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ALABAMA PERMANENT COMMITTEE ON REAPPORTIONMENT  
AND REDISTRICTING PUBLIC HEARING

HELD ON  
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 9TH, 2021  
BEGINNING AT 4:00 P.M.

LOCATION:  
SOUTHERN UNION STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
301 LAKE CONDY ROAD  
OPELIKA, ALABAMA 36801  
AND  
ONLINE VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS MEETING

TRANSCRIBED REMOTELY BY:  
KATHLEEN F. CAVAZOS, RPR,  
COURT REPORTER

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I N D E X

OPENING REMARKS:	PAGE
BY SENATOR JIM MCCLENDON. . . . .	3
BY REPRESENTATIVE CHRIS PRINGLE . . . . .	5
BY MR. DORMAN WALKER. . . . .	6
TESTIMONY:	
BY MS. LAURA HILL . . . . .	12
BY REPRESENTATIVE DEBBIE WOOD . . . . .	13
BY MS. VALERIE FOR O'NEAL SHAW. . . . .	22
BY A SPEAKER. . . . .	23
BY MS. EMILY JOINER . . . . .	27
BY MR. BILL ENGLISH . . . . .	28
BY MR. WARREN TIDWELL . . . . .	30
EXHIBIT:	
Exhibit 1. WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF BERNICE BAHARANYI.	32
Exhibit 2. WRITTEN TESTIMONY BY CASEY DANIELS. . .	32
Exhibit 3. WRITTEN TESTIMONY BY LAURA HILL . . . .	32
Exhibit 4. ONLINE ATTENDANCE LIST. . . . .	32

1           SENATOR MCCLENDON: Let me first ask all of you  
2 that have joined us virtually, I would ask that you  
3 please mute your microphone on your device, your laptop,  
4 your handheld, whatever you're using, and turn your  
5 cameras off. Turn your cameras off at home or work,  
6 wherever you are. Thank you. Thank you. Very good.  
7 Our court reporter is still on. The court reporter stays  
8 on so we can make sure we're communicating.

9           My name is Jim McClendon. I am state senator  
10 from St. Clair County, and I'm Senate chair of the  
11 Redistricting Committee. This committee is charged with  
12 redrawing the lines for state board of education  
13 districts, for Congressional districts and for both House  
14 and Senate districts.

15           Over a 10-year period since the last census, the  
16 population shifts around and can get us away from the  
17 ratio of one person, one vote that we strive for. So we  
18 have to redraw these districts to -- Districts that are  
19 overpopulated, we have to make shifts to reduce their  
20 population. Some districts will be underpopulated, and  
21 we have to make changes in those lines to get their  
22 people back to get near the ideal amount for that  
23 district. Keep in mind that House districts, Senate  
24 districts and board of education districts, we have a  
25 latitude of plus or minus five percent.

1           Let me give you some examples in your area of  
2 Senate districts. The ideal Senate district under the  
3 new census data is 143,551. So one of the districts in  
4 your area is 13, Senate 13, and that district lost 90  
5 people. Well, that's certainly within that plus or minus  
6 five percent deviation, but keep in mind, you may have a  
7 district with very little change in population, but the  
8 district adjacent to it can have a change in population,  
9 and the change in that district can affect the next-door  
10 neighbor. Senate 27 gained about 22,700 people, and  
11 Senate 28 lost about 6,400 people.

12           In your House districts in your area, House 37  
13 lost 3,000 people, while House 38 gained about 4,300.  
14 House 79 gained 14,000 people. These are round numbers,  
15 14,000 people. House 80, that gained 1,600. House 81  
16 lost about 2,400. House 83 lost about 2,000. So you can  
17 see what our task is. That outlines our task pretty  
18 well.

19           Also joining us here at the State House, a  
20 member of the Redistricting Committee sitting in with us  
21 is Senator Steve Livingston. On my right is the House  
22 chairman of redistricting, Representative Chris Pringle,  
23 and on my left is Mr. Dorman Walker. Mr. Walker is an  
24 attorney, and he is employed by the Redistricting  
25 Committee.

1           With that being said, I'll turn this over to  
2 Representative Pringle.

3           REPRESENTATIVE PRINGLE: Thank you, Senator.  
4 Again, my name is Chris Pringle. I'm the state  
5 representative from House district 101 in Mobile. I'm  
6 the House chairman of the Reapportionment Committee.

7           Today, we will call people to speak in the order  
8 in which they signed up. Each speaker is limited to  
9 three minutes. When called, please come to the  
10 microphone and very slowly and clearly state your name,  
11 the community you represent and the district or districts  
12 you want to speak about. If you decide you want to speak  
13 but did not sign up, we'll ask at the end if anybody else  
14 would like to speak. If you are participating remotely,  
15 send in your question or comments and we'll read those  
16 into the record for you.

17           The hearing is being transcribed by a court  
18 reporter working remotely. If you have something you  
19 would like introduced into the record as an exhibit,  
20 bring it to the microphone when you speak and let the  
21 hearing officer know. They'll get it to us, and we'll  
22 have it put into the permanent record of this committee.

23           Today's hearing is designed to deal with the  
24 redistricting only, and we're not here to discuss any  
25 issue outside of that that might be facing the

1 legislature.

2           Again, I'd like to welcome you and thank you for  
3 coming, and with that, I'm going to turn it over to  
4 Dorman Walker.

5           MR. WALKER: Hello, and welcome. And before we  
6 start to take testimony, I'd like to explain some basic  
7 things that may make it helpful to understand the  
8 process. One of these is ideal population, which has  
9 been mentioned. That's simply the state's new total  
10 population of roughly five million divided by the number  
11 of districts. So the ideal population which Senator  
12 McClendon gave you, for example, a Senate district, is  
13 simply five million divided by 35 Senate districts or  
14 divided by 105 House districts, and, of course, as he  
15 explained, some variation is allowed. Some deviation  
16 from that ideal number is allowed in populating those  
17 districts to give the legislature some room to accomplish  
18 other tasks like trying to keep counties or  
19 municipalities whole or recognizing -- or trying to keep  
20 communities of interest whole.

21           There are times when those interests,  
22 principally in trying to keep a county or municipality or  
23 precinct or community of interest whole, butts up against  
24 the need for population equality, and when that happens,  
25 something has to go, and that's usually the former, and

1 that explains why some counties and some municipalities  
2 get split because they're in the middle of an area where  
3 they are often surrounded by rural districts that are  
4 losing population, and if you've got in the middle of  
5 that an area that's gaining population, then the solution  
6 when you're repopulating the rural districts is to come  
7 take some of that urban area, typically from the area  
8 that's gaining population, and that's why things tend to  
9 get split up.

10           These hearings will continue through the 16th.  
11 All the hearings are being transcribed by a court  
12 reporter. They'll start showing up shortly on the  
13 reapportionment website. If you're interested in seeing  
14 them, google Alabama legislature, and there will be a tab  
15 for redistricting. Go to that, and you'll be able to  
16 work your way to the transcripts of all the hearings. I  
17 imagine they'll all be up within the next two weeks, and  
18 you can read the hearings, and you can see any exhibits  
19 that were attached to the hearings, and in some places  
20 there have been.

21           Concurrent with this, the state board of  
22 education members, members of the Congressional staffs,  
23 legislators in the House and Senate are meeting with our  
24 map drawer to determine how they want their district to  
25 change. If their district is due to gain population,

1 they're talking about what areas of their adjoining  
2 district they would like to have become part of their  
3 district, and the same for if their district is due to  
4 lose population, what do they want to lose, what do they  
5 not want to lose, what would they mind losing, what would  
6 they not mind. Of course, all those interests between  
7 the legislators and the districts have to be  
8 accommodated, so it takes a while to work that out.

9 But, ultimately, there will be a call for a  
10 special session. We don't know when that's going to  
11 happen, perhaps in the second half of October, for the  
12 purpose of passing new redistricting plans, and at that  
13 point, the plans will start to be available to review as  
14 legislators who -- There will be a Reapportionment  
15 Committee plan that will be introduced for each one of  
16 the four, the Congress, the House, the Senate, state  
17 board of education. Various legislators may also  
18 introduce other competing plans. For example, Senator  
19 Singleton has stated that he will introduce a  
20 Congressional whole-county plan that was developed and  
21 sponsored by the League of Women Voters. So if you're  
22 interested in seeing other plans, when the special  
23 session is announced, you may want to go again to the  
24 legislative website, and you can go to either the House  
25 or the Senate and click on prefiled bills, and you'll be



1 able to pull up those plans.

2 I would like to also go over some of the rules  
3 that govern how districts are drawn. The legislature  
4 can't draw districts just any way it wants. It has to  
5 comply with federal and state constitutional statutory  
6 rules, as well as its own race-neutral guidelines for  
7 districts. First and foremost, overarching everything  
8 are the needs to have equality of population or one  
9 person, one vote -- those terms are interchangeable -- as  
10 well as to ensure that the plans are not discriminatory  
11 and don't violate the equal protection clause or section  
12 two of the Voting Rights Act as well as other legal  
13 requirements.

14 In addition, no district will be drawn in a  
15 manner that subordinates race-neutral districting  
16 criteria to considerations of race, color or membership  
17 in a minority language group -- and I'll explain those  
18 race-neutral districting criteria in a second -- except  
19 that race, color or membership in a language minority  
20 group may be considered and may predominate over race-  
21 neutral districting criteria to comply with section two  
22 of the Voting Rights Act, provided the state has a strong  
23 basis in evidence for doing that. A strong basis in  
24 evidence exists when there is good reason to believe that  
25 race must be used in order to satisfy section two of the

1 Voting Rights Act.

2           When it draws districts, the legislature has  
3 some race-neutral districting criteria, and among these  
4 are that districts should be reasonably compact, which is  
5 a relative term. Obviously, a House district is going to  
6 be smaller than a Senate district, and both of those will  
7 be smaller than a Congressional district. All districts  
8 should be drawn to reflect the democratic will of the  
9 people, which is one reason for the hearings, so that the  
10 legislature can receive testimony about how districts  
11 should be redrawn.

12           The House has to -- I mean, the legislature has  
13 to pass 35 Senate districts and 105 House districts even  
14 though the constitution would allow 106 districts. All  
15 districts are single-member districts, meaning only one  
16 person is elected from each district. Some areas of the  
17 country, you have multi-member districts where multiple  
18 people are elected from a single district. We don't have  
19 that in Alabama.

20           When the legislature draws districts, contests  
21 between incumbents are to be avoided, and the legislature  
22 seeks to preserve the cores of existing districts. In  
23 addition, contiguity among districts is required, which  
24 means that all points of a boundary of a district must  
25 touch either the state boundaries or the boundaries of

1 adjoining districts. Contiguity across a lake or a river  
2 or Mobile Bay, for example, is allowed.

3           Districts must respect communities of interest,  
4 neighborhoods and political subdivisions to the extent  
5 practicable. A community of interest is defined as an  
6 area with recognized similarities of interest, including,  
7 but not limited to, ethnic, racial, economic, tribal,  
8 social, geographic and historical identities. The term  
9 "community of interest" may, in certain circumstances,  
10 include political subdivisions such counties, voting  
11 precincts, municipalities, tribal lands and reservations,  
12 and school districts.

13           The discernment, weighing and balancing of the  
14 very factors that contribute to communities of interest  
15 is an intensely political process best carried out by the  
16 elected representatives of the people.

17           In establishing legislative districts, the  
18 Reapportionment Committee and the legislature give due  
19 consideration to these criteria. However, priority is  
20 given to the compelling state interest requiring equality  
21 of population among districts in compliance with the  
22 Voting Rights Act and the equal protection clause should  
23 the requirements of these criteria conflict with any  
24 other criteria.

25           In addition, the race-neutral criteria that I

1 mentioned are not listed in order of precedence, and in  
2 each instance where they conflict, the legislature at its  
3 discretion determines which ones take priority. I'm  
4 going to open the hearing for testimony now, and I'll  
5 call people in the order that they signed up, and the  
6 first person is Ms. Laura N. Hill.

7 Ms. Hill, if you'll come up and take the podium.

8 Ms. Hill, I'm sorry. Check and see if the  
9 microphone is on. Hello? Can you hear me?

10 MS. HILL: I can hear you. Can you hear me?

11 MR. WALKER: I can hear you now. Welcome,  
12 Ms. Hill.

13 MS. HILL: Thank you very much. My name is  
14 Laura Hill, and I reside in (inaudible). I am a  
15 constituent in the current third Congressional district.

16 I'm here today to ask the Reapportionment  
17 Committee to develop Congressional boundary lines  
18 (inaudible) of encompassing whole counties following  
19 traditional --

20 MR. WALKER: I'm sorry, Ms. Hill. Hang on.  
21 Madam court reporter, can you hear?

22 THE COURT REPORTER: I can barely hear. So if  
23 she could start over, please.

24 MR. WALKER: Let's try again, Ms. Hill.

25 MS. HILL: As you know, I am Laura Hill and I

1 reside in Opelika where I am a constituent in the third  
2 Congressional district.

3 I am asking the Reapportionment Committee to  
4 develop Congressional boundary lines on the traditional  
5 method of encompassing whole counties following  
6 traditional county lines. Following traditional county  
7 lines is a fair method for establishing districts than  
8 the method used to create the current districts. Using  
9 county lines helps keep communities and municipalities  
10 intact and helps coalesce the interests of residents. It  
11 ensures our political decisions reflect the interest of  
12 citizens and the diversity of communities of interest.

13 I'm speaking to encourage the use of the  
14 whole-county Congressional map concept.

15 Thank you.

16 MR. WALKER: Thank you, Ms. Hill.

17 The next person is Representative Debbie Wood.  
18 Good morning, Representative Wood -- afternoon, rather.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WOOD: Hello. Hello, Chairmen.  
20 Thank you so much for your work, and I just want to say  
21 out loud that you take on an enormous task, and you're  
22 getting paid lots of zero dollars for doing that. So I  
23 appreciate so much what you're doing.

24 So I have a number of questions. I'm in my  
25 first term as a representative, and since we are about to

1 reapportion and draw the new lines, I've had many  
2 constituents call me and ask me questions that I cannot  
3 answer. So I'm going to pose these questions to our  
4 chairmen, and hopefully they can help us further. And  
5 thank you, Mr. Attorney, for being here as well.

6 In 1983, there was a special election for  
7 district 38. At that time (audio lost) In 1983, there  
8 was a special election, and there was a gentlemen who ran  
9 as an independent, Derrick Fuller (phonetic), and he won  
10 the vote. And all of Chambers County was district 38,  
11 all of it. It was still all district 38 in 1990. But if  
12 you look now at the map, only one-fourth of the entire  
13 county --

14 (Audio interference.)

15 SENATOR MCCLENDON: We ask all of you that are  
16 attending virtually to mute your microphones. Mute your  
17 microphone.

18 THE COURT REPORTER: This is the court reporter.  
19 I cannot hear anything from the auditorium now.

20 MS. HILL: So if you look at the map -- I don't  
21 know -- Can you see my visual aid? I don't know if y'all  
22 can see that or not, but, anyway, if you look at your  
23 map, look at district 38, now only one-fourth of Chambers  
24 County even sits in the district. So from 1990 to where  
25 we are today, the county has been fractured from a whole

1 down to only not even a fourth. So those are answers  
2 that I don't have for our constituents. And I heard the  
3 attorney read everything about keeping communities  
4 together and keeping people within their districts or  
5 within their counties and those that look-alike. Well,  
6 that definitely has not happened to district 38, and I  
7 don't have the answers for my people. They come and ask  
8 me their questions.

9 Now, let me say I'm very honored to serve  
10 district 38 wherever those lines are, but there is  
11 something going on for that district to have changed the  
12 way it has changed from 1990 to today. And those are  
13 questions that we need to answer. We need to have the  
14 answers for our constituents, and I don't have those  
15 answers, gentlemen. And I want to be able to face my  
16 people and tell them the truth. I don't have any answers  
17 for it. There was other leadership at the House  
18 representing the people when this happened. I wasn't  
19 there. Maybe we weren't all paying attention, but we are  
20 now.

21 So I wish you would look into this, and I wish  
22 you would have some answers for me so we can figure out  
23 what's happened. We're a growing county. I think  
24 there's five, six rural counties that grew, but, yet, we  
25 continue to lose numbers in this county.

1           So thank you so much for your time. I know that  
2 you have an enormous task, and I appreciate once again  
3 what you're doing, but I need your help because I need  
4 answers.

5           Thank you.

6           MR. WALKER: Representative, let me suggest that  
7 there are two answers or two factors that may be an  
8 answer to the question you asked.

9           (Audio interference)

10          MR. WALKER: One is in the last -- the  
11 legislature allowed itself a one percent deviation above  
12 and below the ideal population, total of two percent  
13 deviation. That was done because of what was perceived  
14 by Alabama and by many states to be guidance from the  
15 Supreme Court that it was going to narrow the allowable  
16 deviation from what it had previously considered a safe  
17 harbor of plus or minus five percent. That lack of  
18 flexibility to deviate from the ideal population caused a  
19 lot of split (inaudible)

20          SENATOR MCCLENDON: Someone is coming in. Turn  
21 your mic off. As long as your mic is on, we're getting  
22 an echo. It's very distracting. Very good. Thank you.

23          Proceed, Mr. Walker.

24          MR. WALKER: But, also, and probably the major  
25 reason for that change is the huge population increase in



1 Lee County. I don't know the figure of growth from the  
2 '90s to 2000, but I can tell you from 2010 to 2020, the  
3 population increased by 33 to 34,000, increased by almost  
4 25 percent. It was one of three or four population  
5 increases made (inaudible) ahead of Madison.

6 When population increase like that (inaudible)  
7 needed, and that causes districts at the low end, if you  
8 will --

9 (Audio interference.)

10 MR. WALKER: -- Chambers County, also increased  
11 in population has been cut up. So I'm not sure that's a  
12 thorough answer, but I think those are matters that  
13 contributed to what you're talking about.

14 Representative Wood, if you're talking, we can't  
15 hear you. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. We don't usually have  
16 these problems. There's a problem with the microphone at  
17 your end.

18 REPRESENTATIVE WOOD: Okay. Yes, sir.

19 MR. WALKER: Oh, we've got you now.

20 REPRESENTATIVE WOOD: Thank you so much for your  
21 explanation. You said when I was listening to your  
22 opening comments that constitutionally we can have 106  
23 members. This area is going to continue to grow.  
24 There's so much here. There's universities, colleges,  
25 housing, recreation, all kinds of new development.

1 Everywhere you look, there is growth right here. It's  
2 going to continue to grow. We need to look at adding  
3 another member.

4 Basically, what you just told district 38 is,  
5 guess what, you're not valuable, Chambers County, because  
6 you're not growing as much as Lee County. So we're going  
7 to pull your people that live in your rural county to  
8 another county that's growing. That's not fair. That  
9 was basically your answer. Your answer is another county  
10 is growing, so we're going to move you away from your  
11 people. That is not a good answer.

12 Now, it may be an answer that you're supposed to  
13 give, but let me just say that is extremely unfair to our  
14 small rural counties. I live in a county that I don't  
15 even have the county seat. A representative above me had  
16 his own county, his county seat and mine. How can we  
17 honestly tell our constituents that we are here to  
18 represent them when we are pulling people from their area  
19 because of what you said, growth. I understand it, but I  
20 can honestly say that maybe we need to look at another  
21 person for Lee County because they are going to continue  
22 to grow. They have so much to offer.

23 MR. WALKER: Yes, ma'am. Thank you,  
24 Representative Wood.

25 REPRESENTATIVE WOOD: Thank you for your time,

1 yes, sir.

2 MR. WALKER: The next person is -- It looks  
3 like -- I'm sorry. I can't make out this last name.

4 MS. BAHARANYI: My name is Bernice Baharanyi.

5 MR. WALKER: For the court reporter, could you  
6 spell your last name, please?

7 MS. BAHARANYI: B-A-H-A-R-A-N-Y-I.

8 MR. WALKER: Thank you.

9 MS. BAHARANYI: I'm here and speaking on behalf  
10 of myself and the other African-Americans who feel  
11 unrepresented by the 2011 Congressional map. I don't  
12 think that -- You talked about making sure one person,  
13 one vote, but some of these maps, to me, does not  
14 represent that. And I was here 10 years ago when you had  
15 a similar public hearing, and nothing that we represented  
16 or what we said at that time seemed to have been taken  
17 into consideration. So I want to read a personal  
18 statement.

19 I was born and raised here in Alabama. I have  
20 lived through the Jim Crowe reign of terror. I've lived  
21 through the Civil Rights movement, lynching, voter  
22 suppression and much more. I have celebrated the voting  
23 rights bill, and I've rejoiced at the election of the  
24 first person of color elected as president of the United  
25 States.

1           But I can see that in all of these hard-fought  
2 efforts, the advancement of my people is still always,  
3 always been threatened by white male politicians who sit,  
4 draw lines and exclude us out from the lines and include  
5 us in others that we shouldn't be in in order to dilute  
6 our vote and disenfranchise us. But the most important  
7 part is it limits our own representation when it comes to  
8 Congressional lines. You set it up so we can only have  
9 so many African-Americans or people of color representing  
10 us.

11           I totally agree with the person who said that we  
12 need to be looking at the natural lines, the county  
13 lines, in order to go back to that because that was the  
14 way Alabama was doing -- was drawing those Congressional  
15 lines. But after the Supreme Court ruled against some of  
16 the gerrymandering, then people got together and started  
17 to figure out another way to keep white politicians in  
18 power, and that's what I see.

19           So what I hope would happen with this is that  
20 you consider this alternative map, which is the county --  
21 the whole-county map. That would give everyone equal  
22 opportunity there. It would make those numbers come out  
23 more even, is my understanding from what I looked at, the  
24 whole county map -- the whole-county district lines.

25           So, in my opinion, the map that we currently

1 have is gerrymandered. That's my opinion. I hope to  
2 avoid that for the new one, and I'll ask a question like  
3 this: Where is the representation on our end? Where are  
4 the people who look like me on the committee and speaking  
5 to make sure that everything is fair? That's my question  
6 to you.

7 My request and my demand is that you, when you  
8 run the new lines, you consider all of Alabama and give  
9 us all an opportunity to vote, to be represented, have  
10 our votes mean something. I know that right now the  
11 politicians, there's a super majority of both the House  
12 and the Senate in Alabama, which means that you feel like  
13 you can just do whatever you want, but my thing is that  
14 we're not going to sit by and let what's happened in the  
15 last 10 years happen again in the next 10 years. I'm  
16 getting too old for that.

17 Thank you.

18 MR. WALKER: Thank you. I'm not sure if I  
19 understood your question. I think it was where up here  
20 or --

21 MS. BAHARANYI: On your panel.

22 MR. WALKER: On the panel. The Reapportionment  
23 Committee has 22 members appointed equally from the House  
24 and from the Senate, and there are black and white people  
25 on the Reapportionment Committee. The two co-chairs are

1 both white. Usually, Senator Singleton is in here with  
2 us as well. Senator Figures was with us 10 years ago.  
3 I think he's detained in a meeting or something like that  
4 right now.

5 MS. BAHARANYI: Okay. I would love to see those  
6 senators.

7 MR. WALKER: Okay. Thank you, ma'am, for your  
8 comments.

9 The next person to speak is Valerie (inaudible)

10 MS. VALERIE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm here  
11 on behalf of O'Neal Shaw, the chairman of the Chambers  
12 County Republican Party, and I have a letter I'd like to  
13 introduce to the court reporter, so I will give it to the  
14 proper people before I leave, and I'll paraphrase very  
15 quickly.

16 Chambers County is fortunate to have one of our  
17 citizens serve as the representative for district 38.  
18 Representative Wood understands our community, and she  
19 works tirelessly to assist in addressing our needs.  
20 Unfortunately, in the past few years of redistricting,  
21 the lines have been redrawn to include less and less of  
22 Chambers County within 38, while assigning more of our  
23 county to district 37 and predominantly ramped up the  
24 county district.

25 Now, by design and intent, representatives in

1 the legislature are representatives of their constituency  
2 and that representation is best served by someone who  
3 lives and works among the people that they represent. As  
4 you begin your arduous task of redistricting, I would  
5 urge you to take an objective look at 37-10-13  
6 (phonetic). The people of Chambers County deserve to  
7 have a strong voice in Montgomery, and the only way that  
8 is possible is to have representation that understands us  
9 and fights for the specific needs of our people. Moving  
10 ahead, the only way to ensure Chambers County is  
11 appropriately represented in the Alabama House is to  
12 bring back more of Chambers County into district 38.

13           Again, I'm just going to paraphrase. I'll  
14 submit this letter. I appreciate your consideration and  
15 am available should you desire to discuss this or other  
16 matters, O'Neal Shaw, Chairman of the Chambers County  
17 Republican Party.

18           Thank you.

19           MR. WALKER: Thank you, ma'am.

20           The next person is (inaudible).

21           SPEAKER: Thank you very much for the time to  
22 come before the committee today. I don't envy the job  
23 you've got that's in front of you. This is very  
24 passionate for everyone involved and thank you for doing  
25 this.

1 I'm a representative of Chambers County. I'm  
2 the president of the Chambers County Republican Party  
3 Board of Directors, and I want to say to you about  
4 district 38 -- I'm not going to repeat a lot of the  
5 things you already heard about district 38 and Chambers  
6 County. We are one of your rural counties that has been  
7 successful and did show growth. That doesn't happen  
8 without the state's efforts to help the rural counties  
9 over the last several years. We appreciate that, and  
10 hopefully, we've been good stewards with what you've done  
11 with us, and we have shown growth.

12 The one thing I want to add to what's been said  
13 here today about our districts, you mentioned a community  
14 of interest. If you look in the southeast corner of  
15 Chambers County, you have three cities, Valley, Lanett  
16 and Lafayette. Those three cities are within 15 miles of  
17 each other. The issues that we face are all the same  
18 issues. The strengths, the weaknesses, everything we  
19 have is right there in that corner of Chambers County.  
20 Now, we've got a large rural area outside of those three  
21 suburban areas, but when you're looking at Chambers  
22 County and looking at district 38, those three  
23 municipalities are split between 37 and 38. We need a  
24 representative that's close. We need a representative  
25 for our county that is located here in our county that



1 can represent those three communities as well as the rest  
2 of the county.

3           When you speak of a community of interest, I  
4 serve on several boards. We have people from Lanett,  
5 Lafayette and Valley that all serve together. We need  
6 representatives that match that. We need representation  
7 that matches that. Those three towns and the areas  
8 around them have seen growth. We're going to continue to  
9 grow. We have subdivisions that are going in. We've got  
10 industries that are coming into the area. We're right on  
11 the Georgia line. We're competing with Georgia, and  
12 we're winning, which is a tough thing to do with those  
13 folks over there, but that area is continuing to grow.  
14 We're going to continue to grow, and we need  
15 representation from that area to represent the people in  
16 our area, in our county. And I'd appreciate your  
17 considering including some of county back together in  
18 district 38.

19           Thank you for your time.

20           MR. WALKER: Thank you very much.

21           Next is (inaudible)

22           SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll be  
23 brief. What I'm here to speak about has already been  
24 said. I'm from Chambers County and want to discuss  
25 district 38 specifically in regard to the city of

1 Lafayette in Chambers County. As Representative Wood  
2 mentioned, Lafayette is the county seat of Chambers  
3 County, and it has been since the '90s. The entirety of  
4 the city of Lafayette has had a representative from  
5 Chambers County. Our three cities in Chambers County are  
6 very similar and work together. To have split  
7 representation would be detrimental specifically to the  
8 city of Lafayette when we've seen significant growth in  
9 areas of district 38; whereas, district 37, which  
10 encompasses all of Lafayette now, has seen significant  
11 decline and lack of representation.

12 So I would request that you consider moving the  
13 lines to incorporate the city -- the entirety of the city  
14 of Lafayette into district 38 to have local  
15 representation.

16 MR. WALKER: Thank you, sir. For all the people  
17 in the auditorium who have signed up, I want to see if  
18 anybody else wants to speak and see if anybody  
19 participating virtually wants to speak.

20 Anyone wanting to speak remotely?

21 MS. TAYLOR: Lloyd Bryant. "Is this entire  
22 meeting about Chambers County only?"

23 MR. WALKER: No, it's not about Chambers County  
24 only. If you have anything to say, you're welcome to  
25 submit comments. It's about redistricting, though.

1 MS. TAYLOR: Emily Joiner.

2 MS. JOINER: Hey. This is Emily Joiner. Can  
3 you hear me? Can you hear me? Hello? I just have a  
4 question. I wanted to know whether outside non-partisan  
5 commissions are being consulted for this redistricting  
6 process in order to ensure fair maps.

7 MR. WALKER: The Alabama constitution requires  
8 the legislature to conduct redistricting, and that's the  
9 process we have now. Other people or interest groups may  
10 consult outside groups. For example, the League of Women  
11 Voters has proposed a map. But in Alabama, we don't have  
12 a redistricting commission, as some minority states do.

13 MS. JOINER: Have you considered the League of  
14 Women Voters' proposal? What did you think about that  
15 map?

16 MR. WALKER: Would you mind asking that question  
17 again? I couldn't make it out.

18 MS. JOINER: Sorry. Yes. I am aware that the  
19 League of Women Voters submitted a proposed map, and I  
20 was just wondering if that map had been considered or if  
21 anyone on the panel has thoughts as to that map.

22 I'm sorry. Was that hard to hear again? I  
23 apologize.

24 MR. WALKER: No. Could you hear my response?  
25 Can you hear me now?

1 MS. JOINER: Yes.

2 MR. WALKER: Okay. I can't tell you who has  
3 considered the plan proposed by the League of Women  
4 Voters other than Senator Bobby Singleton who has said  
5 that he will sponsor the plan. I think there was someone  
6 else who said he wanted to sponsor it, but I don't recall  
7 who that was. Senator Smitherman also said that he would  
8 sponsor the plan. So, obviously, it will be considered.  
9 It will be introduced and considered by the legislature.

10 Anyone else?

11 MS. OVERTON: Bill English at the college would  
12 like to speak.

13 MR. WALKER: Okay. Bill English, welcome.

14 MR. ENGLISH: Thank you very much and thank you  
15 for holding these hearings. I'm Bill English. I'm in my  
16 21st year as (inaudible), and I also serve as chairman of  
17 the Lee County Commission.

18 I appreciate the difficult job you have and that  
19 we have. This will be my fourth cycle of redistricting  
20 in Lee County. I'm speaking of this county. We have two  
21 Senate districts and five House districts, but my concern  
22 (inaudible) goes beyond the borders of any one county  
23 that could very well benefit other counties. I very much  
24 understand that your primary mission is the equal  
25 population of the districts of the legislature, the

1 Congress and the state boards. I get that. My primary  
2 mission is the population of the districts and the county  
3 commissions. The cities have the same job. The problem  
4 is, we each focus on our own and draw our own districts,  
5 there's very little, if any, coordination, and the voters  
6 pay the price for that lack of coordination. We have  
7 confusing districts. We have voters who don't know what  
8 district they live in, and I believe that contributes to  
9 some of the voter apathy.

10           Would you please consider letting the  
11 legislators talk to the county governments in their  
12 districts? County election officials can help them  
13 minimize the division of cities, the division of polling  
14 places. We have precincts that have as many as 10 to 12  
15 different ballots in one precinct because of the  
16 hodgepodge of all the district lines. Counties have the  
17 ability to help adjust. We can help adjust precinct  
18 lines to coincide with district lines if we can do this  
19 in a collaborative effort. But, if not and we simply  
20 leave it like it is, the voters suffer, and we tell them  
21 to blame it on the legislature. We want to help you fix  
22 this. I've made this same suggestion to both the cities  
23 here in Lee County. The cities and counties can draw  
24 their lines. We can keep voters having to go two  
25 different places for one election. Okay, this one, I go

1 over there. That one, I go over here. Let's try to help  
2 the voters and increase the turnout.

3 Once again, I don't envy your task but I have it  
4 here as well. We appreciate you giving us this  
5 opportunity. Thank you.

6 And, Mr. Walker, for your information, the 1990  
7 to 2000 census growth in Lee County was 32.1 percent.

8 MR. WALKER: Pretty significant. Thank you.

9 Is there anyone else in the auditorium who  
10 wishes to speak? Last call. Anyone else attending  
11 virtually? Oh, come on up.

12 MR. TIDWELL: Thank you. My name is Warren  
13 Tidwell. I am --

14 MR. WALKER: Did you say Warren Tidwell?

15 MR. TIDWELL: Warren Tidwell, yes, sir. I'm a  
16 representative of Auburn and constituent of House  
17 district 79, Senate district 27 and school board district  
18 two.

19 My neighborhood is split between 79 and 82 in  
20 the House districts. Only two streets away, my father-  
21 in-law is in an entirely different district in the same  
22 neighborhood. I used to not think too much about that,  
23 but as Mr. English mentioned, this hodgepodge has it  
24 where a lot of us live in one district, go to church, buy  
25 groceries across multiple districts. I understand that

1 with growth, there will be problems with the maps and  
2 changes to come, but the maps in our area cut out some  
3 neighborhood (inaudible) because the nearest population  
4 center they apply to is a county away. This is true  
5 especially of northwest Auburn in both Senate and House.

6 As for the school board, our region has the most  
7 geographically separated systems in the state. It runs  
8 from northeast of Anniston through Auburn all the way to  
9 the state line. I would propose that there are distinct  
10 differences between these regions, and it would serve us  
11 better to have a more compact map when it comes to that.

12 As to my neighborhood being split in two  
13 districts, in doing disaster recovery, I have encountered  
14 in the past neighborhoods that have been struck and have  
15 two separate representatives. The people who live there  
16 support each other, and they have two different  
17 recoveries because one representative may be more  
18 responsive than others. They're unable to have a uniform  
19 voice in the recovery or a unified front from the  
20 neighborhood in their representation.

21 I will be submitting a written statement as  
22 well, and I thank you for your time.

23 MR. WALKER: Thank you, Mr. Tidwell.

24 Is there anyone else in the auditorium who  
25 wishes to speak?

1           Is there anyone else who is attending virtually  
2 who wishes to speak?

3           All right. No one wishes to speak. This is the  
4 end of the hearing. Thank you very much for attending in  
5 person and virtually. That's very important to the  
6 process, and your testimony is being recorded. Thank  
7 you. Have a good day.

8           (Exhibits 1 through 4 were marked.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF ALABAMA     )  
COUNTY OF MOBILE    )

I hereby certify that the above and foregoing deposition was taken down by me in stenotype and transcribed by means of computer-aided transcription, and that the foregoing is a true and correct transcript of the testimony given by said witness upon said hearing.

I further certify that I am neither of counsel nor of kin to any of the parties, nor am I in anywise interested in the result of said cause.

I further certify that I am duly licensed by the Alabama Board of Court Reporting as a Certified Court Reporter as evidenced by the ACCR number following my name found below.



KATHLEEN F. CAVAZOS, RPR, ACCR302  
NOTARY PUBLIC  
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<p><b>2</b></p> <p><b>2</b> 2:18  <b>2,000</b> 4:16  <b>2,400</b> 4:16  <b>2000</b> 17:2 30:7  <b>2010</b> 17:2  <b>2011</b> 19:11  <b>2020</b> 17:2  <b>2021</b> 1:9  <b>21st</b> 28:16  <b>22</b> 2:10 21:23  <b>22,700</b> 4:10  <b>23</b> 2:11  <b>25</b> 17:4  <b>27</b> 2:12 4:10 30:17  <b>28</b> 2:13 4:11</p>	<p><b>4</b></p> <p><b>4</b> 2:20 32:8  <b>4,300</b> 4:13  <b>4:00</b> 1:10</p> <p><b>5</b></p> <p><b>5</b> 2:4</p> <p><b>6</b></p> <p><b>6</b> 2:5  <b>6,400</b> 4:11</p> <p><b>7</b></p> <p><b>79</b> 4:14 30:17,19</p> <p><b>8</b></p> <p><b>80</b> 4:15  <b>81</b> 4:15  <b>82</b> 30:19  <b>83</b> 4:16</p> <p><b>9</b></p> <p><b>90</b> 4:4  <b>90s</b> 17:2 26:3  <b>9th</b> 1:9</p>	<p><b>ability</b> 29:17</p>	
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<p><b>auditorium</b> 14:19 26:17 30:9 31:24 <b>available</b> 8:13 23:15 <b>avoid</b> 21:2 <b>avoided</b> 10:21 <b>aware</b> 27:18</p>	<p><b>born</b> 19:19 <b>boundaries</b> 10:25 10:25 <b>boundary</b> 10:24 12:17 13:4 <b>brief</b> 25:23 <b>bring</b> 5:20 23:12 <b>bryant</b> 26:21 <b>butts</b> 6:23 <b>buy</b> 30:24</p>	<p>24:15,19,21 25:24 26:1,2,5,5,22,23 <b>change</b> 4:7,8,9 7:25 16:25 <b>changed</b> 15:11,12 <b>changes</b> 3:21 31:2 <b>charged</b> 3:11 <b>check</b> 12:8 <b>chris</b> 2:4 4:22 5:4 <b>church</b> 30:24 <b>circumstances</b> 11:9 <b>cities</b> 24:15,16 26:5 29:3,13,22,23 <b>citizens</b> 13:12 22:17 <b>city</b> 25:25 26:4,8,13 26:13 <b>civil</b> 19:21 <b>clair</b> 3:10 <b>clause</b> 9:11 11:22 <b>clearly</b> 5:10 <b>click</b> 8:25 <b>close</b> 24:24 <b>coalesce</b> 13:10 <b>coincide</b> 29:18 <b>collaborative</b> 29:19 <b>college</b> 1:13 28:11 <b>colleges</b> 17:24 <b>color</b> 9:16,19 19:24 20:9 <b>come</b> 5:9 7:6 12:7 15:7 20:22 23:22 30:11 31:2 <b>comes</b> 20:7 31:11 <b>coming</b> 6:3 16:20 25:10 <b>comments</b> 5:15 17:22 22:8 26:25 <b>commission</b> 27:12 28:17 33:23</p>	<p><b>commissions</b> 27:5 29:3 <b>committee</b> 1:5 3:11 3:11 4:20,25 5:6,22 8:15 11:18 12:17 13:3 21:4,23,25 23:22 <b>communicating</b> 3:8 <b>communities</b> 6:20 11:3,14 13:9,12 15:3 25:1 <b>community</b> 1:13 5:11 6:23 11:5,9 22:18 24:13 25:3 <b>compact</b> 10:4 31:11 <b>compelling</b> 11:20 <b>competing</b> 8:18 25:11 <b>compliance</b> 11:21 <b>comply</b> 9:5,21 <b>computer</b> 33:8 <b>concept</b> 13:14 <b>concern</b> 28:21 <b>concurrent</b> 7:21 <b>conduct</b> 27:8 <b>condy</b> 1:14 <b>conflict</b> 11:23 12:2 <b>confusing</b> 29:7 <b>congress</b> 8:16 29:1 <b>congressional</b> 3:13 7:22 8:20 10:7 12:15,17 13:2,4,14 19:11 20:8,14 <b>consider</b> 20:20 21:8 26:12 29:10 <b>consideration</b> 11:19 19:17 23:14 <b>considerations</b> 9:16 <b>considered</b> 9:20 16:16 27:13,20</p>
<p><b>b</b></p>	<p><b>b</b> 19:7 <b>back</b> 3:22 20:13 23:12 25:17 <b>baharanyi</b> 2:17 19:4,4,7,9 21:21 22:5 <b>balancing</b> 11:13 <b>ballots</b> 29:15 <b>barely</b> 12:22 <b>basic</b> 6:6 <b>basically</b> 18:4,9 <b>basis</b> 9:23,23 <b>bay</b> 11:2 <b>beginning</b> 1:10 <b>behalf</b> 19:9 22:11 <b>believe</b> 9:24 29:8 <b>benefit</b> 28:23 <b>bernice</b> 2:17 19:4 <b>best</b> 11:15 23:2 <b>better</b> 31:11 <b>beyond</b> 28:22 <b>bill</b> 2:13 19:23 28:11,13,15 <b>bills</b> 8:25 <b>black</b> 21:24 <b>blame</b> 29:21 <b>board</b> 3:12,24 7:21 8:17 24:3 30:17 31:6 33:15 <b>boards</b> 25:4 29:1 <b>bobby</b> 28:4 <b>borders</b> 28:22</p>	<p><b>c</b></p>	<p><b>c</b></p>
<p><b>b</b> 19:7 <b>back</b> 3:22 20:13 23:12 25:17 <b>baharanyi</b> 2:17 19:4,4,7,9 21:21 22:5 <b>balancing</b> 11:13 <b>ballots</b> 29:15 <b>barely</b> 12:22 <b>basic</b> 6:6 <b>basically</b> 18:4,9 <b>basis</b> 9:23,23 <b>bay</b> 11:2 <b>beginning</b> 1:10 <b>behalf</b> 19:9 22:11 <b>believe</b> 9:24 29:8 <b>benefit</b> 28:23 <b>bernice</b> 2:17 19:4 <b>best</b> 11:15 23:2 <b>better</b> 31:11 <b>beyond</b> 28:22 <b>bill</b> 2:13 19:23 28:11,13,15 <b>bills</b> 8:25 <b>black</b> 21:24 <b>blame</b> 29:21 <b>board</b> 3:12,24 7:21 8:17 24:3 30:17 31:6 33:15 <b>boards</b> 25:4 29:1 <b>bobby</b> 28:4 <b>borders</b> 28:22</p>	<p><b>c</b> 33:1,1 <b>call</b> 5:7 8:9 12:5 14:2 30:10 <b>called</b> 5:9 <b>cameras</b> 3:5,5 <b>carried</b> 11:15 <b>casey</b> 2:18 <b>cause</b> 33:13 <b>caused</b> 16:18 <b>causes</b> 17:7 <b>cavazos</b> 1:21 33:21 <b>celebrated</b> 19:22 <b>census</b> 3:15 4:3 30:7 <b>center</b> 31:4 <b>certain</b> 11:9 <b>certainly</b> 4:5 <b>certified</b> 33:15 <b>certify</b> 33:6,11,14 <b>chair</b> 3:10 <b>chairman</b> 4:22 5:6 22:10,11 23:16 25:22 28:16 <b>chairmen</b> 13:19 14:4 <b>chairs</b> 21:25 <b>chambers</b> 14:10,23 17:10 18:5 22:11 22:16,22 23:6,10 23:12,16 24:1,2,5</p>	<p>24:15,19,21 25:24 26:1,2,5,5,22,23 <b>change</b> 4:7,8,9 7:25 16:25 <b>changed</b> 15:11,12 <b>changes</b> 3:21 31:2 <b>charged</b> 3:11 <b>check</b> 12:8 <b>chris</b> 2:4 4:22 5:4 <b>church</b> 30:24 <b>circumstances</b> 11:9 <b>cities</b> 24:15,16 26:5 29:3,13,22,23 <b>citizens</b> 13:12 22:17 <b>city</b> 25:25 26:4,8,13 26:13 <b>civil</b> 19:21 <b>clair</b> 3:10 <b>clause</b> 9:11 11:22 <b>clearly</b> 5:10 <b>click</b> 8:25 <b>close</b> 24:24 <b>coalesce</b> 13:10 <b>coincide</b> 29:18 <b>collaborative</b> 29:19 <b>college</b> 1:13 28:11 <b>colleges</b> 17:24 <b>color</b> 9:16,19 19:24 20:9 <b>come</b> 5:9 7:6 12:7 15:7 20:22 23:22 30:11 31:2 <b>comes</b> 20:7 31:11 <b>coming</b> 6:3 16:20 25:10 <b>comments</b> 5:15 17:22 22:8 26:25 <b>commission</b> 27:12 28:17 33:23</p>	<p><b>commissions</b> 27:5 29:3 <b>committee</b> 1:5 3:11 3:11 4:20,25 5:6,22 8:15 11:18 12:17 13:3 21:4,23,25 23:22 <b>communicating</b> 3:8 <b>communities</b> 6:20 11:3,14 13:9,12 15:3 25:1 <b>community</b> 1:13 5:11 6:23 11:5,9 22:18 24:13 25:3 <b>compact</b> 10:4 31:11 <b>compelling</b> 11:20 <b>competing</b> 8:18 25:11 <b>compliance</b> 11:21 <b>comply</b> 9:5,21 <b>computer</b> 33:8 <b>concept</b> 13:14 <b>concern</b> 28:21 <b>concurrent</b> 7:21 <b>conduct</b> 27:8 <b>condy</b> 1:14 <b>conflict</b> 11:23 12:2 <b>confusing</b> 29:7 <b>congress</b> 8:16 29:1 <b>congressional</b> 3:13 7:22 8:20 10:7 12:15,17 13:2,4,14 19:11 20:8,14 <b>consider</b> 20:20 21:8 26:12 29:10 <b>consideration</b> 11:19 19:17 23:14 <b>considerations</b> 9:16 <b>considered</b> 9:20 16:16 27:13,20</p>

<p>28:3,8,9  <b>considering</b> 25:17  <b>constituency</b> 23:1  <b>constituent</b> 12:15  13:1 30:16  <b>constituents</b> 14:2  15:2,14 18:17  <b>constitution</b> 10:14  27:7  <b>constitutional</b> 9:5  <b>constitutionally</b>  17:22  <b>consult</b> 27:10  <b>consulted</b> 27:5  <b>contests</b> 10:20  <b>contiguity</b> 10:23  11:1  <b>continue</b> 7:10  15:25 17:23 18:2  18:21 25:8,14  <b>continuing</b> 25:13  <b>contribute</b> 11:14  <b>contributed</b> 17:13  <b>contributes</b> 29:8  <b>coordination</b> 29:5  29:6  <b>cores</b> 10:22  <b>corner</b> 24:14,19  <b>correct</b> 33:9  <b>counsel</b> 33:11  <b>counties</b> 6:18 7:1  11:10 12:18 13:5  15:5,24 18:14 24:6  24:8 28:23 29:16  29:23  <b>country</b> 10:17  <b>county</b> 3:10 6:22  8:20 13:6,6,9,14  14:10,13,24,25  15:23,25 17:1,10  18:5,6,7,8,9,14,15</p>	<p>18:16,16,21 20:12  20:20,21,24,24  22:12,16,22,23,24  23:6,10,12,16 24:1  24:2,6,15,19,22,25  24:25 25:2,16,17  25:24 26:1,2,3,5,5  26:22,23 28:17,20  28:20,22 29:2,11  29:12,23 30:7 31:4  33:4  <b>course</b> 6:14 8:6  <b>court</b> 1:22 3:7,7  5:17 7:11 12:21,22  14:18,18 16:15  19:5 20:15 22:13  33:15,15  <b>create</b> 13:8  <b>criteria</b> 9:16,18,21  10:3 11:19,23,24  11:25  <b>crowe</b> 19:20  <b>current</b> 12:15 13:8  <b>currently</b> 20:25  <b>cut</b> 17:11 31:2  <b>cycle</b> 28:19</p>	<p><b>deposition</b> 33:7  <b>derrick</b> 14:9  <b>deserve</b> 23:6  <b>design</b> 22:25  <b>designed</b> 5:23  <b>desire</b> 23:15  <b>detained</b> 22:3  <b>determine</b> 7:24  <b>determines</b> 12:3  <b>detrimental</b> 26:7  <b>develop</b> 12:17 13:4  <b>developed</b> 8:20  <b>development</b> 17:25  <b>deviate</b> 16:18  <b>deviation</b> 4:6 6:15  16:11,13,16  <b>device</b> 3:3  <b>differences</b> 31:10  <b>different</b> 29:15,25  30:21 31:16  <b>difficult</b> 28:18  <b>dilute</b> 20:5  <b>directors</b> 24:3  <b>disaster</b> 31:13  <b>discernment</b> 11:13  <b>discretion</b> 12:3  <b>discriminatory</b>  9:10  <b>discuss</b> 5:24 23:15  25:24  <b>disenfranchise</b>  20:6  <b>distinct</b> 31:9  <b>distracting</b> 16:22  <b>district</b> 3:23 4:2,4,7  4:8,9 5:5,11 6:12  7:24,25 8:2,3,3  9:14 10:5,6,7,16,18  10:24 12:15 13:2  14:7,10,11,23,24  15:6,10,11 18:4</p>	<p>20:24 22:17,23,24  23:12 24:4,5,22  25:18,25 26:9,9,14  29:8,16,18 30:17  30:17,17,21,24  <b>districting</b> 9:15,18  9:21 10:3  <b>districts</b> 3:13,13,14  3:18,18,20,23,24  3:24 4:2,3,12 5:11  6:11,13,14,17 7:3,6  8:7 9:3,4,7 10:2,4,7  10:10,13,13,14,15  10:15,17,20,22,23  11:1,3,12,17,21  13:7,8 15:4 17:7  24:13 28:21,21,25  29:2,4,7,12 30:20  30:25 31:13  <b>diversity</b> 13:12  <b>divided</b> 6:10,13,14  <b>division</b> 29:13,13  <b>doing</b> 9:23 13:22  13:23 16:3 20:14  23:24 31:13  <b>dollars</b> 13:22  <b>door</b> 4:9  <b>dorman</b> 2:5 4:23  6:4  <b>draw</b> 9:4 14:1 20:4  29:4,23  <b>drawer</b> 7:24  <b>drawing</b> 20:14  <b>drawn</b> 9:3,14 10:8  <b>draws</b> 10:2,20  <b>due</b> 7:25 8:3 11:18  <b>duly</b> 33:14</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>d</b></p> <p><b>d</b> 2:1  <b>daniels</b> 2:18  <b>data</b> 4:3  <b>day</b> 32:7  <b>deal</b> 5:23  <b>debbie</b> 2:9 13:17  <b>decide</b> 5:12  <b>decisions</b> 13:11  <b>decline</b> 26:11  <b>defined</b> 11:5  <b>definitely</b> 15:6  <b>demand</b> 21:7  <b>democratic</b> 10:8</p>		
			<p style="text-align: center;"><b>e</b></p> <p><b>e</b> 2:1 33:1,1  <b>echo</b> 16:22</p>

<p><b>economic</b> 11:7  <b>education</b> 3:12,24                  7:22 8:17  <b>effort</b> 29:19  <b>efforts</b> 20:2 24:8  <b>either</b> 8:24 10:25  <b>elected</b> 10:16,18                  11:16 19:24  <b>election</b> 14:6,8                  19:23 29:12,25  <b>emily</b> 2:12 27:1,2  <b>employed</b> 4:24  <b>encompasses</b> 26:10  <b>encompassing</b>                  12:18 13:5  <b>encountered</b> 31:13  <b>encourage</b> 13:13  <b>english</b> 2:13 28:11                  28:13,14,15 30:23  <b>enormous</b> 13:21                  16:2  <b>ensure</b> 9:10 23:10                  27:6  <b>ensures</b> 13:11  <b>entire</b> 14:12 26:21  <b>entirely</b> 30:21  <b>entirety</b> 26:3,13  <b>envy</b> 23:22 30:3  <b>equal</b> 9:11 11:22                  20:21 28:24  <b>equality</b> 6:24 9:8                  11:20  <b>equally</b> 21:23  <b>especially</b> 31:5  <b>establishing</b> 11:17                  13:7  <b>ethnic</b> 11:7  <b>evidence</b> 9:23,24  <b>evidenced</b> 33:16  <b>example</b> 6:12 8:18                  11:2 27:10</p>	<p><b>examples</b> 4:1  <b>exclude</b> 20:4  <b>exhibit</b> 2:16,17,18                  2:19,20 5:19  <b>exhibits</b> 7:18 32:8  <b>existing</b> 10:22  <b>exists</b> 9:24  <b>expires</b> 33:23  <b>explain</b> 6:6 9:17  <b>explained</b> 6:15  <b>explains</b> 7:1  <b>explanation</b> 17:21  <b>extent</b> 11:4  <b>extremely</b> 18:13</p>	<p><b>foremost</b> 9:7  <b>former</b> 6:25  <b>fortunate</b> 22:16  <b>fought</b> 20:1  <b>found</b> 33:17  <b>four</b> 8:16 17:4  <b>fourth</b> 14:12,23                  15:1 28:19  <b>fractured</b> 14:25  <b>front</b> 23:23 31:19  <b>fuller</b> 14:9  <b>further</b> 14:4 33:11                  33:14</p>	<p>16:15 17:23 18:2,6                  18:10,21 21:14                  23:13 24:4 25:8,9                  25:14  <b>good</b> 3:6 9:24 13:18                  16:22 18:11 24:10                  32:7  <b>google</b> 7:14  <b>govern</b> 9:3  <b>governments</b> 29:11  <b>grew</b> 15:24  <b>groceries</b> 30:25  <b>group</b> 9:17,20  <b>groups</b> 27:9,10  <b>grow</b> 17:23 18:2,22                  25:9,13,14  <b>growing</b> 15:23 18:6                  18:8,10  <b>growth</b> 17:1 18:1                  18:19 24:7,11 25:8                  26:8 30:7 31:1  <b>guess</b> 18:5  <b>guidance</b> 16:14  <b>guidelines</b> 9:6</p>
<p><b>encountered</b> 31:13  <b>encourage</b> 13:13  <b>english</b> 2:13 28:11                  28:13,14,15 30:23  <b>enormous</b> 13:21                  16:2  <b>ensure</b> 9:10 23:10                  27:6  <b>ensures</b> 13:11  <b>entire</b> 14:12 26:21  <b>entirely</b> 30:21  <b>entirety</b> 26:3,13  <b>envy</b> 23:22 30:3  <b>equal</b> 9:11 11:22                  20:21 28:24  <b>equality</b> 6:24 9:8                  11:20  <b>equally</b> 21:23  <b>especially</b> 31:5  <b>establishing</b> 11:17                  13:7  <b>ethnic</b> 11:7  <b>evidence</b> 9:23,24  <b>evidenced</b> 33:16  <b>example</b> 6:12 8:18                  11:2 27:10</p>	<p><b>f</b>  <b>f</b> 1:21 33:1,21  <b>face</b> 15:15 24:17  <b>facing</b> 5:25  <b>factors</b> 11:14 16:7  <b>fair</b> 13:7 18:8 21:5                  27:6  <b>father</b> 30:20  <b>federal</b> 9:5  <b>feel</b> 19:10 21:12  <b>fighths</b> 23:9  <b>figure</b> 15:22 17:1                  20:17  <b>figures</b> 22:2  <b>first</b> 3:1 9:7 12:6                  13:25 19:24  <b>five</b> 3:25 4:6 6:10                  6:13 15:24 16:17                  28:21  <b>fix</b> 29:21  <b>flexibility</b> 16:18  <b>focus</b> 29:4  <b>folks</b> 25:13  <b>following</b> 12:18                  13:5,6 33:16  <b>foregoing</b> 33:6,9</p>	<p><b>g</b>  <b>gain</b> 7:25  <b>gained</b> 4:10,13,14                  4:15  <b>gaining</b> 7:5,8  <b>gentlemen</b> 14:8                  15:15  <b>geographic</b> 11:8  <b>geographically</b>                  31:7  <b>georgia</b> 25:11,11  <b>gerrymandered</b>                  21:1  <b>gerrymandering</b>                  20:16  <b>getting</b> 13:22 16:21                  21:16  <b>give</b> 4:1 6:17 11:18                  18:13 20:21 21:8                  22:13  <b>given</b> 11:20 33:10  <b>giving</b> 30:4  <b>go</b> 6:25 7:15 8:23                  8:24 9:2 20:13                  29:24,25 30:1,24  <b>goes</b> 28:22  <b>going</b> 6:3 8:10 10:5                  12:4 14:3 15:11</p>	<p><b>h</b>  <b>h</b> 19:7  <b>half</b> 8:11  <b>handheld</b> 3:4  <b>hang</b> 12:20  <b>happen</b> 8:11 20:19                  21:15 24:7  <b>happened</b> 15:6,18                  15:23 21:14  <b>happens</b> 6:24  <b>harbor</b> 16:17  <b>hard</b> 20:1 27:22  <b>hear</b> 12:9,10,10,11                  12:21,22 14:19                  17:15 27:3,3,22,24                  27:25</p>

<p><b>heard</b> 15:2 24:5  <b>hearing</b> 1:6 5:17,21  5:23 12:4 19:15  32:4 33:10  <b>hearings</b> 7:10,11  7:16,18,19 10:9  28:15  <b>held</b> 1:8  <b>hello</b> 6:5 12:9 13:19  13:19 27:3  <b>help</b> 14:4 16:3 24:8  29:12,17,17,21  30:1  <b>helpful</b> 6:7  <b>helps</b> 13:9,10  <b>hey</b> 27:2  <b>hill</b> 2:8,19 12:6,7,8  12:10,12,13,14,20  12:24,25,25 13:16  14:20  <b>historical</b> 11:8  <b>hodgepodge</b> 29:16  30:23  <b>holding</b> 28:15  <b>home</b> 3:5  <b>honestly</b> 18:17,20  <b>honored</b> 15:9  <b>hope</b> 20:19 21:1  <b>hopefully</b> 14:4  24:10  <b>house</b> 3:13,23 4:12  4:12,13,14,15,15  4:16,19,21 5:5,6  6:14 7:23 8:16,24  10:5,12,13 15:17  21:11,23 23:11  28:21 30:16,20  31:5  <b>housing</b> 17:25  <b>huge</b> 16:25</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>i</b></p> <p><b>ideal</b> 3:22 4:2 6:8  6:11,16 16:12,18  <b>identities</b> 11:8  <b>imagine</b> 7:17  <b>important</b> 20:6  32:5  <b>inaudible</b> 12:14,18  16:19 17:5,6 22:9  23:20 25:21 28:16  28:22 31:3  <b>include</b> 11:10 20:4  22:21  <b>including</b> 11:6  25:17  <b>incorporate</b> 26:13  <b>increase</b> 16:25 17:6  30:2  <b>increased</b> 17:3,3,10  <b>increases</b> 17:5  <b>incumbents</b> 10:21  <b>independent</b> 14:9  <b>industries</b> 25:10  <b>information</b> 30:6  <b>instance</b> 12:2  <b>intact</b> 13:10  <b>intensely</b> 11:15  <b>intent</b> 22:25  <b>interchangeable</b>  9:9  <b>interest</b> 6:20,23  11:3,5,6,9,14,20  13:11,12 24:14  25:3 27:9  <b>interested</b> 7:13  8:22 33:13  <b>interests</b> 6:21 8:6  13:10  <b>interference</b> 14:14  16:9 17:9</p>	<p><b>introduce</b> 8:18,19  22:13  <b>introduced</b> 5:19  8:15 28:9  <b>involved</b> 23:24  <b>issue</b> 5:25  <b>issues</b> 24:17,18</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>j</b></p> <p><b>jim</b> 2:3 3:9 19:20  <b>job</b> 23:22 28:18  29:3  <b>joined</b> 3:2  <b>joiner</b> 2:12 27:2,2  27:13,18 28:1  <b>joining</b> 4:19  <b>jointer</b> 27:1</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>k</b></p> <p><b>kathleen</b> 1:21  33:21  <b>keep</b> 3:23 4:6 6:18  6:19,22 13:9 20:17  29:24  <b>keeping</b> 15:3,4  <b>kin</b> 33:12  <b>kinds</b> 17:25  <b>know</b> 5:21 8:10  12:25 14:21,21  16:1 17:1 21:10  27:4 29:7</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>l</b></p> <p><b>lack</b> 16:17 26:11  29:6  <b>lafayette</b> 24:16  25:5 26:1,2,4,8,10  26:14  <b>lake</b> 1:14 11:1  <b>lands</b> 11:11  <b>lanett</b> 24:15 25:4  <b>language</b> 9:17,19</p>	<p><b>laptop</b> 3:3  <b>large</b> 24:20  <b>latitude</b> 3:25  <b>laura</b> 2:8,19 12:6  12:14,25  <b>law</b> 30:21  <b>leadership</b> 15:17  <b>league</b> 8:21 27:10  27:13,19 28:3  <b>leave</b> 22:14 29:20  <b>lee</b> 17:1 18:6,21  28:17,20 29:23  30:7  <b>left</b> 4:23  <b>legal</b> 9:12  <b>legislative</b> 8:24  11:17  <b>legislators</b> 7:23 8:7  8:14,17 29:11  <b>legislature</b> 6:1,17  7:14 9:3 10:2,10,12  10:20,21 11:18  12:2 16:11 23:1  27:8 28:9,25 29:21  <b>letter</b> 22:12 23:14  <b>letting</b> 29:10  <b>licensed</b> 33:14  <b>limited</b> 5:8 11:7  <b>limits</b> 20:7  <b>line</b> 25:11 31:9  <b>lines</b> 3:12,21 12:17  13:4,6,7,9 14:1  15:10 20:4,4,8,12  20:13,15,24 21:8  22:21 26:13 29:16  29:18,18,24  <b>list</b> 2:20  <b>listed</b> 12:1  <b>listening</b> 17:21  <b>little</b> 4:7 29:5</p>
---	---	---	--

<p><b>live</b> 18:7,14 29:8 30:24 31:15 <b>lived</b> 19:20,20 <b>lives</b> 23:3 <b>livingston</b> 4:21 <b>loyd</b> 26:21 <b>local</b> 26:14 <b>located</b> 24:25 <b>location</b> 1:12 <b>long</b> 16:21 <b>look</b> 14:12,20,22,23 15:5,21 18:1,2,20 21:4 23:5 24:14 <b>looked</b> 20:23 <b>looking</b> 20:12 24:21,22 <b>looks</b> 19:2 <b>lose</b> 8:4,4,5 15:25 <b>losing</b> 7:4 8:5 <b>lost</b> 4:4,11,13,16,16 14:7 <b>lot</b> 16:19 24:4 30:24 <b>lots</b> 13:22 <b>loud</b> 13:21 <b>love</b> 22:5 <b>low</b> 17:7 <b>lynching</b> 19:21</p>	<p>27:11,15,19,20,21 31:11 <b>maps</b> 19:13 27:6 31:1,2 <b>marked</b> 32:8 <b>match</b> 25:6 <b>matches</b> 25:7 <b>matters</b> 17:12 23:16 <b>mccleendon</b> 2:3 3:1 3:9 6:12 14:15 16:20 <b>mean</b> 10:12 21:10 <b>meaning</b> 10:15 <b>means</b> 10:24 21:12 33:8 <b>meeting</b> 1:17 7:23 22:3 26:22 <b>member</b> 4:20 10:15 10:17 18:3 <b>members</b> 7:22,22 17:23 21:23 <b>membership</b> 9:16 9:19 <b>mentioned</b> 6:9 12:1 24:13 26:2 30:23 <b>method</b> 13:5,7,8 <b>mic</b> 16:21,21 <b>microphone</b> 3:3 5:10,20 12:9 14:17 17:16 <b>microphones</b> 14:16 <b>microsoft</b> 1:17 <b>middle</b> 7:2,4 <b>miles</b> 24:16 <b>million</b> 6:10,13 <b>mind</b> 3:23 4:6 8:5,6 27:16 <b>mine</b> 18:16 <b>minimize</b> 29:13</p>	<p><b>minority</b> 9:17,19 27:12 <b>minus</b> 3:25 4:5 16:17 <b>minutes</b> 5:9 <b>mission</b> 28:24 29:2 <b>mobile</b> 5:5 11:2 33:4 <b>montgomery</b> 23:7 <b>morning</b> 13:18 <b>move</b> 18:10 <b>movement</b> 19:21 <b>moving</b> 23:9 26:12 <b>multi</b> 10:17 <b>multiple</b> 10:17 30:25 <b>municipalities</b> 6:19 7:1 11:11 13:9 24:23 <b>municipality</b> 6:22 <b>mute</b> 3:3 14:16,16</p>	<p><b>neighborhoods</b> 11:4 31:14 <b>neither</b> 33:11 <b>neutral</b> 9:6,15,18 9:21 10:3 11:25 <b>new</b> 4:3 6:9 8:12 14:1 17:25 21:2,8 <b>non</b> 27:4 <b>northeast</b> 31:8 <b>northwest</b> 31:5 <b>notary</b> 33:22 <b>number</b> 6:10,16 13:24 33:16 <b>numbers</b> 4:14 15:25 20:22</p>
<p><b>m</b></p>	<p><b>ma'am</b> 18:23 22:7 23:19 <b>madam</b> 12:21 <b>madison</b> 17:5 <b>major</b> 16:24 <b>majority</b> 21:11 <b>making</b> 19:12 <b>male</b> 20:3 <b>manner</b> 9:15 <b>map</b> 7:24 13:14 14:12,20,23 19:11 20:20,21,24,25</p>	<p><b>n</b> <b>n</b> 2:1 12:6 19:7 <b>name</b> 3:9 5:4,10 12:13 19:3,4,6 30:12 33:17 <b>narrow</b> 16:15 <b>natural</b> 20:12 <b>near</b> 3:22 <b>nearest</b> 31:3 <b>need</b> 6:24 15:13,13 16:3,3 18:2,20 20:12 24:23,24 25:5,6,14 <b>needed</b> 17:7 <b>needs</b> 9:8 22:19 23:9 <b>neighbor</b> 4:10 <b>neighborhood</b> 30:19,22 31:3,12 31:20</p>	<p><b>o</b> <b>o'neal</b> 2:10 22:11 23:16 <b>objective</b> 23:5 <b>obviously</b> 10:5 28:8 <b>october</b> 8:11 <b>offer</b> 18:22 <b>officer</b> 5:21 <b>officials</b> 29:12 <b>oh</b> 17:19 30:11 <b>okay</b> 17:18 22:5,7 28:2,13 29:25 <b>old</b> 21:16 <b>once</b> 16:2 30:3 <b>ones</b> 12:3 <b>online</b> 1:17 2:20 <b>opelika</b> 1:15 13:1 <b>open</b> 12:4 <b>opening</b> 2:2 17:22 <b>opinion</b> 20:25 21:1 <b>opportunity</b> 20:22 21:9 30:5 <b>order</b> 5:7 9:25 12:1 12:5 20:5,13 27:6 <b>outlines</b> 4:17</p>

<p><b>outside</b> 5:25 24:20 27:4,10 <b>overarching</b> 9:7 <b>overpopulated</b> 3:19 <b>overtone</b> 28:11</p>	<p><b>person</b> 3:17 9:9 10:16 12:6 13:17 18:21 19:2,12,24 20:11 22:9 23:20 32:5</p>	<p><b>predominantly</b> 22:23 <b>predominate</b> 9:20 <b>prefiled</b> 8:25 <b>preserve</b> 10:22 <b>president</b> 19:24 24:2</p>	<p><b>quickly</b> 22:15</p>
<p><b>p</b></p>	<p><b>personal</b> 19:17</p>	<p><b>pretty</b> 4:17 30:8</p>	<p><b>r</b></p>
<p><b>p.m.</b> 1:10 <b>page</b> 2:2 <b>paid</b> 13:22 <b>panel</b> 21:21,22 27:21 <b>paraphrase</b> 22:14 23:13 <b>part</b> 8:2 20:7 <b>participating</b> 5:14 26:19 <b>parties</b> 33:12 <b>partisan</b> 27:4 <b>party</b> 22:12 23:17 24:2 <b>pass</b> 10:13 <b>passing</b> 8:12 <b>passionate</b> 23:24 <b>pay</b> 29:6 <b>paying</b> 15:19 <b>people</b> 3:22 4:5,10 4:11,13,14,15 5:7 10:9,18 11:16 12:5 15:4,7,16,18 18:7 18:11,18 20:2,9,16 21:4,24 22:14 23:3 23:6,9 25:4,15 26:16 27:9 31:15 <b>perceived</b> 16:13 <b>percent</b> 3:25 4:6 16:11,12,17 17:4 30:7 <b>period</b> 3:15 <b>permanent</b> 1:5 5:22</p>	<p><b>phonetic</b> 14:9 23:6 <b>places</b> 7:19 29:14 29:25 <b>plan</b> 8:15,20 28:3,5 28:8 <b>plans</b> 8:12,13,18,22 9:1,10 <b>please</b> 3:3 5:9 12:23 19:6 29:10 <b>plus</b> 3:25 4:5 16:17 <b>podium</b> 12:7 <b>point</b> 8:13 <b>points</b> 10:24 <b>poling</b> 29:13 <b>political</b> 11:4,10,15 13:11 <b>politicians</b> 20:3,17 21:11 <b>populating</b> 6:16 <b>population</b> 3:16,20 4:7,8 6:8,10,11,24 7:4,5,8,25 8:4 9:8 11:21 16:12,18,25 17:3,4,6,11 28:25 29:2 31:3 <b>pose</b> 14:3 <b>possible</b> 23:8 <b>power</b> 20:18 <b>practicable</b> 11:5 <b>precedence</b> 12:1 <b>precinct</b> 6:23 29:15 29:17 <b>precincts</b> 11:11 29:14</p>	<p><b>price</b> 29:6 <b>primary</b> 28:24 29:1 <b>principally</b> 6:22 <b>pringle</b> 2:4 4:22 5:2 5:3,4 <b>priority</b> 11:19 12:3 <b>probably</b> 16:24 <b>problem</b> 17:16 29:3 <b>problems</b> 17:16 31:1 <b>proceed</b> 16:23 <b>process</b> 6:8 11:15 27:6,9 32:6 <b>proper</b> 22:14 <b>proposal</b> 27:14 <b>propose</b> 31:9 <b>proposed</b> 27:11,19 28:3 <b>protection</b> 9:11 11:22 <b>provided</b> 9:22 <b>public</b> 1:6 19:15 33:22 <b>pull</b> 9:1 18:7 <b>pulling</b> 18:18 <b>purpose</b> 8:12 <b>put</b> 5:22</p>	<p><b>r</b> 19:7 33:1 <b>race</b> 9:6,15,16,18 9:19,20,25 10:3 11:25 <b>racial</b> 11:7 <b>raised</b> 19:19 <b>ramped</b> 22:23 <b>ran</b> 14:8 <b>ratio</b> 3:17 <b>read</b> 5:15 7:18 15:3 19:17 <b>reapportion</b> 14:1 <b>reapportionment</b> 1:5 5:6 7:13 8:14 11:18 12:16 13:3 21:22,25 <b>reason</b> 9:24 10:9 16:25 <b>reasonably</b> 10:4 <b>recall</b> 28:6 <b>receive</b> 10:10 <b>recognized</b> 11:6 <b>recognizing</b> 6:19 <b>record</b> 5:16,19,22 <b>recorded</b> 32:6 <b>recoveries</b> 31:17 <b>recovery</b> 31:13,19 <b>recreation</b> 17:25 <b>redistricting</b> 1:6 3:11 4:20,22,24 5:24 7:15 8:12 22:20 23:4 26:25 27:5,8,12 28:19 <b>redraw</b> 3:18 <b>redrawing</b> 3:12 <b>redrawn</b> 10:11 22:21 <b>reduce</b> 3:19</p>
		<p><b>q</b></p>	
		<p><b>question</b> 5:15 16:8 21:2,5,19 27:4,16 <b>questions</b> 13:24 14:2,3 15:8,13</p>	



<p><b>reflect</b> 10:8 13:11  <b>regard</b> 25:25  <b>region</b> 31:6  <b>regions</b> 31:10  <b>reign</b> 19:20  <b>rejoiced</b> 19:23  <b>relative</b> 10:5  <b>remarks</b> 2:2  <b>remotely</b> 1:20 5:14  5:18 26:20  <b>repeat</b> 24:4  <b>repopulating</b> 7:6  <b>reporter</b> 1:22 3:7,7  5:18 7:12 12:21,22  14:18,18 19:5  22:13 33:16  <b>reporting</b> 33:15  <b>represent</b> 5:11  18:18 19:14 23:3  25:1,15  <b>representation</b>  20:7 21:3 23:2,8  25:6,15 26:7,11,15  31:20  <b>representative</b> 2:4  2:9 4:22 5:2,3,5  13:17,18,19,25  16:6 17:14,18,20  18:15,24,25 22:17  22:18 24:1,24,24  26:1,4 30:16 31:17  <b>representatives</b>  11:16 22:25 23:1  25:6 31:15  <b>represented</b> 19:15  21:9 23:11  <b>representing</b> 15:18  20:9  <b>republican</b> 22:12  23:17 24:2</p>	<p><b>request</b> 21:7 26:12  <b>required</b> 10:23  <b>requirements</b> 9:13  11:23  <b>requires</b> 27:7  <b>requiring</b> 11:20  <b>reservations</b> 11:11  <b>reside</b> 12:14 13:1  <b>residents</b> 13:10  <b>respect</b> 11:3  <b>response</b> 27:24  <b>responsive</b> 31:18  <b>rest</b> 25:1  <b>result</b> 33:13  <b>review</b> 8:13  <b>right</b> 4:21 18:1  21:10 22:4 24:19  25:10 32:3  <b>rights</b> 9:12,22 10:1  11:22 19:21,23  <b>river</b> 11:1  <b>road</b> 1:14  <b>room</b> 6:17  <b>roughly</b> 6:10  <b>round</b> 4:14  <b>rpr</b> 1:21 33:21  <b>ruled</b> 20:15  <b>rules</b> 9:2,6  <b>run</b> 21:8  <b>runs</b> 31:7  <b>rural</b> 7:3,6 15:24  18:7,14 24:6,8,20</p>	<p><b>see</b> 4:17 7:18 12:8  14:21,22 20:1,18  22:5 26:17,18  <b>seeing</b> 7:13 8:22  <b>seeks</b> 10:22  <b>seen</b> 25:8 26:8,10  <b>senate</b> 3:10,14,23  4:2,2,4,10,11 6:12  6:13 7:23 8:16,25  10:6,13 21:12,24  28:21 30:17 31:5  <b>senator</b> 2:3 3:1,9  4:21 5:3 6:11 8:18  14:15 16:20 22:1,2  28:4,7  <b>senators</b> 22:6  <b>send</b> 5:15  <b>separate</b> 31:15  <b>separated</b> 31:7  <b>september</b> 1:9  <b>serve</b> 15:9 22:17  25:4,5 28:16 31:10  <b>served</b> 23:2  <b>session</b> 8:10,23  <b>set</b> 20:8  <b>shaw</b> 2:10 22:11  23:16  <b>shifts</b> 3:16,19  <b>shortly</b> 7:12  <b>show</b> 24:7  <b>showing</b> 7:12  <b>shown</b> 24:11  <b>sign</b> 5:13  <b>signature</b> 33:20  <b>signed</b> 5:8 12:5  26:17  <b>significant</b> 26:8,10  30:8  <b>similar</b> 19:15 26:6  <b>similarities</b> 11:6</p>	<p><b>simply</b> 6:9,13 29:19  <b>single</b> 10:15,18  <b>singleton</b> 8:19 22:1  28:4  <b>sir</b> 17:18 19:1  26:16 30:15  <b>sit</b> 20:3 21:14  <b>sits</b> 14:24  <b>sitting</b> 4:20  <b>six</b> 15:24  <b>slowly</b> 5:10  <b>small</b> 18:14  <b>smaller</b> 10:6,7  <b>smitherman</b> 28:7  <b>social</b> 11:8  <b>solution</b> 7:5  <b>sorry</b> 12:8,20 17:15  17:15 19:3 27:18  27:22  <b>southeast</b> 24:14  <b>southern</b> 1:13  <b>speak</b> 5:7,12,12,14  5:20 22:9 25:3,23  26:18,19,20 28:12  30:10 31:25 32:2,3  <b>speaker</b> 2:11 5:8  23:21 25:22  <b>speaking</b> 13:13  19:9 21:4 28:20  <b>special</b> 8:10,22  14:6,8  <b>specific</b> 23:9  <b>specifically</b> 25:25  26:7  <b>spell</b> 19:6  <b>split</b> 7:2,9 16:19  24:23 26:6 30:19  31:12  <b>sponsor</b> 28:5,6,8  <b>sponsored</b> 8:21</p>
	<b>s</b>		
	<p><b>safe</b> 16:16  <b>satisfy</b> 9:25  <b>school</b> 11:12 30:17  31:6  <b>seat</b> 18:15,16 26:2  <b>second</b> 8:11 9:18  <b>section</b> 9:11,21,25</p>		

<p><b>st</b> 3:10  <b>staffs</b> 7:22  <b>start</b> 6:6 7:12 8:13 12:23  <b>started</b> 20:16  <b>state</b> 1:13 3:9,12 4:19 5:4,10 7:21 8:16 9:5,22 10:25 11:20 29:1 31:7,9 33:3  <b>state's</b> 6:9 24:8  <b>stated</b> 8:19  <b>statement</b> 19:18 31:21  <b>states</b> 16:14 19:25 27:12  <b>statutory</b> 9:5  <b>stays</b> 3:7  <b>stereotype</b> 33:7  <b>steve</b> 4:21  <b>stewards</b> 24:10  <b>streets</b> 30:20  <b>strengths</b> 24:18  <b>strive</b> 3:17  <b>strong</b> 9:22,23 23:7  <b>struck</b> 31:14  <b>subdivisions</b> 11:4 11:10 25:9  <b>submit</b> 23:14 26:25  <b>submitted</b> 27:19  <b>submitting</b> 31:21  <b>subordinates</b> 9:15  <b>suburban</b> 24:21  <b>successful</b> 24:7  <b>suffer</b> 29:20  <b>suggest</b> 16:6  <b>suggestion</b> 29:22  <b>super</b> 21:11  <b>support</b> 31:16  <b>supposed</b> 18:12</p>	<p><b>suppression</b> 19:22  <b>supreme</b> 16:15 20:15  <b>sure</b> 3:8 17:11 19:12 21:5,18  <b>surrounded</b> 7:3  <b>systems</b> 31:7</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>t</b></p> <p><b>t</b> 33:1,1  <b>tab</b> 7:14  <b>take</b> 6:6 7:7 12:3,7 13:21 23:5  <b>taken</b> 19:16 33:7  <b>takes</b> 8:8  <b>talk</b> 29:11  <b>talked</b> 19:12  <b>talking</b> 8:1 17:13 17:14  <b>task</b> 4:17,17 13:21 16:2 23:4 30:3  <b>tasks</b> 6:18  <b>taylor</b> 26:21 27:1  <b>teams</b> 1:17  <b>tell</b> 15:16 17:2 18:17 28:2 29:20  <b>tend</b> 7:8  <b>term</b> 10:5 11:8 13:25  <b>terms</b> 9:9  <b>terror</b> 19:20  <b>testimony</b> 2:7,17 2:18,19 6:6 10:10 12:4 32:6 33:10  <b>thank</b> 3:6,6 5:3 6:2 12:13 13:15,16,20 14:5 16:1,5,22 17:20 18:23,25 19:8 21:17,18 22:7 22:10 23:18,19,21 23:24 25:19,20,22 26:16 28:14,14</p>	<p>30:5,8,12 31:22,23 32:4,6  <b>thing</b> 21:13 24:12 25:12  <b>things</b> 6:7 7:8 24:5  <b>think</b> 15:23 17:12 19:12 21:19 22:3 27:14 28:5 30:22  <b>third</b> 12:15 13:1  <b>thorough</b> 17:12  <b>thoughts</b> 27:21  <b>threatened</b> 20:3  <b>three</b> 5:9 17:4 24:15,16,20,22 25:1,7 26:5  <b>thursday</b> 1:9  <b>tidwell</b> 2:14 30:12 30:13,14,15,15 31:23  <b>time</b> 14:7 16:1 18:25 19:16 23:21 25:19 31:22  <b>times</b> 6:21  <b>tirelessly</b> 22:19  <b>today</b> 5:7 12:16 14:25 15:12 23:22 24:13  <b>today's</b> 5:23  <b>told</b> 18:4  <b>total</b> 6:9 16:12  <b>totally</b> 20:11  <b>touch</b> 10:25  <b>tough</b> 25:12  <b>towns</b> 25:7  <b>traditional</b> 12:19 13:4,6,6  <b>transcribed</b> 1:20 5:17 7:11 33:8  <b>transcript</b> 33:9  <b>transcription</b> 33:8</p>	<p><b>transcripts</b> 7:16  <b>tribal</b> 11:7,11  <b>true</b> 31:4 33:9  <b>truth</b> 15:16  <b>try</b> 12:24 30:1  <b>trying</b> 6:18,19,22  <b>turn</b> 3:4,5 5:1 6:3 16:20  <b>turnout</b> 30:2  <b>two</b> 7:17 9:12,21,25 16:7,7,12 21:25 28:20 29:24 30:18 30:20 31:12,15,16  <b>typically</b> 7:7</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>u</b></p> <p><b>ultimately</b> 8:9  <b>unable</b> 31:18  <b>underpopulated</b> 3:20  <b>understand</b> 6:7 18:19 28:24 30:25  <b>understanding</b> 20:23  <b>understands</b> 22:18 23:8  <b>understood</b> 21:19  <b>unfair</b> 18:13  <b>unfortunately</b> 22:20  <b>unified</b> 31:19  <b>uniform</b> 31:18  <b>union</b> 1:13  <b>united</b> 19:24  <b>universities</b> 17:24  <b>unrepresented</b> 19:11  <b>urban</b> 7:7  <b>urge</b> 23:5  <b>use</b> 13:13  <b>usually</b> 6:25 17:15 22:1</p>
--	---	---	--

<b>v</b>	<p><b>wants</b> 9:4 26:18,19  <b>warren</b> 2:14 30:12  30:14,15  <b>way</b> 7:16 9:4 15:12  20:14,17 23:7,10  31:8  <b>we've</b> 17:19 24:10  24:20 25:9 26:8  <b>weaknesses</b> 24:18  <b>website</b> 7:13 8:24  <b>weeks</b> 7:17  <b>weighing</b> 11:13  <b>welcome</b> 6:2,5  12:11 26:24 28:13  <b>white</b> 20:3,17 21:24  22:1  <b>winning</b> 25:12  <b>wish</b> 15:21,21  <b>wishes</b> 30:10 31:25  32:2,3  <b>witness</b> 33:10  <b>women</b> 8:21 27:10  27:14,19 28:3  <b>won</b> 14:9  <b>wondering</b> 27:20  <b>wood</b> 2:9 13:17,18  13:19 17:14,18,20  18:24,25 22:18  26:1  <b>work</b> 3:5 7:16 8:8  13:20 26:6  <b>working</b> 5:18  <b>works</b> 22:19 23:3  <b>written</b> 2:17,18,19  31:21</p>	<p><b>y'all</b> 14:21  <b>year</b> 3:15 28:16  <b>years</b> 19:14 21:15  21:15 22:2,20 24:9</p>
		<b>z</b>
		<p><b>zero</b> 13:22</p>
<b>w</b>	<p><b>walker</b> 2:5 4:23,23  6:4,5 12:11,20,24  13:16 16:6,10,23  16:24 17:10,19  18:23 19:2,5,8  21:18,22 22:7  23:19 25:20 26:16  26:23 27:7,16,24  28:2,13 30:6,8,14  31:23  <b>want</b> 5:12,12 7:24  8:4,5,23 13:20  15:15 19:17 21:13  24:3,12 25:24  26:17 29:21  <b>wanted</b> 27:4 28:6  <b>wanting</b> 26:20</p>	
	<b>x</b>	
	<p><b>x</b> 2:1</p>	
	<b>y</b>	
	<p><b>y</b> 19:7</p>	