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BEFORE THE
ILLINOIS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE
ELGIN

Hearing held, pursuant to notice, on the 5th
day of April, 2021, between the hours of 5:30 p.m.
and 6:20 p.m. via Zoom teleconference.

1 A P P E A R A N C E S

2 COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

3 Representative Elizabeth Hernandez, Chairperson
4 Representative Tim Butler, Republican Spokesperson
5 Representative Avery Bourne, Member
6 Representative Dave Severin, Member
7 Representative Ryan Spain, Member

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Court Reporter
Lydia Pinkawa, CSR
Illinois CSR #084-002342
Alaris Litigation Services
711 North Eleventh Street
St. Louis, Missouri 63101

1 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: House committee on
2 redistricting shall come to order. I'm state
3 representative Lisa Hernandez. I'm a member of the
4 redistricting committee and will be chairing today's
5 hearing. I'd like to recognize our local
6 representatives who have joined us. I'll start off
7 with Representative Anna Moeller. Thank you for
8 joining us, Representative.

9 REPRESENTATIVE MOELLER: Madam Chairwoman.

10 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: And I will start with a
11 statement and then I would ask Leader Butler as well
12 to say a few words. So I'll start off with thanking
13 everyone who has chosen to participate in today's
14 hearing. Your insight and participation is as
15 important as ever as we begin the redistricting
16 process under unprecedented circumstances. The
17 United States and Illinois constitution require the
18 general assembly to redraw political boundaries every
19 ten years to account for population shifts. These
20 hearings are a part of that process.

21 The House Democrats are dedicated to
22 transparency and public participation in the
23 redistricting process. While state law requires a
24 minimum of four public hearings throughout the state,

1 our committee intends to hold far more and present
2 additional avenues for public participation. Our
3 goal is to hear from as many people as possible and
4 to gain as much information as possible about the
5 diverse communities of our state.

6 Our staff have been making many, many phone
7 calls to encourage participation in these upcoming
8 hearings. Those who wish to participate should be
9 given an opportunity, period. We are holding a
10 series of virtual and in person hearings throughout
11 the state. Early last month we announced a schedule
12 of 23 hearings before proposing a redistricting plan.
13 For comparison, in 2011 the House redistricting
14 committee held 17 hearings in total.

15 While we are guided in this endeavor by the
16 United States constitution, the Federal Voting Rights
17 Act, the Illinois constitution and the Illinois
18 Voting Rights Act, we are also interested in any
19 relevant demographic information such as social,
20 political, economic, religious or any other
21 characteristics that are unique to your community.
22 We want to hear your specific views on any social,
23 political, economic or religious interests commonly
24 held in the community, any specific interest groups

1 that exist, any concerns you have regarding the
2 current boundaries or alternatively, what works well
3 about the current boundaries and suggestions for the
4 drawing of new boundaries. In short, we want to hear
5 any testimony that is relevant to the drawing of our
6 new political boundaries.

7 This year, for the first time, Illinois
8 residents will be able to participate in the process
9 from the comfort of their own homes, including
10 through remote participation in these hearings and by
11 drawing their own maps via web site. And that could
12 be found in the public drawing portal available at
13 IllinoisHouseDems.com, slash, Redistricting, which
14 allows any Illinois resident to draw districts and
15 share those maps with the committee for
16 consideration. The public may also submit written
17 testimony or other public comment to the committee by
18 e-mail at RedistrictingCommittee@HDS.ilga.gov. All
19 written testimony, public comments, maps submitted to
20 the committee will be made publicly available at
21 ILGA.gov and ILHouseDems.com, slash, Redistricting.
22 Transcripts of the committee's hearings will also be
23 uploaded to those sites.

24 As for today, we will begin with a short

1 slide show presentation. Following that brief
2 presentation, we have a number of witnesses who have
3 indicated a desire to testify. If you have written
4 testimony prepared, we would ask that you submit that
5 testimony to us and just briefly summarize it in your
6 oral presentation. Leader Butler, would you like to
7 say a few words?

8 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: Thank you, Madam Chair,
9 Chair Hernandez. This is, I think, the eighth
10 redistricting committee hearing I've been in since
11 Thursday, so looking forward to hearing what the
12 folks around the Elgin region and Kane and Cook and
13 surrounding areas have to say to us here. I do have
14 several of my House Republican colleagues on with me.
15 Representative Avery Bourne, who is in a district
16 just south of mine here in central Illinois. We've
17 got Representative Tom Morrison on board. We've got
18 Representative Spain, Ryan Spain, Leader Spain;
19 Representative Dave Severin from southern Illinois
20 and Representative Dan Ugaste from Geneva who
21 represents a district in the area. So looking
22 forward to it.

23 And Madam Chair, just one thing. I made this
24 ask a few days ago, I think with Representative

1 Tarver, but it would be nice if, at one of these
2 committee hearings, that we had a bit of an overview
3 of how the mapping process works on the web site. I
4 know we've got a slide show on overall redistricting,
5 but I think we'd like to see how the physical mapping
6 process works that's referred to. So if we could do
7 that at some point, that would be good as well. So
8 look forward to hearing everyone's testimony tonight
9 and glad to be here.

10 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Wonderful. And just so
11 you know, Leader Butler, I did inquire, put an
12 inquiry about that and it's being looked into. So
13 I did want you to know that.

14 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: Thank you.

15 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, we will begin with
16 the short video and I believe, who is it who is going
17 to be presenting? Allie McNamara.

18 MS. McNAMARA: Hi. Good evening, everybody.

19 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Good evening.

20 MS. McNAMARA: Let me share my screen. Good
21 evening, everybody. My name is Allie McNamara.
22 That's A-l-l-i-e, M-c-N-a-m-a-r-a. I'm an employee
23 with the Illinois House of Representatives and I'm
24 here to give a brief overview of the state's

1 redistricting procedure. I'll briefly discuss the
2 background of redistricting and the redistricting
3 process here in Illinois. I will also be going over
4 federal and state redistricting requirements and
5 guidelines. Finally, we will be looking at what
6 preliminary data reveals about population trends in
7 the state and in the region.

8 Redistricting is the process that ensures all
9 Illinois residents are afforded equal representation
10 in the state legislature and federal Congress as
11 guaranteed by the U.S. constitution. The U.S.
12 Supreme Court held a series of rulings in the 1960's
13 that congressional and state legislative districts in
14 each state must be of approximately equal population,
15 establishing the principle of one person, one vote.
16 As a result, states redraw their congressional and
17 state districts every ten years to reflect changes in
18 population.

19 The timeline for redrawing the legislative
20 map is based on the Illinois constitution. The
21 constitution gives the Illinois legislature the
22 initial responsibility of passing the new legislative
23 map. Both the state House and the state Senate must
24 pass a plan which then must be signed by the

1 governor.

2 If a new map does not go into effect by the
3 constitutional deadline of June 30th, responsibility
4 for creating a new map passes from the legislature
5 to a legislative redistricting commission. The
6 commission would consist of eight members, with two
7 each appointed by the legislative leaders and no more
8 than four from the same political party. A majority
9 vote of five or more commission members will
10 constitute final approval of a new map.

11 However, if the commission does not agree to
12 a map by September 1st, the Illinois Supreme Court
13 will submit two names, one from each party, to the
14 Illinois secretary of state, who will then choose one
15 name at random to serve as the ninth member of the
16 commission. Five of the nine members of the
17 commission must agree to a plan no later than
18 October 5th.

19 In order to understand the process of
20 creating new districts, we must look at some legal
21 guiding principles. First among these is equal
22 population. Congressional districts must be nearly
23 equal in population, while state districts must be
24 substantially equal population. Federal and state

1 law also requires that all districts be contiguous,
2 which means that all parts of a district must be next
3 to each other unless connected by water. Annexations
4 and unincorporated areas in municipalities and
5 counties sometimes mean communities are
6 discontinuous. However, congressional and state
7 districts must be adjacent or connected at all
8 points.

9 A more difficult requirement to define is
10 compactness. There are at least 30 different
11 scientific ways to measure how compact a district is,
12 but no statute or court precedent identifies standard
13 criteria of compactness. In theory, compactness
14 focuses on the shape of a district's boundaries, how
15 far out a district is from one central core and where
16 the district's population center of gravity is. In
17 practice, compactness is hindered by geography and on
18 the ground realities. So often the interpretation of
19 compactness involves more than a visual test.

20 Illinois is one of 14 states that nests its
21 house districts, also called representative
22 districts, inside one of its senate districts, also
23 called legislative districts. Map makers will also
24 look, where possible, to follow existing political

1 and geographical boundaries in ways that maximize
2 a community's opportunities to have its interests
3 represented. As you know, however, county,
4 municipality, township and natural geographic
5 boundaries are not always compact or contiguous.

6 By studying population data and holding
7 public hearings like this one to listen to the
8 thoughts of residents across the state, law makers
9 look to identify what are known as communities of
10 interest. A community of interest is a group of
11 people concentrated in a geographic area where
12 socially, culturally, ethnically, economically,
13 religiously or otherwise alike can be joined in a
14 district to most effectively have their voices heard.
15 The factors contributing to any particular community
16 of interest will vary throughout the state.

17 Federal law requires redistricting plans to
18 respect minority representation. The principles of
19 the Federal Voting Rights Act are in place to prevent
20 the reduction of opportunities for minority
21 populations to participate equally in the electoral
22 process. However, districts cannot be drawn solely
23 on the basis of race.

24 Illinois law also protects representation of

1 racial and language minority groups. The Illinois
2 Voting Rights Act helps to prevent minority
3 fracturing or dividing a concentration of minorities
4 among two or more districts by requiring map makers
5 to consider creating crossover districts, coalition
6 or influence districts.

7 A crossover district is one in which large
8 minority groups may elect the candidate of its choice
9 with help from voters of the majority group. A
10 coalition district brings multiple racial or language
11 minority groups together to elect a candidate of
12 their choice. An influence district allows a group
13 to influence an election outcome without being the
14 majority population in a district.

15 These state law requirements come into play
16 only after compliance with federal law and the U.S.
17 and state constitutional requirements on
18 redistricting. In addition, the law ensures
19 transparency and public participation by requiring
20 public hearings across the state, one of which we're
21 having right now. At the end of the presentation, we
22 will display an e-mail address on the screen that
23 Chair Hernandez has already provided where you can
24 submit your ideas. The committee is also accepting

1 written testimony today.

2 Now that we've covered the redistricting
3 process, let's discuss what data shows about Illinois
4 population. The U.S. Census Bureau has delayed the
5 release of much of the decennial census data by more
6 than six months until this fall. However, the U.S.
7 Census Bureau's annual population estimates show some
8 trends that can help inform the work ahead.

9 The census 2019 population estimate shows an
10 overall decline in state population over the past
11 decade. There are, however, areas that project out
12 population gains. Communities with the largest
13 population by percentage increases since 2010 are
14 Kendall, Monroe, Champaign and Kane counties.
15 Demographically speaking, the state's white
16 population is projected to decline, while
17 African-American population statewide will likely see
18 a smaller overall decline. The Hispanic and Asian
19 populations across Illinois are projected to see
20 growth.

21 Locally, Kane County's population stands to
22 increase. While the white population will drop
23 slightly, the African-American, Hispanic and Asian
24 populations will see growth over the next decade.

1 Locally, Cook County is projected to see a modest
2 decrease in population. Cook County's white and
3 African-American population stand to decline, while
4 Asian and Hispanic population will likely increase.

5 Thank you very much for your attention and
6 for coming out to share your thoughts today. As the
7 Chair mentioned, you'll be able to find testimony
8 from this and other hearings on ILGA.gov and on
9 ILHouseDems.com, slash, Redistricting. The
10 redistricting web site offers additional ways to
11 engage with the process, including our public drawing
12 portal where you can draw and submit your own
13 district maps. You can send further written
14 testimony and suggestions to the committee any time
15 by e-mailing RedistrictingCommittee@HDS.ILGA.gov.
16 Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you, Allie,
18 for that presentation. So we have all together, let
19 me just double check if I got this right, we have
20 three panels. I'm going to ask Leader Butler if it's
21 okay if we could have questions after all the panels
22 or would you like it after each panel? How would you
23 prefer? Should we wait till the end?

24 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: Whichever -- I mean, we

1 have been doing it by panel.

2 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay.

3 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: But whatever works for
4 you. It doesn't matter to me either way, honestly.

5 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: All right, let's do that.
6 Okay, so the first panel begins with Mr. David
7 Kaptain. He's from the city of Elgin. He's the
8 mayor. We'll begin with Mr. Kaptain and then
9 followed by, I believe Mr. John Skillman is on, if he
10 wishes to testify as well. And then there is Eric
11 Johnson, also from Carpentersville, and then Chris
12 Nelson, West Dundee mayor. Mr. Kaptain, if you'd
13 like to begin.

14 MAYOR KAPTAIN: Thank you very much, Chair
15 Hernandez. Elgin is one of the ten largest cities in
16 the state of Illinois. We are also one of the most
17 diverse communities in the entire country. A few
18 years ago we were selected, I believe 32nd or 33rd as
19 the most diverse community of over a hundred thousand
20 people in the entire country. In the last decade, we
21 have moved from what has been perceived as a weakness
22 in our community into a strength and shown that with
23 our diversity, it allows us to become able to work
24 together to become a better community.

1 Elgin is roughly, based on the last census
2 which is now 11 years old, roughly 44 percent Latinx,
3 44 percent Caucasian, six percent Black and six
4 percent Asian. We also have a large senior
5 population. At one time we had one of the fastest
6 growing senior populations in the entire state.

7 Our local government is elected at large. We
8 try to do our best to represent every ethnic group in
9 our city. Representative Moeller grew up in the
10 Elgin political system and became a representative
11 for the entire community and we take great pride in
12 that. We're all elected at large and we all work
13 hard within our community to represent everyone here.

14 My mentor and great friend of mine who
15 recently passed away was Bob Gilliam. Bob Gilliam
16 served on the Elgin city council for 40 years as a
17 council member. He was a Black member of the
18 community, he represented his ethnic community very
19 well. But Bob was never elected by just the Black
20 community in this city. He was elected by the entire
21 community or he never would have been there for
22 40 years. He did a great job, he represented
23 everybody fairly and he and I had many conversations
24 as what it takes to be a good representative. We try

1 to represent everybody equally and be fair. You may
2 not like what we say, you may not like what we do,
3 but we're going to be fair to you and that's what I
4 try to do as mayor of the city.

5 I've been mayor for ten years. I have a
6 couple more years to go. I was a city councilman for
7 six years and I served on planning commissions. So
8 I've been involved in city politics for 20 years.
9 And this is a part-time job. This is not a full-time
10 manager's job.

11 We all try to represent people as best we
12 can. I would say that it would be disingenuous of me
13 to say that we should divide our community based on
14 ethnicity. I think that we need to look at this
15 community as a whole and we look at somebody that
16 could represent us all. If that takes one person or
17 two persons -- I believe we now have three or four
18 representatives that touch districts, their district
19 touches part of our city and our community. And I
20 live personally on the borderline. I'm probably
21 200 feet from Representative Moeller and Senator
22 Castro's district and been there for a number of
23 years. And it creates some challenges for people,
24 but it also creates opportunities. And I think the

1 idea is to represent people as best we can.

2 My neighborhood has changed over 30 years.

3 I started here as one of the younger members and now
4 I've become one of the older. Our people moved here
5 because they feel safe and they feel welcome in this
6 community. Their votes count. If separation becomes
7 a political distraction within the community, we'll
8 never move on as a city and we'll never move on as a
9 community.

10 We have a great neighborhood here. Many of
11 my neighbors are Latinx. We have many, many Black
12 people within the community. My voting, the voting
13 record for our neighborhood is one of the strongest
14 in the entire city. We vote, we vote what we think,
15 we vote what we feel represents us. This is my
16 opinion. You know, I think that we need to have
17 representation of a community that fits the
18 community. It's your decision how you district, but
19 our representation in this community I think depends
20 on how we look at us as a community. When we had
21 racial strife within the state of Illinois and within
22 the country, Elgin was one of the communities that
23 walked through that without having great issues
24 because we work together and we felt like we can sit

1 down together and discuss problems. And if that's
2 what the future of America should be, I would totally
3 agree with that. Thank you for listening to me.
4 I'll be happy to answer any questions when you get
5 through the presentations.

6 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Before we move on to the
7 next speaker, Mayor Kaptain, can you spell your name,
8 for the purposes of the record, spell out your name?
9 And I'm going to ask the rest of the witnesses as
10 well to spell out their name when they --

11 MAYOR KAPTAIN: Absolutely. Thank you for
12 asking. David Kaptain, K-a-p-t-a-i-n. And I'm the
13 mayor of the city of Elgin.

14 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you. Is Mr. John
15 Skillman on?

16 PRESIDENT SKILLMAN: Yes, I am, thank you. John
17 Skillman, J-o-h-n, S-k-i-l-l-m-a-n. I do have a
18 question for Mayor Kaptain.

19 MAYOR KAPTAIN: Yes.

20 PRESIDENT SKILLMAN: First of all, thank you.
21 That's a great presentation. I'm just wondering how
22 many representatives do you have in Elgin that border
23 to you? Maybe I missed that.

24 MAYOR KAPTAIN: I believe -- maybe Representative

1 Moeller could answer that better, but I believe we
2 have five or six. And many of them touch small
3 sections of our community. I know Representative
4 Crespo, Ugaste is part of our community as well. We
5 have Senator DeWitte, Senator Castro, Representative
6 Moeller. I believe Skillicorn was our representative
7 at one time. I may be outdated, but I believe we
8 have a number. And some of them don't, you know,
9 just small portions of our community.

10 PRESIDENT SKILLMAN: Yes, that's where I think I
11 have, you know, that's why I'm here tonight, because
12 I believe that we have a few, too, that some, a
13 couple of them actually just have a couple blocks and
14 it just doesn't make sense, you know. And I think
15 that's really why -- but I'm going to really defer,
16 so everybody understands, to my village manager is
17 actually on, Eric Johnson, so I won't have to repeat,
18 so I'll have him go through some of that. But
19 personally, Senator Castro and state rep Moeller have
20 done a great job, first I want to thank them, of
21 course. They've looked out for, of course,
22 Carpentersville and Elgin for many, many years. And
23 I appreciate that, especially through the COVID
24 vaccinations, they've helped us out, also. So state

1 representative Ness is new to our area and she also
2 is part of McHenry County, which I don't know if
3 everybody knows that. She's from McHenry County, but
4 she's new in the position. I believe she replaced
5 Alan's position when he moved away. And then I think
6 I have Martin McLaughlin. Mr. McLaughlin used to be
7 the mayor of Barrington Hills, great guy.

8 But that's part of the cut up situation I'm
9 talking about where, like my subdivision where I'm at
10 on the west side of Carpentersville by Spring Hill
11 Mall, you know, I have Marty and then the next block
12 or streets over have Suzanne Ness. So that's where
13 we're not sure, you know, we're getting all that
14 representation that we think we need up here.

15 You know, we're north of Elgin, so everybody
16 is aware of it. Elgin is the big -- we're the third
17 largest community in Kane County. Elgin is our big
18 brother there and so we basically have the same, you
19 know, makeup of the community, obviously smaller, you
20 know, we're 40,000 people, not compared to, I don't
21 know how many people exactly you have in Elgin. But
22 we're made up of the same, though, basically. But I
23 wanted to -- Eric, are you on?

24 MR. JOHNSON: Yes, I am.

1 PRESIDENT SKILLMAN: Okay, I'll have you take it.
2 I don't want to have to -- we'll both be talking
3 about the same stuff. If you take it from there, I'd
4 appreciate it.

5 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Mayor
6 Skillman. Go right ahead, Eric.

7 MR. JOHNSON: I'm Eric Johnson. E-r-i-c,
8 J-o-h-n-s-o-n. As President John Skillman had said,
9 I'm the village manager for Carpentersville. One of
10 the things that I've noticed in my two years here at
11 the village is, to echo both Elgin's mayor and our
12 village president, is the divided representative
13 democracy that we have. Carpentersville has about
14 40,000 residents. The districts are divided roughly
15 along the river, on the east side of the river
16 represented by Senator Castro and Representative
17 Moeller. Don DeWitte is on the -- I'm sorry, I have
18 it reversed. Don DeWitte's on the west side, Castro
19 on the east side and then we have further
20 representation to the north.

21 Our belief is just that a community of our
22 size, and it is difficult with different aspects of
23 the voting rights acts, trying to break up the
24 districts based on different ethnic groups and

1 backgrounds, but we view it as important to, and I
2 forget the term that was used in the presentation,
3 but communities of interest. Carpentersville, being
4 the third largest city in Kane County, we are nestled
5 right in the northeast corner of the county. We
6 border McHenry County on the north side, run almost
7 up to Cook County on the east side. And as these
8 district boundaries start crossing not only community
9 borders from municipalities but county borders,
10 interests get further divided.

11 And it's our belief that, you know,
12 communities of interest, regardless of political
13 makeup or even demographic makeup, you know, people
14 identify most closely with their local municipality.
15 And being able to keep those groups together, echoing
16 what Mayor Kaptain said, we don't always agree.
17 There's plenty of diversity within Carpentersville,
18 in Carpentersville and our communities but, you know,
19 wanting to see our interest, municipal interest
20 concentrated in fewer districts. I think it would
21 give us better representation in Springfield and
22 downstate.

23 We've been lucky over the years to have some
24 good representation and representatives who take care

1 of our interests even though we don't make up the
2 majority of their districts. But I've always found
3 that, you know, the representatives tend to be able
4 to focus, you know, I would assume it would be easier
5 on them to have fewer communities that they're
6 representing because it has to chop up their
7 attention. And you know, representing 16, small
8 parts of 16 different communities actually gets more
9 difficult than representing, you know, two or three
10 communities which could have more regional interests
11 combined with that local municipal interest.

12 I will be submitting -- I thank the
13 chairwoman for giving that e-mail address -- some
14 more written information to not take up more time
15 here today. But you know, our biggest interest for
16 Carpentersville and our region is a belief of not
17 splitting up the municipalities as much as possible
18 in the redistricting process.

19 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Mr. Johnson.
20 Next we have Mr. Chris Nelson, mayor of West Dundee.
21 Is he not on?

22 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: I don't think I see Mayor
23 Nelson on.

24 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Yes, okay.

1 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: And Madam Chair, if we
2 could just ask to make sure these folks stick around
3 if we're going to ask questions at the end.

4 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Absolutely.

5 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: Okay, thanks.

6 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: So as requested by Leader
7 Butler, I do ask that the witnesses do stay on at
8 least for the questions. So that actually concludes
9 our first panel, so we can open it up to questions.
10 Is there any questions from members?

11 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: Sure, let me just start
12 and thank you all for being here today. And I think
13 this panel underscores so much of what we've been
14 talking about, what I've been talking about over
15 these hearings, and it's the dilution of communities.
16 My district, I live in Springfield. I cover four
17 counties in downstate Illinois. But I come from a
18 community of 115,000 people here in Springfield. We
19 have three state representatives in the city of
20 Springfield because it's been divided up for
21 political reasons, very honestly. My neighbors from
22 a few blocks south of me are represented by somebody
23 from Decatur.

24 And I think when I look at the map of Elgin

1 and especially Carpentersville and West Dundee, I
2 mean, Carpentersville and West Dundee, you guys are
3 right next to each other, yet it seems you've got
4 four or so state representatives that feed into those
5 communities. And I think, Mr. Johnson, what you said
6 is very correct. I think people become very confused
7 when existing boundaries are not respected in the
8 legislative redistricting process. And people get
9 pretty confused about -- it's hard enough to remember
10 who your city alderman is or your county board
11 member, but also then when lines are drawn all over
12 the place with your representatives both in
13 Springfield and Washington, it gets very confusing.
14 So I appreciate what you all had to say this evening.

15 Mayor Kaptain, if you don't mind, because I
16 honestly don't know, what's kind of the racial and
17 ethnic breakup of your city council?

18 MAYOR KAPTAIN: We are, well, we have nine
19 members. We just went to nine members at the last
20 election. And for decades we were seven members. We
21 have two African-Americans, two Latinx, we have, the
22 remainders are Caucasian.

23 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: So that's pretty
24 representative of your community, I would say.

1 MAYOR KAPTAIN: Very close.

2 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: I mean, I know Elgin, as
3 you said, that Elgin has had a burgeoning Latinx
4 population over the last couple decades.

5 MAYOR KAPTAIN: These are all non, these are
6 non-partisan.

7 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: Right.

8 MAYOR KAPTAIN: This is a nonpartisan election
9 and we take great pride in that. And we're a home
10 rule community and that's kind of the way that we've
11 governed ourselves for 50 years.

12 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: Well, you're going to
13 pass my community of Springfield in the not too
14 distant future, I believe, in population, so I
15 understand it. And maybe we should make these
16 positions nonpartisan as well in the legislature.
17 Maybe that might do us some good, if we make
18 legislative positions nonpartisan.

19 But my point on asking you about the ethnic
20 and racial breakup of your city council is it's not
21 necessarily reflective of the legislative balance in
22 the area, I believe. I mean, Senator Castro
23 obviously represents part of the community, but the
24 rest of the area seems not to be, I don't believe

1 there's any African-Americans from that area of the
2 state that represent the general assembly. And
3 obviously I would, you know, hazard a guess, given
4 the burgeoning population, that the Latinx population
5 is not overly represented in that area. We've got
6 Senator Castro and I think that's about it from the
7 Elgin area.

8 And I think this is one of the issues we get
9 into when we divide these communities up. They have
10 been divided for political reasons and one of the
11 side effects has been splitting communities. This
12 term communities of interest can be taken a lot of
13 ways. And certainly racial and ethnic and minority
14 communities need to be respected, respected under the
15 law and there's well established statute and case law
16 for that. But also dividing up cities and villages
17 and counties needlessly is one of the reasons why I
18 also believe that not as many minorities have been
19 elected into these positions. And I think it's
20 something we need to pay attention to as we're going
21 through here. So I appreciate what you guys have to
22 say.

23 One of my former -- one of your former
24 representatives used to live across the hall from me

1 in an apartment in downtown Springfield when she was
2 a member of the general assembly, Ruth Munson. So I
3 look forward to hopefully visiting your area soon and
4 that's a great area of the state and I appreciate you
5 guys coming out here today and talking to us about
6 the mapping process.

7 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, Representative
8 Ugaste, you have a question?

9 REPRESENTATIVE UGASTE: Thank you, Chair
10 Hernandez. It's more of a statement just in followup
11 to what a few of the witnesses were talking about.
12 I represent a good portion of Kane County, certainly
13 not in geography or population in any sizable
14 portion, but most of my district lies solely within
15 Kane County. I do go into the very southern tip of
16 McHenry County, but I don't think I have but maybe
17 four precincts up there with a total population of
18 less than a couple thousand. So this area is
19 divided.

20 I believe that to, while I thoroughly enjoy
21 and like all the areas I represent, my district only
22 includes one town that is solely within my geographic
23 boundaries and that's Pingree Grove, which is the
24 smallest community in my entire district, and it's

1 just west of Elgin. Great community, great people
2 there, but it's the only community that lies solely
3 within my district. And I have heard from numerous
4 people and believe this myself, that we'd be better
5 served if we did a bit more representation of
6 contiguous boundaries and have towns that are
7 completely included within the area and the counties
8 not carved up into different portions so that there
9 are so many different people representing them.
10 People feel that, as others have stated, that they're
11 not represented quite as well when they don't know
12 who their representatives are. Because the towns I'm
13 in, the town I live in actually has three different
14 representatives, and we're even smaller than the town
15 of Carpentersville.

16 So I think if we look at this process moving
17 forward and try and stick as best we can with keeping
18 the boundaries contiguous and the towns and
19 respecting those as well as the other factors that
20 have to be considered, I think everyone would
21 probably be much happier and better served. Thank
22 you.

23 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you. Is there any
24 further questions from members? Okay, if not, we

1 will go to our second panel. And we have two
2 witnesses under the second panel. Mr. Carl
3 Strathmann, or I'm sorry, I'm pronouncing that
4 incorrectly, Strathmann at Elgin Township Democratic
5 -- that's what I have here. And then Vern Tepe, Kane
6 County board member. We'll start with Mr. Carl
7 Strathmann. Please don't forget to spell your name
8 out. Thank you.

9 I don't see Mr. Strathmann here.

10 REPRESENTATIVE MOELLER: I don't see him.

11 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, we will move on to
12 Mr. Vern Tepe.

13 MR. TEPE: Thank you. Please permit me to do a
14 minor correction. It's Verner Tepe.

15 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Tepe. Sorry about that.

16 MR. TEPE: And thank you very much. And as you
17 mentioned, I'm a member of the county board. So I've
18 been thrown into the political arena, but at a much
19 older age than most of the people in this call.

20 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Could you please spell
21 your name? We still need it for the record.

22 MR. TEPE: Yes. T-e-p-e. Short name, frequently
23 misspelled. First off, I'd like to initially echo
24 all of the responses that were done by Mayor Kaptain.

1 I think he did a really interesting and a very
2 thorough job of explaining the kinds of things that
3 happen in Elgin and the kind of welcoming community
4 that's in Elgin. And I think it's quite interesting
5 that Representative Moeller is here and you mentioned
6 Senator Castro.

7 To me, it's very important that the
8 communities have a cohesive representation. And a
9 large part of Elgin on the western side is not
10 represented by either Ms. Moeller or Ms. Castro.
11 They're represented by Mr. Ugaste and Mr. DeWitte.
12 And the challenge for all four of them is to be able
13 to really do an effective job of representing the
14 community. And it is virtually impossible for
15 Mr. Ugaste or Mr. DeWitte to really come up and get
16 involved in the Elgin aspect of things because the
17 part of Elgin that they represent is on the far west
18 side.

19 So the key thing I would urge is to find a
20 way to include those of us on the west side of Elgin
21 who feel that we are a major part of Elgin, okay, and
22 would like to be represented that way. So thank you.
23 I tried to keep it short and sweet.

24 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Mr. Tepe.

1 Leader Butler, that concludes the second panel. I
2 have two more, but I don't see Mister -- there's
3 another person missing here, Wendy Covich from the
4 League of Women Voters. And then we have Sergio
5 Rodriguez. Do you want to just go into the second
6 panel and then we'll conclude?

7 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: Sure, that's fine. Panel
8 three with Mr. Rodriguez, okay.

9 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: So since Wendy Covich is
10 not here, Mr. Sergio Rodriguez, do you want to -- and
11 please spell your name out. Thank you.

12 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Yes, thank you. Sergio
13 Rodriguez. Sergio is spelled S-e-r-g-i-o.
14 Rodriguez, R-o-d-r-i-g-u-e-z. And I want to say good
15 evening and thank you to Madam Chairperson Hernandez
16 and Leader Butler for allowing me to speak today.

17 My name is Sergio Rodriguez and I'm the board
18 president of Centro de Informacion, a not-for-profit
19 social agency headquartered in Elgin, Illinois that
20 serves the surrounding area including Carpentersville
21 and Hanover Park. It serves to empower Hispanics
22 with the ability to effectively integrate into our
23 greater community through facilitation of
24 information, education, citizenship and well-being.

1 I would like to take a moment to really thank
2 Representative Anna Moeller and State Senator Castro
3 who have been very active with Centro de Informacion
4 and helped us in doing what we do, and that's helping
5 the Latino community. I also want to make sure I'm
6 echoing what village president Skillman said. I
7 actually grew up in Carpentersville in the '80s and
8 '90s and now what we see Carpentersville as today is
9 a lot different than when I grew up. And a big
10 portion of that has been through the growth of the
11 Latino community.

12 And I want to make sure, you know, I do agree
13 with some of the things that Mayor Kaptain said and
14 some of the other people here where some of these
15 districts should be represented by the cities.
16 Because it's very difficult when you have all these
17 different representation to make sure that, you know,
18 we're getting the best for our communities. But if
19 you look at the growth that has happened in both
20 Elgin and Carpentersville, we're probably going to
21 see probably close to 40 to 50 percent of the
22 population has been Hispanic and Latinx. So I feel
23 that even though we would be able to keep the
24 boundaries and the districts within the community,

1 it's still going to be representative of the
2 population that's within those communities.

3 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, are you done,
4 Mr. Rodriguez? Okay, thank you. So any questions
5 from members?

6 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: Sure, let me just add,
7 Madam Chair. And Mr. Rodriguez, thank you. It looks
8 like you have a Marine flag in your background. So
9 thank you for your service.

10 MR. RODRIGUEZ: It was a pleasure. I enjoyed my
11 time.

12 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: Very good. Well, thank
13 you for that. Again, I think you and Vern make great
14 points, what we highlighted earlier that, you know,
15 we do have concerns of dividing up communities when
16 we think of them in the village and city aspect
17 especially, dividing them up. And I do think this is
18 something we need to continue to take a look at.

19 And when you look at legislation that a lot
20 of us have pushed and co-sponsored and voted for
21 about creating a nonpartisan, a citizen run
22 commission to draw the maps, one of the key factors
23 in that, in those pieces of legislation is respecting
24 existing political boundaries with all the other

1 things that we have to take into consideration as
2 well. And right now when you look at the maps across
3 the state for 118 house districts, the existing
4 political boundaries are largely obliterated in a lot
5 of places.

6 And Vern, you make a great point. It's,
7 sometimes it's difficult for someone outside of the
8 community, who doesn't live in the community to truly
9 know the interests of the community. Those of us who
10 have downstate districts, we represent a lot of
11 communities. As I said, I represent four counties.
12 It's about 50 plus communities that I represent. And
13 I think I do a pretty good job of staying on top of
14 things. But you're right, when you're not living in
15 a community day in and day out, it makes it more
16 difficult to stay on top of things.

17 So I think what I've heard this evening
18 echoes exactly a lot of the things we've heard over
19 these hearings, concerns about, especially concerns
20 about keeping communities together. So again, I
21 appreciate you guys coming out this evening and
22 testifying and then tell us what you think.
23 Hopefully this will, I don't know how this is all
24 going to work going into the process of drawing maps.

1 That's a big question mark right now. But hopefully,
2 a lot of this is taken into consideration at the end
3 of the day when the new maps come out later this
4 year. So thanks for being here this evening.

5 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Leader Butler.
6 Is there any other question from members? I just
7 want to also just add to the conversation we can't
8 always like respect municipal and county boundaries
9 due to the one person, one vote. We must remember
10 that. So just wanting to share that. Members, no
11 more questions? That is all there is in terms of
12 witnesses. Mr. Tepe, do you want to add further to
13 your testimony?

14 MR. TEPE: I wanted to ask a question, if I
15 could. Who is responsible for drawing the boundaries
16 for individual precincts?

17 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: So I'll tell you what.
18 What we're going to do is we're just, the hearings
19 right now that we're conducting, we're just taking
20 the information. When we're done, we will provide
21 information, those sorts of -- that sort of
22 information to the public. But right now we're just
23 talking about redistricting.

24 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: And Mr. Tepe, usually the

1 precinct level redistricting is done by local
2 election authority, so county clerk or your local
3 election authority. I don't know if Elgin has a
4 local election authority, but usually that is how
5 they do it, along with local redistricting such as
6 county boards are done on a local level as well.

7 MR. TEPE: Okay.

8 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Well, I want to
9 thank all the witnesses for coming out, taking the
10 time, making time. It is a really essential part of
11 this whole process to hear from the community. And
12 I'm just going to do one more call out if I didn't
13 miss anyone, if anybody jumped on in. Because that
14 did happen to me the last time, that we had some last
15 minute witnesses. So hearing there being none, that
16 really just concludes our redistricting committee.
17 So I want to once again thank everybody and wishing
18 everybody a great evening.

19 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you.

21 REPRESENTATIVE SEVERIN: Representative Severin
22 from southern Illinois says thank you.

23 * * *

24

1 STATE OF ILLINOIS)
) SS.
2 CITY OF SPRINGFIELD)

3

4 I, LYDIA B. PINKAWA, a Certified Shorthand
5 Reporter, do hereby certify that the meeting
6 aforementioned was held at the time previously
7 described.

8

9 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my
10 hand and seal.

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