district in Aurora had a special --
21 being 65 percent. We would defer any argument based on
22 the standards.

23 MR. FORTNER: Okay. Thank you both very
24 much.

1 MR. LANG: Thank you. Are there further
2 questions of these gentlemen? Thank you, gentlemen,
3 for your attendance today.

4 I understand that Mr. Rangel had one
5 thing to explain to us that he did not explain to us
6 and he needs less than a minute to come back to the
7 table. Mr. Rangel?

8 MR. RANGEL: Thank you very much. It's just
9 for clarification purposes in terms of counsel on our
10 position. We did have legal counsel that was
11 representing us and guiding us throughout this mapping
12 process which includes Reyes and Bonoma and Gerson,
13 Tristan Rosales, who are attorneys. They had a long
14 history and experiences and we met them.

15 MR. LANG: Thank you, Mr. Rangel. Next
16 witness is Wayne Serbin, who identifies himself as a
17 member of the general public. Mr. Serbin?

18 MR. SERBIN: My name is Wayne Serbin. I'm a
19 member of the general public. I was at the committee
20 meeting when Elaine Nekritz was there in Waukegan. I
21 believe it was last month. And the purpose of the
22 meeting is -- when I attended the meeting, it was the
23 concern of the blacks, gay and the Hispanic vote. The
24 minority groups often is limited to, what they discuss

1 now about, having equal representation. That was one
2 issue, having a Hispanic forum in Waukegan. But yet,
3 the point I read in The New York Times, and I read in
4 Russ Stewart's Column, writes for a local group
5 columnist, apparently, that they feel that your major
6 concern is protecting the incumbencies of your jobs.
7 Now, that is what they think. Now, I don't know which
8 is which. I'm just stating what The New York Times
9 stated. And from what I observed, these people who are
10 speaking today and yesterday in Waukegan. That's all
11 I'm saying.

12 MR. LANG: Thank you, sir. Any questions of
13 this witness? Thank you for being here today.

14 MR. SERBIN: You're welcome.

15 MR. LANG: Next witness is Deborah Harrington
16 from CHANGE Illinois. While Ms. Harrington is coming
17 to the table, again, if there are witnesses that have
18 not filled out a witness slip, please return and do
19 fill one out for us so that we can make sure you have
20 your opportunity to testify in this hearing.

21 MS. HARRINGTON: Thank you. My name is
22 Deborah Harrington. That's spelled D-e-b-o-r-a-h,
23 H-a-r-r-i-n-g-t-o-n. And I am a coach -- one of three
24 coaches here at CHANGE Illinois. And that acronym

1 stands for Coalition for Honest and New Government
2 Ethics. I appreciate the opportunity to be before you
3 today to testify. I want to recognize my
4 representative, the Honorable Barbara Flynn Currie and
5 also our Representative Connie Howard, who is a
6 champion for criminal justice. I just want to thank
7 you very much.

8 I was going to read my testimony, but I
9 understand I should not, so I may not be as coherent as
10 I would have been otherwise. But CHANGE Illinois is an
11 independent non-partisan coalition with diverse
12 interests including organizations that represent over
13 two million Illinoisans across the state for political
14 reform. And I want to commend the committee for the 15
15 hearings that it has held. And given the public an
16 opportunity to have some comment on the maps, you know,
17 that we are looking forward to seeing.

18 In April, April 28th of this year, our
19 coalition sent a letter to every member of the General
20 Assembly, and we asked about four different steps that
21 we would like for the committee to take. I'm going to
22 briefly recount those four steps. One is that the maps
23 drafted by the legislative leaders to be presented to
24 lawmakers and posted on website be accessible to the

1 general public. And that step was taken on Thursday.
2 And we appreciate that. But our question is where are
3 the Congressional maps.

4 The second point is that we were
5 interested in getting some of the data that's known to
6 the actual mapmakers with a narrative with an
7 explanation of sections of the boundaries, selections
8 of the boundaries and including the impact on minority
9 communities of interest and municipal and county
10 boundaries similar to what was presented by the senate
11 map.

12 My understanding before the hearing
13 started or during the course of the hearing is that
14 those -- that information may be available based on
15 written requests. And I'm not sure -- but that's what
16 I think I heard. But if that's the case, I still think
17 the time is much too short and it would be good to have
18 that information posted on a website for the public.

19 And third, the public should have at
20 least a week to analyze the maps and that the public
21 has much too little time and too little information,
22 that more time is needed for a thoughtful analysis.

23 And finally, we ask that a minimum of
24 four hearings in different regions of the state be

1 held, and that without this a lot of the public will
2 miss an opportunity for transparency and public
3 participation. When I testified before the committee
4 before, I was talking about the fact that, you know,
5 it's very important that the public have significant
6 comments after the maps are drawn, and we still hold
7 that position. And that's the extent of my testimony.
8 Thank you very much.

9 MR. LANG: Thank you for your testimony. Are
10 there questions from committee members? Mr. Fortner?

11 MR. FORTNER: Thank you.

12 In your comments, you talked about
13 whether or not you had information. When did you find
14 out you could put in a written request against the
15 information?

16 MS. HARRINGTON: I became aware of that at
17 this hearing.

18 MR. FORTNER: At this hearing. So the fact
19 that it might have been announced earlier, you at least
20 as a member of the public have certain interest -- you
21 testified before the committee before, you were not
22 able to know that until you got here today?

23 MS. HARRINGTON: No, I was not aware that it
24 could be requested in writing.

1 MR. FORTNER: And certainly it seems like a
2 real defect; that the public should know. I think it
3 certainly is great that they could get access, but in
4 timeliness. I think it's very important. I think
5 that's what you are saying, we just didn't have enough
6 time for some of the members of the public, such as
7 yourself, to maybe access the information that was
8 available.

9 MS. HARRINGTON: Yes, part of my testimony
10 is, you know, in the interest of the transparency that
11 the public have more time for analysis of the maps.
12 And in terms of the written request for additional
13 demographic information and other information, I did
14 not know that until this afternoon.

15 MR. FORTNER: Thanks.

16 MS. CURRIE: Let me just clarify that we are,
17 of course, still accepting requests for data as well as
18 requests for further changes, what have you. So it's
19 not too late. And I did know that the press new that.
20 I'm kind of disappointed that they didn't make that
21 information a lot more generally available.

22 MR. LANG: Are there further questions for
23 this witness?

24 MS. HARRINGTON: Thank you.

1 MR. LANG: Thank you very much for your
2 attendance today. The next witness is C.W. Chan,
3 Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community.
4 Mr. Chan, please limit your testimony to three minutes.

5 MR. CHAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I make
6 my witness statement. I apologize for not having a
7 copy for everybody, and I will not be reading from
8 statement.

9 MR. LANG: We'll make it part of the record
10 for all members of the committee, sir.

11 MR. CHAN: Yeah. My name is C.W. Chan. I'm
12 the chairperson for the Coalition for a Better Chinese
13 American Community. That organization was formed ten
14 years ago for Chinatown to be included in the
15 legislative district. We have the opportunity to
16 review the map that is released by Senate and the House
17 for the last few days. And we believe that by and
18 large the Chinatown community has been kept intact.
19 And over 90 percent of the Chinese Americans are
20 residing in south-side neighborhoods of Armor Square,
21 Bridgeport, McKinney Park and Brighton Park, will be
22 included in one single legislative district, which is a
23 far cry from what we experienced ten years ago after
24 redistricting. We were split into four different

1 districts.

2 The fact that we have different outcomes
3 doesn't mean that ten years ago we did not work hard.
4 This time what was different also by we working hard,
5 we also -- in receiving support from our legislative,
6 our law maker, and also our neighbors. We have been
7 working in close contact with our African-American
8 neighbors, our Latino neighbors. And that's precisely
9 the reason why I want to be here to thank all the
10 people who have given us support. I particularly want
11 to thank our legislative leaders. Also, Representative
12 Currie would be working with community, and also
13 cutting through the passage of the Voting Rights Act of
14 Illinois.

15 While generally the outcome for the
16 China community is pleased with the outcome for our
17 particular neighborhood, I also might forward the fact
18 that our coalition partners also have some concern
19 about their respective area. We want to indicate
20 support. While we are working on this process, we are
21 proud to be in coalition with many organizations. And
22 we are also proud to be a coalition member of the
23 United Congress for community and religious
24 organization. They have involved a large number of

1 organization at the very early stage of this
2 redistricting process including CBCAC.

3 And we do consider that to be a real
4 good role model for minority community working together
5 in cooperation, and cooperation -- and my understanding
6 is a painstaking process. But we would like to right
7 now support for the effort for the coming days to work
8 with the legislature to improve the matter to protect
9 the voting rights of minority communities and
10 communities of interest. Thank you very much.

11 MR. LANG: Thank you for your testimony, sir.
12 Are there questions of this witness? Thank you for
13 being here, sir. And if you will provide a copy of
14 your written testimony, we'll provide it to members of
15 the committee.

16 The next witness would be Josina Morita,
17 United Congress of Community & Religious Organizations.
18 Please spell your name for the court reporter. Limit
19 your testimony to three minutes.

20 MS. MORITA: Sure. Good afternoon. My name
21 is Josina Morita, J-o-s-i-n-a, Morita, M-o-r-i-t-a.
22 I'm with the United Congress of Community and Religious
23 Organizations. We are a broad-based alliance community
24 organization that is specifically around redistricting

1 have 50 coalition member organizations from the
2 African-American, Latino, Asian and Arab -- that have
3 signed onto the community map that we presented and
4 submitted, both, in hard copy and electronic copy both
5 to the House and the Senate Redistricting Committee a
6 month ago that shows that it's possible to draw 57
7 majority/minority state House and Senate districts in
8 the state of Illinois based on 2010 census data.

9 We want to thank the House Redistricting
10 Committee, particularly Representative Currie, for
11 holding these hearings after the proposed map was
12 released. We really appreciate being able to comment
13 and have this information accessible to us. As one of
14 the people had gone through the painstaking process of
15 drawing the maps with over a hundred stakeholders at
16 the table, I can appreciate how difficult and
17 challenging and complex this process is and agree with
18 Representative Currie's statement that there is no such
19 thing as a perfect map. And we look forward to
20 continuing -- to work with all of you after this map is
21 passed to continue to improve this process to increase
22 transparency and information availability to the
23 public.

24 Along with our coalition members, we

1 analyzed the house. We sent maps over in the last two
2 days since they have been released. We do believe that
3 many of our principles, priorities and issues of the
4 United Congress and our coalition partners are
5 reflected in this map. In particular, we want to
6 applaud the fact that the proposed map in Chinatown and
7 Little Village, communities of interest that have been
8 split into multiple districts in the past, intact. We
9 do, however, believe that the map can and should be
10 improved to respect other communities of interest that
11 have testified at numerous hearings and that are kept
12 together and our unity map including the Back of the
13 Yards, Englewood, West Englewood, Auburn Gresham and
14 the African-American community on the southwest side as
15 well as the Latino community in southeast Chicago.

16 We also believe that the General
17 Assembly shall create more voting rights districts as
18 well as strengthen some of the voting rights district
19 that are included in the proposed map to ensure that
20 that voting rights of Illinois communities are
21 protected. In particular, we ask the General Assembly
22 to consider the following: Protect existing
23 African-American state houses and their voting rights
24 districts on the west side, strengthening these

1 districts to ensure that there are affective majority
2 to ensure residents in the area will be able to elect
3 the candidates of their own choice.

4 Currently, there are three districts
5 drawn between 52 and 55 percent as well as one at
6 46 percent. In the 2000 maps, these were strong
7 existing voting rights. We certainly believe that
8 these should be protected. We've demonstrated in our
9 unity map that it is possible to draw four districts at
10 at least 67 percent African-American in these areas.

11 . Ensure that existing as well as new
12 Latino state house and senate district on north and
13 south side have effected majority to ensure residents
14 in these areas will be able to elect candidates at
15 their own choice. In particular, we believe the
16 percentages of north side districts can be strengthened
17 and the percentages on the south side can be more
18 balanced.

19 We propose five districts about
20 65 percent on the south side as well as a coalition
21 district that was over 56 percent, I believe, Latino
22 with Chinatown kept intact, the current map throughout
23 the coalition districts to a way that we agree. But
24 the other five districts are drawn in a range of

1 percentages from 30 percent to 80 percent. And we
2 believe that these could be more balanced to ensure
3 residents throughout this area have an effective vote.

4 With respect to the communities of
5 interest identified by Asian-American communities on
6 the north side by keeping them together in two house
7 districts and one senate district, we believe
8 Asian-Americans can and should make up at least a
9 quarter of two House districts and one Senate district,
10 and that Asian-American neighborhood thus defined by
11 people who live there can still be kept intact. We do,
12 however, appreciate there is one district above
13 25 percent.

14 The Latino population in the south
15 Chicago area can make up one-third of the house
16 district. While it would be ideal to keep the
17 population in one house district in the interest of
18 ensuring the African-American district in this area are
19 protected, we ask that the community be drawn at least
20 one senate district.

21 And lastly, that the African-American
22 community on the southwest side of the City of Chicago
23 in the areas of Bridgeview, Palos Hills, Chicago Ridge
24 and Burbank, that has higher percentages and numbers of

1 African-American that can make up a possible influence
2 district in this area, that these areas be respected.
3 They are currently drawn into three separate house
4 districts at very low percentages, and we would like
5 you to consider a way to keep them more intact.

6 Thanks.

7 MR. LANG: Thank you very much. Questions of
8 the witness, Mr. Fortner.

9 MR. FORTNER: Thank you. Thank you for all
10 your work. I know how much work you've put in, both,
11 for the map that you presented last month as well as
12 your following up on that through this possess. On
13 the -- I don't know that you actually said this. So
14 you don't support this map and the amendment that's
15 here, in your organization, your coalition does not
16 support this form as presented?

17 MS. MORITA: We haven't had ample time for
18 all of our coalition members to thoroughly look at the
19 map and take an official position. We've gotten
20 feedback from our members in terms of using the map
21 that we do like as well as using the map that we think
22 can be improved as I outlined in my testimony.

23 MR. FORTNER: One of the things I was very
24 interested in when you presented your map last month

1 was there seems to be a lot of care to try to balance
2 all the different groups and interest within your
3 coalition. And I think you just commented in your
4 testimony here like, for example, whereas one might
5 want to put all of the south side Latino communities
6 together in one house district, you were able to show
7 that you could be respectful of the different diverse
8 communities and recognize that there are ways of -- to
9 still maintain fair representation elsewhere in the map
10 and yet still make sure that all the different
11 community interests were able to be protected; is that
12 a fair assessment of what you --

13 MS. MORITA: Yes. Thank you for that. We
14 tried our best.

15 MR. FORTNER: In fact, I thought you did a
16 pretty nice job with that. So again, let me just -- I
17 want to make sure that anything that is important, for
18 points that have been raised for us to consider to
19 improve the map. So one being to make the -- some
20 of -- whether they be the west side African-American
21 districts, some of the south side Latino districts, the
22 north side Latino districts, make sure that they really
23 have numbers able to elect candidates of choice. And
24 what you see as a wider range of numbers, I think is

1 what you said, rather than saying let's make sure that
2 they are all able to provide for the election candidate
3 choice; is that a fair summarization of --

4 MS. MORITA: Yes. And in particular, we want
5 to emphasize that we believe that existing voting
6 rights districts should maintain those effective
7 percentages.

8 MR. FORTNER: And in the current map, that
9 isn't the case in some areas?

10 MS. MORITA: Right.

11 MR. FORTNER: So -- and also, I noted in
12 terms of keeping things together, they talked about the
13 south side. In your map, I know people talked about
14 keeping together areas like Little Village, like the
15 Pilsen, your map was able to do that as well. Again,
16 balancing is still reflecting all of the different
17 diverse communities?

18 MS. MORITA: Correct, as well as communities
19 of interest, including Englewood, West Englewood,
20 Gresham, Woodlawn, a number of other communities that
21 have testified in this process.

22 MR. FORTNER: Well, thank you very much. I
23 look forward to your continued working with this area.

24 MS. MORITA: Thank you.

1 MR. LANG: Are there further questions of
2 this witness? Thank you very much for your testimony.
3 We appreciate it. Next witness would be Allan Mellis,
4 Wrightwood Neighbors.

5 Please spell your name for the court
6 reporter, sir, and then try to limit your comments to
7 three minutes.

8 MR. MELLIS: Thank you, Madam Chairman.

9 My name is Allan Mellis, A-l-l-a-n,
10 M-e-l-l-i-s, representing our neighborhood association,
11 Wrightwood Neighbors. Thank you. Thank you for
12 starting on time. The senate was an hour late
13 yesterday. Thank you for publishing the map. Thank
14 you for having this hearing after the map was out, and
15 thank you for keeping our neighborhood intact.

16 MR. LANG: Thank you for that very succinct
17 testimony.

18 MR. MELLIS: You're welcome.

19 MR. LANG: Especially the complimentary part.
20 Any questions of the witness? Thank you very much.

21 Michael Rodriguez from ENLACE. Please
22 spell your name for the court reporter and limit your
23 comments to three minutes.

24 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Good morning, Michael, common

1 spelling, Rodriguez, R-o-d-r-i-g-u-e-z. I'm the
2 Executive Director of the ENLACE Chicago. ENLACE is
3 dedicated to making a positive difference in the lives
4 of the Little Village community. We would like to take
5 this opportunity to thank you very much for hosting
6 this redistricting committee meeting and coming through
7 on promise to you have public input after the maps were
8 released and before they were voted on, so thank you
9 very much. We also want to thank the community Chair
10 for concurring and moving this forward.

11 And last is a founding member of United
12 Congress of Community and Religious Organizations,
13 UCCRO, and we have taken leadership. And UCCRO has
14 taken leadership in the redistricting coalition
15 efforts. We are also an active member of the Illinois
16 Latino agenda. We have analyzed the house's set of
17 maps released over the last several days, and we
18 believe that many of the principles, priorities and
19 issues that our coalition partners have raised have
20 been reflected in this map.

21 Little Village is a community of 90,000
22 residents known as the Mexican Capital of the Midwest.
23 26th Street is our main principal commercial district
24 and generates the second most tax revenue in the city

1 outside Michigan Avenue, at least that's what I have
2 been told, and I tell everyone. Little Village is a
3 community of interest. In the most recent remap ten
4 years ago, Little Village is split into four house
5 districts, three senate districts, four municipal
6 districts diluting our voting power for our residents.
7 We are very pleased that the General Assembly has heard
8 our voice and respected our community by keeping our
9 community in one house district and one senate
10 district. This will have lasting impact on our
11 community's voting rights.

12 We do, however, stand with United
13 Congress and our coalition partners in calling for
14 improvements to this map. Essentially, south Chicago,
15 southeast Chicago, Back of the Yards and other
16 communities also need to be respected in the same
17 manner that Little Village and Chinatown were.

18 In our region of the southwest side of
19 Chicago, we believe that boundaries can be tweaked in
20 order to balance out percentages in districts that
21 currently range from 30 to 81 percent total population
22 Hispanic while still protecting communities of interest
23 like Little Village, Pilsen, Back of the Yards and
24 Chinatown. Thank you for your time.

1 MR. LANG: Thank you, sir. Are there
2 questions from committee members? Appreciate your
3 testimony today.

4 The next witness is Whitney Woodward,
5 Campaign for Political Reform.

6 MS. WOODWARD: Hi, good afternoon. My name
7 is Whitney Woodward. And I'm with the Illinois
8 Campaign for Political Reform, which is a non-partisan,
9 non-profit public interest group that researches and
10 advocates for a transparency and accountability in
11 governments and policies. For the last 18 months, CPR
12 encourages the General Assembly to open the
13 historically secretive process of drawing the
14 legislative and congressional district boundaries,
15 because in past decades the maps have been drawn away
16 from public view and with minimum opportunities for
17 residents to observe and participate in the process.

18 Unfortunately, despite taking some
19 admirable steps toward remedying this problem, the
20 house hasn't broken the broad precedence of shouting
21 out the public from this important process where the
22 involvement is needed the most, one who draft maps are
23 on the table.

24 It is noteworthy that this committee and

1 its common present Senate are holding three hearings,
2 including this one to take feedback on the proposal.
3 ICPR has repeatedly called on the General Assembly to
4 hold such meetings, and we wish we felt comfortable
5 applauding you for holding these meetings.
6 Unfortunately, we have to question these hearings can
7 be meaningful considering that images of the house
8 districts released 48 hours ago. The committees'
9 decision to hold a meeting on this draft and we are two
10 days after posting these outlines is unacceptable.
11 Speakers of committees' regional hearings repeatedly
12 called on this committee to offer at least one or two
13 weeks' notice to examine drafts.

14 Today, you've heard many speakers say
15 that their analysis of the map is preliminary. I
16 suppose that is because they have not had ample time to
17 study it as well. Further, in hindering this public's
18 chance to weight in on this critical moment is the
19 glaring omission of information to help residents
20 decipher the intent of the numerous radically shaped
21 districts.

22 In earlier testimony for this committee,
23 ICPR noted that providing a world map to interpreting
24 these draft districts would help residents to make

1 sense of the mapmakers' intentions whose district may
2 take preliminary shapes for good reason and perhaps aid
3 lawmakers by staving off opposition, such as some of
4 the questions about the Illinois Voting Rights Act that
5 you've received today. The General Assembly have had
6 months to create districts which comply with the law
7 and the constitution.

8 If the committee genuinely seeks to
9 bring sunshine into this process, it's inappropriate
10 and inexcusable to give the public only a few days to
11 examine this map and without accompanying data. ICPR
12 hopes with today's hearing and Tuesday's joint hearing
13 with the Senate will be legitimate opportunities for
14 U.S. lawmakers to give serious consideration to the
15 comments offered today. Of course, there remains time
16 for this committee to hold additional public hearings
17 and adjust the draft map in accordance with the
18 feedback. We really hope that you will do that.

19 In addition, the General Assembly has
20 yet to release a draft of congressional districts for
21 public to review and offer changes. This also is
22 inexcusable. Ten years ago the General Assembly give
23 great deference to the congressional deligation in the
24 drawing of its own districts. It is regrettable that

1 history seems to be repeating itself as published
2 reports have indicated that Illinois' Democratic
3 Congressmen are intimately involved in the map-drawing
4 process this time around and that the public has not
5 been invited to sit in the audience let alone at the
6 table.

7 In the spirit of transparency, which
8 this committee has said it seeks to embrace, ICPR asks
9 this committee and the General Assembly release a draft
10 of those districts and summary language and hold
11 another set of regional public hearings at least a week
12 after the posting of that information. We are mainly
13 concerned that in this critical process partisan
14 interests have the ability to trump the public's
15 interest.

16 This is the foremost reason why sunshine
17 in redistricting is needed. Considering the process as
18 of late, we don't see any reason to believe that the
19 map at least near the close of business Friday, has
20 prioritized Illinois' interest.

21 While we are hardened by many of the
22 earlier steps that this committee has taken to make the
23 public feel included, we know you can do better than
24 offering an unexplained map and two premature hearings.

1 We look forward to this committee and its counterpart
2 of the senate taking additional steps to address these
3 shortcomings. Thank you.

4 MR. LANG: Thank you for your testimony. Are
5 there questions from committee members? Seeing none,
6 thank you very much.

7 MS. WOODWARD: Thank you.

8 MR. LANG: Next witness, Artemio Arreola,
9 Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights. Please
10 spell your name for the court reporter, try to limit
11 your comments to three minutes, sir.

12 MR. ARREOLA: Thank you. Thank you very
13 much. My name is Artemio Arreola, Illinois Coalition
14 for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, A-r-t-e-m-i-o,
15 A-r-r-e-o-l-a. Thank you for hosting this hearing,
16 Ms. Chair. And I want to thank you for coming to the
17 Latino community, Representative Fortner. And my
18 community always is happy to see the representative
19 working. It's not really usually, you know -- I want
20 to highlight it. And I'm really happy to say that.
21 Come to the Latino community more often. Thank you
22 very much.

23 The Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and
24 Refugee Rights, I commends to the Illinois Senate and

1 Illinois House Redistricting Committees for their work
2 with the proposal new legislative map. ICIRR supports
3 the proposed maps as an important step forward to the
4 voting rights representative of the Latino, Asian,
5 Arabs and Muslim communities of Illinois. We ask for
6 amendments to the proposed map to make adjustments in
7 several areas.

8 The proposal map largely delivers on
9 ICIRR's that request that the Latino, Asian, Middle
10 East communities be fairly represented in Illinois in
11 specific the proposal map. Protects the Latino and
12 Latino influence districts on the north side, and adds
13 one Latino Senate and the House district in the
14 southwest side, Cicero area, creates strong Latino and
15 Latino influence districts in Waukegan, Franklin Park
16 Aurora and Elgin areas.

17 United important communities of interest
18 like Chinatown and Little Village in single districts.
19 The map creates a Latino majority district that will
20 provide a representative initially by the powerful
21 House Speaker Madigan. And ICIRR, we believe that
22 having such powerful political representation will
23 greatly benefit the Latino and Immigrant interests in
24 Illinois.

1 There are several areas where ICIRR asks
2 for amendments to the proposal. Those include north
3 side, north side suburbs district, boundaries and
4 southwest suburbs district boundaries to better ensure
5 Asian and Middle East communities of the interest are
6 united. And increasing the Latino population
7 percentages in the proposed Zalewski and Madigan
8 districts. We will let our lawyer decide if the
9 current proposed boundaries meet the legal requirement
10 of the Voting Rights Act. With that, we do not offer
11 an opinion on this legal matter.

12 However, as a practical matter, the
13 proposed map is a significant step forward to
14 representative of the Latino Asian Muslim, Middle East
15 communities of Illinois. And this progression should
16 be celebrated. ICIRR complements the united Community
17 Congress, Asian American Institute, and Latino Agenda
18 on their excellent work to the design maps, however,
19 how very badly as represented.

20 The Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and
21 Refugee Rights continues to work for the passage of the
22 Illinois DREAM Act to advance the education
23 undocumented immigrant youth this legislative session;
24 for appropriate addressing of immigrant needs in the

1 Illinois budget and for measures that limit the
2 destruction of families through the cruel deportations
3 by the out of control secure community program. Thank
4 you very much.

5 MR. LANG: Thank you for your testimony.

6 Are there questions from committee
7 members? Mr. Fortner?

8 MR. FORTNER: To make sure I'm clear although
9 you say it's a step forward, your position would
10 coincide with what we've heard from UCCRO. It was a
11 step forward. It would really need to be amended to
12 really fairly represent what the Latino community would
13 be able and should be able to do given their population
14 growth?

15 MR. ARREOLA: We mentioned, for example, in
16 Zalewski, you know, with things in some of the move
17 little better the line to adjust the percentage, but
18 it's few blocks to make sure our percentage increase.

19 MR. FORTNER: So a higher percentage would
20 suit your community better than in those areas if --
21 thank you. Thank you.

22 MR. ARREOLA: Thank you.

23 MR. LANG: Thank you. Additional questions?

24 MR. ARREOLA: I give the writing --

1 MR. LANG: That would be terrific. Thank you
2 very much, sir, for your testimony.

3 The next witness is Ahlam Jbarra.
4 Please spell your name for the record. Tell us what
5 organization you're with and try to limit your comments
6 to three minutes.

7 MS. JBARA: Good afternoon. Good to see you
8 all again. My name is Ahlam Jbara. First name is
9 A-h-l-a-m. Last name is J-b-a-r-a. I am the Interim
10 Director of the Council of Islamic Organization of
11 Greater Chicago. We are a membership institution of
12 redistricting maps, advocacy organizations and
13 professional committees as well.

14 Basically, we will support United
15 Congress of neighborhood organizations. We support the
16 Asian-American Institute map for the north side,
17 northern suburbs, Asian districts. I'm hoping that we
18 can definitely work on improving this map. I do think
19 Representative Currie and all of you -- I'll go on the
20 record to say they have done really an amazing job this
21 year and has done a great job organizing broad
22 coalition with the organizations from diverse
23 communities. It's the first time I've seen it in my
24 years, you know, in Illinois.

1 One thing I do want to emphasize is
2 United Congress already mentioned as well other than
3 the Asian, Latino districts, African-American
4 districts, we hope that we can increase and make sure
5 that we look at United Congress' map. I really want to
6 emphasize the Arab community. As an Arab-American who
7 grew up in Illinois, I feel it's crucial that we start
8 you know, as elected officials, as a government,
9 recognizing the fact that Arab-Americans are in
10 Illinois. In the southwest suburbs, specifically, we
11 have over 150,000 Arab-Americans.

12 I don't have census numbers for you,
13 unfortunately, I don't. Many people say where are the
14 Arabs or where are the Muslims? I don't have census
15 numbers. Arab-Americans, when we fill out the census,
16 most of us check off white. Actually, I got other name
17 right there Arab-American. We don't have those
18 numbers. Realistically, you know, it's a great deal
19 whether it's social services, advocacy work, writing
20 grants for social services. Even the political work
21 that we have been doing with a Project -- a new
22 organization to show you border numbers of
23 Arab-Americans, Middle Easterners. We were constantly
24 being thrown to the sidelines. We are a community of

1 interest. We are a community who has brought a lot to
2 the southwest suburbs. And we have worked really hard
3 in making sure there are local officials in the
4 southwest suburbs know that we exist.

5 We have built a lot of relationships.
6 We ran several Arab-American candidates for local
7 election. Successes, we have two new members, one in
8 Justice and one in Bridgeview.

9 It's a start. It's a beginning. You
10 know, it's 2000 with a weekly incentive coverage. Our
11 community says, why are you doing this. We are not
12 counted. In 2010, despite that, we still went from
13 door to door in the southwest suburbs across the
14 street. Arab-Americans went door-to-door encouraging
15 our community members, because we do care about other
16 things like education, health care, racial profiling.
17 We have been in the forefront of that for the past ten
18 years. I highly encourage you to look at the House
19 District that represents our community so that we can
20 go to the elected officials strong and say, you are my
21 Senator, you are my support. Thank you very much.

22 MR. LANG: Thank you for your testimony. Are
23 there questions? Appreciate your attendance today.
24 Thank you.

1 The next witness, a Rema Ahmad, Project
2 Mobilize.

3 MS. JBARA: She has written testimony.

4 MR. LANG: We have written testimony from
5 that particular organization.

6 The next witness is Jesse Enriquez
7 Committee for United Back of the Yards. Please spell
8 your name for the court reporter and try to limit your
9 comments to three minutes, sir.

10 MR. INIGUEZ: Thank you. Good afternoon
11 Members of the Committee for Redistricting. My name is
12 Jesse Iniguez. It's J-e-s-s-e, last name is
13 I-n-i-g-u-e-z. Part of the committee for Unified Back
14 of the Yards, which is a group that's comprised of
15 residential institutions, social service agencies,
16 local schools, parks and business communities. The
17 mission of our committee is to advocate for an impact
18 and unified Back of the Yards during the redistricting
19 process. We had been working with the United Congress
20 of Community and Religious organizations and we support
21 their testimony and unity map.

22 As a preliminary matter, we would like
23 to incorporate our committee's testimony and exhibits
24 offered to the House redistricting committee on April

1 20, 2011. We would also like to thank the House
2 Redistricting Committee especially Representative
3 Currie and our Representatives Esther Golmar and Edward
4 Acevedo. For value transparency and public input and
5 for the ensuring that public hearings be held after
6 recent draft maps.

7 Our community has reviewed the proposed
8 House map, and it does not keep our neighborhood
9 intact, therefore, we cannot support in its current
10 form. We point your attention to Exhibit A and Exhibit
11 B.

12 Exhibit A shows the boundaries of our
13 neighborhood as compound and agreed by -- as agreed to
14 by our committee members. The borders are 39th and
15 Pershing on the north, 52nd Street to the south,
16 Halsted to the east and Western to the west.

17 Exhibit B shows a close-up of our
18 neighborhood with the current house redistrict
19 boundaries. As you can see, our neighborhood is
20 separated into three districts.

21 Back of the Yards is a community of
22 interest. An important principle in the redistricting
23 process is the following, a community of interest
24 should be kept together within the same district to the

1 extent possible. LULAC versus Prairie, a 2006 United
2 States Supreme Court case stands for the proposition
3 that landlords should be careful not to divide
4 populations or committees that had common interest or
5 interest.

6 We are one community. Our community
7 identified by Exhibit A show racial ethnic language
8 cultural and social economic identifies. We have one
9 vision. Our community is concerned. It's connected by
10 sheltering into advance immigrant rights, create peace,
11 accompany our youth with more economic development and
12 improve living conditions at our local schools. We are
13 one voice. We are asking you to keep us united so that
14 our voice is not diluted or fractured.

15 There are a lot of good people doing a
16 lot of good things in our neighborhood. We are
17 Christians coming together to address the struggles in
18 our neighbor, but it is a challenge. It becomes more
19 of a challenge when our community is divided. We are
20 now asking you to allow us to be one voice in the eyes
21 of the State Legislature. We offer Exhibits C through
22 K to the record. These exhibits are letters of support
23 from the Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council, Peace
24 Education Coalition, United Southwest Chamber of

1 Congress, Holy Cross, IHM Parish, St. Michael Parish,
2 The Union Impact Center, Mother for Peace Neighborhood
3 Housing Services. In addition, we have previously
4 submitted signed petitions from residents of our
5 neighborhood.

6 In conclusion, we thank the House of
7 Redistricting Committee for maintaining larger ethnic
8 communities intact in the proposed map. However, the
9 map does keep our community intact. If you take a
10 close look at our map, Exhibit A, we are really only
11 talking about blacks. We are not asking for a new
12 district in our neighborhood. We are talking about
13 blacks. In the eyes of the geographers, the change
14 that we are proposing may seem insignificant, but to us
15 it means the world. Therefore, we respectfully request
16 the redistricting committee to reconsider the house
17 district boundaries in our neighborhood and keeping our
18 Back of the Yards intact. Thank you.

19 MR. LANG: Thank you for your testimony. Are
20 there questions from committee members? Mr. Fortner?

21 MR. FORTNER: Thank you. I guess I'm looking
22 at two exhibits here. I'm trying to make sense of
23 them. One of the groups you reference in your exhibit
24 is Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council and Chico as

1 President, CEO. So when I read the letter in your
2 packet, they are specifically calling on keeping Back
3 in the Yards together, which is not in this proposal.

4 MR. INIGUEZ: That's correct.

5 MR. FORTNER: Because there was another
6 letter also presented earlier from the same
7 organization with the same signature, you know, on
8 behalf of that organization. I was just trying to make
9 sense of where they are. They want to see it in the
10 filed.

11 MR. INIGUEZ: Yes, well, I could only speak
12 to the meeting that we have had regarding the letters
13 that they gave us. I wasn't aware of the letter that
14 was previously given to the other organization.

15 MR. FORTNER: Thank you.

16 MR. LANG: Are there further questions?
17 Thank you very much for, sir, for your attendance today
18 and your testimony.

19 The next witness Ray Lopez Calderon from
20 Alionza and the Alliance of the southeast. As with the
21 other witnesses, sir, please spell your name for the
22 court reporter and try to limit your comments to three
23 minutes.

24 MR. CALDERON: Hello and thank you, Members

1 of the Committee. My name is Ray Lopez-Calderon. Last
2 name is spelled L-o-p-e-z, hyphen, C-a-l-d -- as in
3 David -- e-r-o-n as in Nancy. I work with an
4 organization called Alionza Leadership Institute where
5 I'm the Executive Director. And our local project in
6 Chicago is called Alionza of the Southeast. It is an
7 organization that represents 12 churches and community
8 organizations throughout, South Chicago, East side
9 Hegewisch and South Dearing. Many of the names of the
10 members are well-known to the Chicago area, members
11 such as Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, Public Baptist
12 Church, and I can go on. But there is a large
13 constituency there. On southeast Chicago particularly
14 is the first Latino community in the city of Chicago
15 was supported entry for Mexicans and Puerto Ricans,
16 both, in the late 19th Century and early 20th Century
17 respectively. It is also was a key point and entry for
18 African-American migrates coming from the south to work
19 in Chicago. And we, as an organization, support all
20 levels of unity within the African-American and Latino
21 community. And specifically, we support the UCCRO map,
22 the Unity map. And we have worked with UCCRO to have a
23 balanced approach and to make sure that all aspects of
24 our community have been represented.

1 We also applauded the legislature for
2 having released the maps for us to see, and also for
3 making great strides in communities, such as Little
4 Village and Chinatown where they were able to keep
5 certain communities intact. They think obviously the
6 level of work done by you shows good faith on your
7 part, and we applaud that.

8 With that said, because of the short
9 nature -- and this has been mentioned by -- I believe
10 it was mentioned earlier by the Campaign for Political
11 Reform as well as Deborah Harrington. We were in a
12 place where we had to pull up membership very quickly.
13 Once the map came out, there was a lot of phone calls
14 and a few e-mails. But we were not able to meet and
15 search where we get down and dirty with this map. And
16 so for us, we would like to remind and encourage you to
17 please, as much as possible, give us more advanced
18 notice for the other districts that still didn't get to
19 come out in terms of congressional, etcetera.

20 Even though we did not have a robust
21 conversation as we would have liked, we did get
22 feedback from our leaders. And we understood that of
23 the growing Latino specifically that has been branching
24 out from South Chicago, east side, going further down

1 into Hegewisch now and to the south suburbs, and also
2 Indiana, we understand that you cannot necessarily get
3 all those people together. We also understand you have
4 no ability to sort of come in and incorporate pieces of
5 Indiana, so we won't go there. So maybe perhaps we'd
6 like to, right. No, but the point I'm trying to make
7 is that we understand that our community -- it's very
8 difficult to balance between protecting
9 African-American districts as well as keeping Latino's
10 not diluted.

11 And we think that substantially right
12 now for the most part, two districts, which would
13 include the 26th and the Representative Howard's
14 district -- substantially cover most of our region, and
15 most of our members are happy with that, with one
16 caveat where in many ways for us is a deal breaker, is
17 the area that is a part of District 26, that covers
18 Immaculate Conception Church, Bowen High School, the
19 South Chicago Chamber of Commerce.

20 That little piece of South Chicago seems
21 to be lopped off in this current map and drawn into a
22 district that covers Navy Pier and Soldier Field. The
23 reactions from our members were very, very vivid. One
24 member in particular, Father Carl Cubito, from Our Lady

1 of Quadalupe asked that that please -- let you know
2 that he felt, as the dean and leader, for the
3 Archdiocese of Chicago who works with both Immaculate
4 Conception Church and Our Lady of Guadalupe Church and
5 all of the churches in Community C that the map was
6 actually ridiculous, and that it was not something that
7 made since in any kind of way to him. That was -- the
8 gut reaction, and yes, we share that.

9 I would also like to say that given the
10 fact that the rationale and the data itself is not
11 available to us, I had heard that it may be available I
12 guess on request or something like that. But since we
13 didn't have that, I couldn't react to that statement
14 through our membership. But our gut reaction is that
15 we support substantially the -- as best as you could,
16 to draw in the 25th and the 33rd districts, but we feel
17 that the 26th -- the south part of the 26th, that lumps
18 off, that piece of South Chicago should be restored.
19 So that we can continue to work together. And our
20 constituents -- which our fellow constituents represent
21 over 10,000 of them, that they continue to work
22 together, to find their choice, and they also work
23 together to work on issues that affect them deeply.

24 Again, thank you all for your tremendous

1 effort, especially Representative Flynn Currie. We
2 know that this is not an easy job. We understand
3 there's all kinds of legal interests to balance with
4 political interests and community interests and all
5 kinds of stuff, so I do not imagine that this is an
6 easy process. We do thank you for allowing us to have
7 this input.

8 MR. FORTNER: Thank you for your testimony.
9 Are there questions from committee members? Thank you,
10 very much.

11 Next witness, Valerie Leonard from the
12 Lawndale Alliance. Please spell your name for the
13 court reporter and limit your comments to three
14 minutes.

15 MS. LEONARD: My name is Valerie Leonard,
16 first name V-a-l-e-r-i-e, last name L-e-o-n-a-r-d. I
17 also have written testimony, and I will try my best to
18 not read it. There are a lot of numbers in there.
19 Generally speaking, we are essentially happy with the
20 map, with some caveat. And when I say, the map, I'm
21 focusing on the west side map, the African-American
22 majority map. We like the fact that you did your best
23 to keep North Lawndale intact as well as east and west
24 Garfield.

1 That's wonderful. But what we have is a
2 case where we have four majority/minority districts
3 that have effectively become, under this proposal, two
4 majority/minority districts, minority being
5 African-American, and two what you will call -- not
6 influence districts, but coalition districts
7 effectively. So if you look at Page 3 of my testimony,
8 you will see that we have four African-American
9 districts. They are all majority African-American
10 districts right now.

11 And after the map is done, we
12 effectively have two districts with under 50 percent
13 African-American voting age population, and two that
14 are just barely over 50 percent. So we are basically
15 asking if you can go and revisit that map and kind of
16 optimize those numbers. We have provided proposals
17 that were drawn by UCCRO. We are part of their
18 coalition. We support their community map. They have
19 been able to draw 57 minority districts all over the
20 state of Illinois. That includes majority as well as
21 influence and coalition districts. And we believe that
22 that proposal more than any proposal in the State of
23 Illinois optimizes opportunity for African-American,
24 Latinos as well as Asians who -- to vote for candidates

1 of our choice.

2 We're also concerned about Congressional
3 districts, the fact that those have not been released
4 to the best of our knowledge. But we have read in the
5 Crane Chicago Business that there are three
6 African-American districts that have been drawn with
7 51 percent majority.

8 We are concerned about that, because we
9 understand from our discussion with UCCRO that there is
10 an ability to draw those districts with 55 percent.
11 And as you know with the changing demographics that,
12 you know, that was challenging in and of itself. But
13 in closing we thank you for your time. We hope that
14 you can revisit the map and make sure that minority
15 participation is optimized. Thank you very much.

16 MR. LANG: Thank you for your testimony. Are
17 there questions from committee members? Mr. Fortner?

18 MR. FORTNER: Thank you. So I just make sure
19 I understand. Your position, basically, is in line
20 with UCCRO saying that the percentages in the proposed
21 map are not as strong as would satisfy the members of
22 your organization, and that you feel that the
23 larger -- the higher percentages, such as the UCCRO map
24 would be a better way for your groups to elect the

1 candidates of your choice?

2 MS. LEONARD: That's correct.

3 MR. FORTNER: Thank you.

4 MR. LANG: Anything further? Thank you very
5 much for being here today.

6 Next witness, Enrique Perez. Please
7 spell your name for the court reporter and limit your
8 comments to three minutes, sir.

9 MR. PEREZ: My name is Enrique Perez, all
10 committee members and fellow citizens, I'm here to
11 express my complete opposition towards this proposed
12 remap specifically because I believe it disenfranchises
13 the residents of the south loop, near south area of
14 Chicago. I do want to say that I have not had a chance
15 to look at the majority of the proposal because of all
16 the numbers and the map that just came out two days
17 ago, but I did focus specifically on the area, which is
18 in the south loop area of Chicago.

19 I want to start by saying, kind of
20 defining what the south loop generally is. I don't --
21 I have heard a lot of talk here about a quote/unquote
22 community of interest, and all the various
23 characteristics that define that in the various parts
24 of Chicago and the rest of Illinois and the suburbs and

1 all. But I want to say that in addition to some of
2 those characteristics that apply with the south loop as
3 well, I want to strongly emphasize that the south loop
4 is not just a community of interest, but a community of
5 choice. People that live there, choose to live there
6 for a variety of reasons.

7 Very briefly, the south loop, near south
8 area of Chicago is the area bounded by the river on the
9 west, the lake on the east, Congress Parkway, and then
10 the Stevenson Expressway on the south. Historically,
11 it was an old industrial commercial area that's been
12 revamped over the last couple of decades and is now
13 primarily a residential and business area as well.
14 People choose to live there for a variety of reasons.

15 And I submit to you that that's the
16 common bond or the community of choice that makes the
17 south loop what it is. It is a very, very diverse
18 community. You have all races, ethnicities, ages,
19 lifestyles and occupations. In the south loop, you'll
20 have, well, empty nesters, young professionals, family,
21 Artists, teenagers, business people, college kids,
22 retirees. It is really a very diverse, very collected
23 area, very open and diverse in terms of who lives there
24 and why people chose to live there.

1 Some of the older residents in terms
2 that have been there for a long time, are considered
3 quote/unquote "urban pioneers" because there was a time
4 when the south loop was not a place to go to live for a
5 variety of reasons. Once again, emphasizing the
6 community of choice. People choose to live there.
7 Okay. The south loop faces a serious set of problems
8 or a set of common problems, which people that live
9 there know what they are talking on in terms of living
10 there. One such problem is over development in a
11 number of aspects. Another problem is, for families
12 with young kids, is the lack of school space at the
13 elementary level, and probably within the next decade,
14 a lack of high school space as well, because of the
15 population growth that has occurred there in the south
16 loop. There are school governance issues.

17 There is a -- what's generally
18 considered to be a high tax rate without -- then
19 combined with falling property values and sets of
20 foreclosures and all the economic challenges that come
21 along with the modern times that we are living in, just
22 like in any other area of Chicago or Illinois, there's
23 competition for scarce city county and state resources.

24 And then another thing that the south

1 loop has, which is a result, I believe, of its high
2 property tax value rates and what not is an uncertainty
3 over tax income and finance resource allocations that
4 are or will be occurring or are occurring as we speak,
5 a lot of which obviously falls on the City of Chicago
6 government structure, but a lot of which is governed by
7 state law.

8 So having presented this set of problems
9 as I just have, plus the fact that we as residents of
10 the south loop know what we are getting into, we also
11 know what resources we have or what source of
12 information or allies, if you will, we have to solve
13 some of these problems. And one of those are the
14 various, you know, representatives, elected officials
15 that we have that represent us.

16 Currently, the south loop area is
17 represented by two state representatives, the fifth
18 district and the 26th district. If this plan passes as
19 it's proposed, and I have the maps right here, we are
20 going to go from two state representative districts to
21 three state representative districts. It's kind of you
22 take a slither of the south loop, it's long and thin
23 and you divide it up even further. For example -- and
24 excuse me, but if you don't know exactly where these

1 areas are, but if you live in the specific neighborhood
2 of Dearborn Park I or II on Prairie Road, which is
3 where I live in, you'll have one state rep. If you
4 walk two blocks east and you end up on Michigan Avenue,
5 you'll have another state representative. And then if
6 you live in central station and the Prairie district
7 and parts of it, then you'll have another state rep if
8 these plans go through.

9 Now, that may sound all good and fine
10 and academic, but we all have to sent our kids to the
11 same one local elementary school that just so happens
12 to be overcrowded, back to the overdevelopment and lack
13 of school space problem that I presented at the
14 beginning of my presentation. So if you live on one
15 street, you have to go to one state rep to try to get
16 more school funds, state funds or change, you know, an
17 Illinois Education Code to try to accommodate some of
18 these issues, but if you live across the street, you've
19 got to go to somebody else. And it's kind of hard
20 enough as it is already, but if this plan passes, like
21 I said at the beginning, it will make it harder for us
22 as south loop residents to get a good government
23 structure. We all face the same legal problems. We
24 all have to deal with it, but it just is kind of the

1 way it is. Another very local specific issue --

2 MR. LANG: I'm going to ask you to bring your
3 remarks to a close. I have extended you an extra two
4 minutes, bring your remarks to a close.

5 MR. PEREZ: Okay. So I would just ask, as a
6 solution, you consider keeping us at two state
7 representatives in the area of the south loop.
8 Ideally, I would like the area to have one state rep
9 that we can go to, but we have two right now. So I
10 would definitely ask -- and it's easy to do it the way
11 these maps are drawn, I would ask that you strongly
12 look at redrawing it so we can stay intact. Thank you.

13 MR. LANG: Thank you for your testimony. Are
14 there questions from committee members? We appreciate
15 you being here. And if that was a prepared statement
16 if you could provide it to our staff so that the
17 committee members can have a copy of it, we appreciate
18 it. Thank you.

19 The next witness is Clarence Chestand,
20 the for Black Political and Empower. Please spell your
21 name for the court reporter, sir, and try to limit your
22 comments to three minutes.

23 MR. CHESTAND: My name is Clarence Chestand.
24 I'm a member of the Black Force Empower. And my last

1 name is spelled C-h-e-s-t-a-n-d. And as I reviewed the
2 map yesterday, I don't know how we are going to support
3 this map. The districts are not compact and contiguous
4 even to Illinois State Law. When you look at the court
5 case. More importantly, the districts don't respect
6 communities now. Their respect contain with congress a
7 problem for us. Let the voters choose who they will
8 represent.

9 Chicago is drawn on the grid. There's
10 no way the majority districts that look like
11 stepladders going across the city or going cutting
12 through communities. We live in Chatham. We live in
13 Grand Crossing. We live in South Shore. We live in
14 Burnside. We live in various community areas as
15 designated by the City of Chicago. And when you go
16 downtown to get a lawyer, they respect the fact that
17 you live in Chatham and your house is worth a whole lot
18 more money than the house down the street in Grand
19 Crossing. So we would like for the maps to include and
20 retain our communities of interest.

21 The voting age population of these maps
22 don't meet federal guidelines in the courts.
23 Sixty-five percent voting population area, what the
24 courts would look for. I don't know how you expect

1 districts with 25 percent, 50 percent, to be majority
2 districts, African-Americans. I would like to thank
3 you for this opportunity. If you have any questions
4 for me --

5 MR. LANG: Thank you for your testimony. Are
6 there questions from committee members? Thank you,
7 sir. Appreciate your attendance today. Christopher
8 Didato, private citizen. Mr. Didato. Gentleman is not
9 here.

10 That completes the witness list --
11 Mr. Didato, please step in, sir. Spell your name for
12 the court reporter. Try to limit your comments to
13 three minutes.

14 MR. DIDATO: D-i-d-a-t-o, Christopher. I
15 just want -- I didn't intend to testify. I just
16 thought going through the booklet that I was provided,
17 the 32nd district -- the 32nd district goes about ten
18 or 11 blocks from east to west. And while it isn't
19 exactly three miles, it's about three miles from the
20 northernmost part to the southernmost part. I just
21 think that it's not a very compact area and that
22 perhaps you should redraw it so that it's maybe about
23 eight miles or maybe like five miles. But ten miles is
24 a little bit extreme. Thank you.

1 MR. LANG: Thank you, sir. Any questions of
2 the witness? There are none. Thank you, sir. That
3 completes the witness list that I received. Is there
4 any member of the audience that wishes to testify that
5 has not yet done so?

6 Are there any committee members with
7 comments or questions of the sponsor? Mr. Fortner?

8 MR. FORTNER: Actually, it's a question for
9 the Chair. I understand we still have a committee
10 scheduled for tomorrow. Is that going to be canceled.
11 I know we have the joint committee, which has been
12 announced for Tuesday.

13 MR. LANG: Tomorrow's meeting will be
14 canceled, sir. And when we leave today, we will recess
15 until the Tuesday adjourned hearing.

16 MR. FORTNER: And I guess this would probably
17 be for the sponsor then. And then on Tuesday, do you
18 anticipate that the amendment would be called for a
19 vote at that time?

20 MS. CURRIE: I don't have their intention on
21 that front, but it will be possible to do so. There
22 may still be other changes coming or it may be that we
23 would want to wait. I don't know. I don't know that
24 we know.

1 MR. FORTNER: So based on what we have heard,
2 it will be possible that we might see further
3 amendments?

4 MS. CURRIE: Or we might not. And whether or
5 not we do, we might vote on this amendment, and then of
6 course, there could always be trailer amendments. So
7 I'm not in the position to make a commitment as to
8 whether there will or won't be a vote on Tuesday, but I
9 know you will want to be there with or without your
10 vote.

11 MR. FORTNER: It's my intent to be there.
12 I'm sure it's yours as well. No other questions.

13 MR. LANG: Thank you. Anything further?
14 Representative Currie and the Chair and you can handle
15 this from there if you wish, Representative.

16 MS. CURRIE: Thank you very much. If we have
17 anything else to do, just as far as I know all we got
18 left is we will recess or call on the Chair, which we
19 all know will be at 9:00 on Tuesday morning unless
20 someone decided that's too late in the day and we
21 really need to start at 5:00. But if that happens,
22 we'll let you know.

23 (WHEREUPON, the proceeding
24 adjourned.)

1 STATE OF ILLINOIS)
) SS:
2 COUNTY OF C O O K)

3

4 ADRIENNE M. LIGHTFOOT, as an Officer of the
5 Court, says that she is a shorthand reporter doing
6 business in the State of Illinois; that she reported in
7 shorthand the proceedings of said public hearing, and
8 that the foregoing is a true and correct transcript of
9 her shorthand notes so taken as aforesaid, and contains
10 the proceedings given at said public hearing.

11 IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF: I have hereunto set my
12 verified digital signature this 21st day of May, 2011.

13

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Adrienne M. Lightfoot
No. 084-004276
Certified Shorthand Reporter
Notary Public

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