

Meeting of the Election Laws Subcommittee

South Carolina House of Representatives

Judiciary Committee

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Florence, SC

April 5, 2011

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REP. CLEMMONS: Ladies and gentleman, I'd like to welcome you to our -- this meeting of the Election Laws Subcommittee of the South Carolina House of Representatives, otherwise known as the South Carolina Redistricting Hearing. I would invite you to come forward, if you have not already done so, to sign the ledger. If there's anybody else that would like to speak, please feel free to sign the ledger if you'd like to speak. We also have spreadsheets up front that reflect all of the districts in the South Carolina House of Representatives, the 2000 population numbers as well as the current 2010 population numbers, along with the population target for House districts and the corresponding amount of population that House districts are going to shed or gain in order to come within the required reapportioned numbers. I'd like -- before we get started here, I'd like to introduce some special folks with us here today who are members of the House of Representatives. I will introduce first those members of my subcommittee who are here

1 with me. To my far left is Bakari Sellers.
2 Next to me is Jenny Horne. This is Karl
3 Allen. And to my far right is Tom Young. We
4 also have with us Mr. Patrick Dennis down
5 front who is our counsel to advise as when we
6 run into problems and need some whispered
7 advice. I'd also like to introduce other
8 members of the South Carolina House of
9 Representatives that are with us. And as I
10 call your name, if you'd stand so we can
11 recognize you. We have Roberts Williams with
12 us from Florence/Darlington County.

13 [Applause]

14 You didn't clap when I was
15 introduced here, but that's okay. We have
16 from Williamsburg County, Ronnie Sabb.

17 [Applause]

18 From Dillon County and a little bit of
19 Horry County, Coach Jackie Hayes.

20 [Applause]

21 From Marlboro County, Elizabeth
22 Munnerlyn.

23 [Applause]

24 From Darlington County, Denny Neilson and
25 Dave Neilson, her husband.

1 [Applause]

2 And from Florence County, Terry
3 Alexander.

4

5 [Applause]

6 Did I miss anybody? Great. Well, thank
7 you. We almost have a quorum here. Ladies
8 and gentlemen, these hearings are only a first
9 step in a long and involved process that must
10 be followed to complete a workable
11 redistricting plan. We hope to start tonight
12 in Florence, and at the other hearings
13 throughout the state, by listening to
14 extensive public input and then using your
15 input to form the basis of how we proceed.
16 From that input this subcommittee must create
17 and submit to the full House Judiciary
18 Committee a plan for how to draw lines for the
19 South Carolina House, all 124 seats and also
20 for the United States Congress, including the
21 new 7th Congressional District that South
22 Carolina received in the last reapportion
23 process. The full committee must then submit
24 a plan that may or may not be the same as the
25 subcommittee's plan that must be submitted to

1 the full House for all of the members of the
2 judiciary to consider. Any plan that gains
3 approval of the House, and later the Senate,
4 must be submitted to the United States Justice
5 Department, pursuant to the Voting Rights Act.
6 That's a process that's called pre-clearance.
7 If it is determined by the Justice Department
8 or the courts that the plan does not first
9 comply with the constitutional mandates of one
10 man/one vote and equal protection. And,
11 second, with the statutory requirements of the
12 Voting Rights Act more work may still need to
13 be done on our plan.

14 Tonight's goal is to listen to each of
15 you. Each and every interested party that
16 tells us how they would like -- what they
17 would like to see accomplished in the House's
18 drawing of the new district lines for both the
19 South Carolina House of Representatives and
20 for Unites States Congress. We're here
21 tonight to listen to your concerns and
22 recommendations as to what the subcommittee
23 should consider in the process. As the House
24 undertakes the process of redrawing District
25 lines, public input is indispensable. It

1 helps us to shape a House that best represents
2 the people of South Carolina. The House of
3 Representatives is often called the People's
4 House. It's called that because it is your
5 House. You are here to help us draw that
6 House tonight. In order to continue to earn
7 that distinction, we must know how the people
8 want their House to look, how the people wish
9 to be represented. That's the sole purpose of
10 this hearing tonight: to hear from the public
11 and take your guidance as we shape the House
12 and congressional districts for the coming
13 decade. We welcome any input which helps us
14 understand specific issues in your area in
15 which identifies neighborhoods, political
16 subdivisions or other areas which you believe
17 the subcommittee should take into
18 consideration when drawing such lines.
19 Resulting from this series of hearings, our
20 subcommittee plans to adopt a set of criteria
21 that will be drawn primarily from what we hear
22 from the public. These criteria will be the
23 guiding principles by which the House will
24 redraw the district line. As you all know,
25 the plan that is ultimately produced must,

1 more than anything else, assure the principle
2 of one man/one vote, or one woman/one vote,
3 meaning that we are required to have as equal
4 a population in each district as possible.
5 But beyond those requirements this
6 subcommittee is particularly interested in
7 what political subdivisions or what smaller
8 communities have in common, or what those
9 communities or political subdivisions do not
10 have in common, that would suggest that they
11 should be placed into one or multiple
12 districts.

13 While this hearing is being conducted in
14 Florence to allow residence of the immediate
15 area an opportunity for input, the
16 subcommittee is happy to hear testimony from
17 anyone interested in any part of the state or
18 the state as a whole.

19 Because tonight's hearing will become
20 part of the record in this matter, this
21 proceeding is also being recorded and will be
22 transcribed. To make sure that we have a
23 clear record, I would ask that each witness
24 come to the microphone, speak slowly and
25 clearly, state your name and your address and

1 identify the district or districts that you're
2 interested in addressing. If you are
3 appearing tonight on behalf of a group, such
4 as a political party, a public interest group
5 or other organization, please let us know that
6 information as well. I, and other members of
7 this committee, may make comments and ask
8 questions about particular areas which may not
9 reflect the intentions or recommendations of
10 the committee or of the House of
11 Representatives. We will also be glad to
12 answer general questions about the process, if
13 we can. However, because this is the first
14 part of a long process of gathering
15 information from around the state, we may not
16 be able to answer specific questions at this
17 time.

18 I anticipate that this meeting will last
19 approximately two hours, and while we want to
20 hear everything that anyone has to offer to
21 us, we do reserve the right to limit
22 individual testimony to ten minutes, if
23 necessary. I would ask that each person as
24 they offer testimony be considerate of others
25 who are here to offer their opinions as well.

1 We look forward to hearing from all that are
2 here tonight. I would also like to add that
3 this meeting has been advertised through the
4 local media, by press release, through the
5 press association, by individual email to
6 interested parties that have shown any
7 interest, and to all the political -- major
8 political and third party political
9 organizations that we are aware of from
10 throughout the state. So we have tried -- we
11 have tried hard to share the word about this
12 meeting tonight. As a result of that, you are
13 here. We thank you for your attendance. We
14 look forward to hearing from you tonight. But
15 before we start taking public testimony, we
16 have recognized all of the members of the
17 House of Representatives that are here, save
18 one who just joined us. And he made a
19 dramatic entry so that I could introduce him
20 now. We have the Speaker Pro Tem of the House
21 of Representatives, Jay Lucas. Welcome.

22 [Applause]

23 Welcome, Mr. Speaker. Okay. With that,
24 the first person we have signed up to speak
25 tonight is Tommy Phillips. Mr. Phillips,

1 would you please rise to the microphone and
2 address us, sharing with us your name and
3 address and any political organization or
4 other organization that you might be
5 representing tonight.

6 MR. PHILLIPS: My name is Tommy Phillips. I live at
7 1703-A Pineland Avenue in Florence. I'm a
8 member of the Republican party, but I'm not
9 here representing the Republican party. I
10 want to tell you how much I appreciate y'all
11 coming and listening to what we have to say.
12 What I'm going to say, I guess, probably is
13 more concerned with the hopes that we'll get
14 the 7th district in this area. And I wanted
15 to give you some information about this area
16 to show you why the 7th district would be an
17 advantage to the state. I've lived here in
18 Florence since 1958. I've watched the Pee Dee
19 grow and become a valuable part of South
20 Carolina. The counties of the Pee Dee -
21 Florence, Darlington, Marlboro, Dillon, Marion
22 and Horry counties individually have their own
23 leadership qualities, and combined would make
24 an excellent 7th district. We have quite a
25 bit to offer. It would be a decisive

1 advantage for the state to put the 7th
2 district over here.

3 And some of the things that we have to
4 offer to start off with, the interstates. We
5 have I95 that comes straight through this
6 area. We have I20, it either ends here or
7 begins here, it depends on which way you're
8 going. If you're going south, it begins here.
9 And if you're coming back, it ends here. But
10 the value is it ties together. Something that
11 a lot of people don't realize is that the Pee
12 Dee area and Florence/Dillon area is
13 approximately 30 miles off of dead center
14 between New York and Miami which makes us
15 pretty well halfway between a lot of other
16 places. So we have a lot of travel here. We
17 have a lot of traffic that comes through it.
18 People that come into this area appreciate the
19 interstate capabilities and how they can get
20 to where they want to from this area. When
21 I73 is finished it will enhance this area
22 quite a bit and will make it more valuable and
23 more accessible to the entire United States.

24 As I mentioned, we have an excellent
25 geographic area because we are halfway between

1 a lot of places and it makes us a stopping off
2 area for everybody. We have excellent
3 education and recreation. We have Coastal
4 Carolina College; we have Coker College; we
5 have Francis Marion; we have some of the best,
6 if not the best, tech centers that are in the
7 state. This one that you're sitting in right
8 now is one of the best. We have land for
9 industrial and business locations. What used
10 to be a lot of farm land is now changed over
11 and is available for industry. And that could
12 be a big asset to a new congressional
13 district. However, our greatest asset is our
14 people. And don't look at our unemployment
15 figures as a negative. I look at them as a
16 source of employeeorables, people that need to
17 be employed. And they're interest in
18 relearning and being reeducated so they can
19 help make the 7th district and the Pee Dee
20 area grow. Other parts of the state are
21 bogged down and way too congested. And the
22 fact if they built too many more industry over
23 in the Greenville/Spartanburg, that end of the
24 state is going to sink below the mountains.

25 Also, over there if you need a piece of

1 flat space you pretty much have to cut the top
2 off of a mountain, then we won't have anymore
3 mountains. We have room here to expand and we
4 have the roadways to expanding it. We're
5 working here in Florence to expand Highway 378
6 and also Highway 51 into four lanes. When we
7 do that we'll have an excellent corridor for
8 entrance to and exit from the Myrtle
9 Beach/Horry County area which, as everybody
10 will agree, is an excellent recreation area.
11 It draws tourists and draws quite a bit of
12 income for the state for that area.

13 Something else that some of the realtors
14 here might know about, and maybe you've never
15 heard the remark made, we're part of what's
16 called the golden real estate corridor. Back
17 several years ago people who lived primarily
18 in the north or lived primarily in the south
19 got tired of either being excessively cold or
20 excessively hot, so they started moving into a
21 mean temperature area. There's a band about
22 30 miles wide that runs from mid Virginia down
23 into mid Georgia and crosses through us. That
24 eastern border of that band is about 50 miles
25 from the coast which puts us right through the

1 middle of Florence and this area. We're
2 having a lot of people move into the area, not
3 just retirees but also people looking to start
4 their own businesses. I believe that the Pee
5 Dee area, including those counties that I
6 mentioned to you, can be a tremendous asset to
7 the state of South Carolina as the 7th
8 district. I thank you for listening.

9 REP. CLEMMONS: Thank you so much, Mr. Phillips.
10 I would like to share that if -- if you are
11 signed up to speak and someone previous to you
12 shares the same content that you wish to
13 share, you can just reference those remarks
14 and say I agree with everything they said and
15 it will be added in the record accordingly.
16 So with that, thank you Mr. Phillips.

17 Next we have Ron Moore signed up to
18 speak. Mr. Moore.

19 MR. MOORE: I'm Ron Moore from 833 St. George Drive
20 in Florence. I'm not here on behalf of any
21 organization or group, just citizens like me
22 who want their vote to count. I want to speak
23 to you, although I will make a brief reference
24 to the new 7th congressional district, I
25 really want to speak to you this evening about

1 the twin sisters of Gerrymandering and voter
2 dilution. I've written my remarks and
3 prepared them to keep my mind straight and
4 keep me from getting confused as I speak. And
5 I want to preface everything by saying just a
6 couple of things.

7 One, thank you for coming. We really
8 appreciate having you come into our area and
9 to listen to our concerns. And, secondly, I
10 don't want to sound presumptuous in the things
11 that I am going to say here as knowing more
12 than you do because I know that I don't.
13 Y'all have wrestled with this periodically for
14 a long time, and you'll be wrestling with it
15 in great detail for a long time to come as you
16 work your way through all of this. But I've
17 tried to do my research and tried to wrap my
18 head around what this redistricting is all
19 about and to get the facts as I understand
20 them. And I certainly welcome your comments
21 at any time to correct me if I have any of
22 these facts or assumptions that I have made
23 incorrect. So let me just begin with some of
24 these pre-written remarks. I understand that
25 section two of the Voting Right Act protects

1 minority voters from practices and procedures
2 that would deprive them of an effective vote.
3 I also appreciate that any practice that would
4 have the effect of depriving minority of an
5 equal opportunity to elect a candidate of
6 their choice constitutes minority vote
7 dilution. I also recognize that the challenge
8 facing legislators during any redistricting
9 cycle is to ensure that they draw plans that
10 do not dilute minority voting strength as that
11 would otherwise bring liability under the Act.
12 What I do not understand, however, why
13 depriving majority voters an equal opportunity
14 to elect the candidate of their choice doesn't
15 also constitute vote dilution. Isn't that
16 robbing them of their effective vote? For a
17 legislature -- a legislation body to
18 deliberately and arbitrarily dilute one
19 citizen's vote in order to empower the vote of
20 another, no matter how sincere the motive is
21 on its face unfair, and I believe
22 unconstitutional. But that is exactly what
23 Gerrymandering of the 6th District has done.
24 Vote dilution most commonly occurs when
25 those who draw redistricting plans compress

1 minority communities into a small number of
2 districts. That's called packing. Or spread
3 them thinly into a large number of districts
4 which is called cracking, fracturing or
5 splitting. Now, I get that and I understand
6 how these practices would dilute minority
7 vote. They are wrong. But aren't these very
8 practices used to dilute the majority vote
9 when the 6th District was carved out? Even
10 when motivated by good intentions, this kind
11 of Gerrymandering is a blatant violation of
12 the fundamental redistricting principles as I
13 understand them.

14 I've written a couple here. Contiguous
15 and compact territories. Now, some -- since
16 contiguous means sharing a common border, in a
17 strict sense the 6th District meets this
18 criteria. But have you seen how the district
19 is shaped? There is nothing compact about it,
20 and it makes contiguity a farce. There is no
21 question and not even an attempt to disguise
22 the fact that this intentional Gerrymandering
23 was done to make an otherwise minority voting
24 block the majority in determining voice in an
25 election. Since this kind of Gerrymandering

1 is deliberate majority vote dilution, why
2 isn't it illegal?

3 Then there's the principle of preserving
4 political subdivisions. As I understand this
5 principle, it simply means that you cannot
6 deliberately split up a predominantly
7 Democratic or Republican region in such a way
8 as to weaken the one and favor the other in an
9 election. That's where the terms cracking,
10 fracturing, and splitting come from. But
11 don't forget the term packing. This occurs
12 when district lines are drawn in such a way as
13 to pack it with constituents of a particular
14 political tendency. Although this kind of
15 political Gerrymandering is illegal, it seems
16 perfectly acceptable if it's goal is to
17 augment a minority vote, and that's what was
18 done in the 6th District.

19 Then, of course, there's preserving
20 communities of interest. If one of the key
21 principles in the redistricting process is to
22 preserve communities of interest, then how do
23 you justify splitting up communities like
24 Florence, Sumter, and Columbia putting some of
25 their citizens in one district while placing

1 their neighbors in another? Doesn't it make
2 better since that the citizens of the Pee Dee
3 have more common interest among themselves
4 than they do with the citizens of the
5 Lowcountry? Then why shouldn't those in the
6 Pee Dee determine for themselves and with
7 their neighbors who would best represent their
8 interest in Congress. Gerrymandering dilutes
9 their vote by denying the opportunity to
10 combine their voices and resources to effect
11 political change in their own communities.
12 Nothing is as a greater affront to the
13 Constitution than denying or diluting the vote
14 of any citizen. And I believe for any reason
15 Gerrymandering as a means to empower the
16 minority vote via majority vote dilution
17 violates virtually every basic principle of
18 redistricting. The practice may have an
19 admiral motive, but it is attempting to
20 correct one wrong with another. And two
21 wrongs have never made anything right.

22 According to section five of the Act, any
23 redistricting plan in South Carolina must be
24 submitted to the Justice Department or to the
25 courts for review. They would review any

1 change in standard, practice or procedure with
2 respect to voting to determine whether these
3 changes have the purpose of -- or effect of
4 denying or bridging the voting rights of
5 protected minority groups. There's a very
6 serious problem with this law. The
7 Constitution isn't as much about protecting
8 rights of groups as it is protecting the
9 rights of individuals. Gerrymandering, by its
10 very nature, grants an effective vote while
11 diluting the vote of others. It's time to end
12 that disenfranchising practice.

13 Now, I assume that the reason South
14 Carolina is required to follow section five is
15 because of past vote dilution practices. I
16 learned over the weekend that back before
17 these laws came into effect, South Carolina
18 was predominantly a white, male, Democratic
19 state. All the office holders, legislators,
20 so on and so forth were all white, Democratic
21 males. Now, things have changed a lot since
22 then. I would offer the following as
23 additional evidence that things are changing
24 in South Carolina. Consider, for example,
25 that in the solemnly Democratic 5th District

1 the citizens elected a conservative
2 Republican. And the solemnly Republican 1st
3 District the citizens elected a minority
4 representative. In another historic events
5 South Carolinians have elected its first
6 minority female governor. And here in
7 Florence for the first time a couple years ago
8 Florence in an open seat in an open election
9 elected its first female minority city council
10 member. Most no longer vote on the sole basis
11 of race, gender or party affiliation. It's
12 time that our politicians do the same. Stop
13 Gerrymandering now. Now, I'm not going to go
14 over these court cases I have here because my
15 time is well coming to an end. But the court
16 cases that came after the 6th District was
17 carved out were all settled. And the basis of
18 that settlement was that the State had a
19 compelling interest in drawing out that
20 congressional district.

21 So I want to conclude my written remarks
22 with this. Most citizens wouldn't have a
23 problem with the State having some flexibility
24 for what is called compelling government
25 interest. That's fine. But let me ask a

1 simple question. What more compelling
2 government interest can there be than
3 guaranteeing to every citizen equal vote in
4 the election process. Stop the
5 Gerrymandering. Protect the vote, the sacred
6 vote, of every individual.

7 Now I want to make a comment about the
8 7th congressional district that's going to be
9 carved out. And I do understand that the
10 upstate is probably wanting to split the
11 Greenville and the Spartanburg. You probably
12 are going to get a lot of elbows twisted,
13 whatever, when you get up there to that part
14 of the state. They already have a
15 Representative. Their Representative
16 represented well in Congress. But because of
17 the Gerrymandering down here, there are many
18 of us who for years have felt like we've not
19 had a Representative who reflected our wishes
20 and our votes. And before you carve out and
21 give the upstate two, please give us one.

22 REP. CLEMMONS: Thank you, Mr. Moore. I'd also like

23 --

24 MR. CARRAWAY: I'd like to second what he said.

25 REP. CLEMMONS: Thank you very much, sir.

1 MR. CARRAWAY: I have a (inaudible), so I'll
2 scratch my name off.

3 REP. CLEMMONS: Would you mind stepping to
4 the microphone and giving us your name for the
5 record, sir.

6 MR. CARRAWAY: My name is Jessie Carraway from Hicks
7 Road, (inaudible) , South Carolina. And I'd
8 like to recommend that this man what he said
9 is the gospel and the state of South Carolina
10 has been run over by politicians too long to
11 put stuff in their own back pockets. Thank
12 you.

13 REP. CLEMMONS: Thank you, Mr. Carraway.

14 REP. CLEMMONS: I'd like to remind you folks -- or,
15 actually, I don't think I shared this with you
16 originally. If you have any written materials
17 you'd like to leave with us, if you'd please
18 print your name and your address on those
19 written materials and we will be happy to
20 receive them and make them a part of this
21 evening's record.

22 The next person we have signed up to
23 speak is Bernice Johnson. Ms. Johnson, would
24 you please step to the microphone? Welcome,
25 Ms. Johnson. Share with us your name and

1 address, please.

2 MS. JOHNSON: Thank you. My name is Bernice
3 Johnson, and I'm from -- I live at 1306 West
4 Main Street, Bennettsville, South Carolina.
5 And I stand here to -- this afternoon to ask
6 you all to please put in your records that we
7 want to keep Marlboro County in District 54.
8 I appreciate having Marlboro County in
9 District 54 because it gives us a chance to
10 communicate with our representatives. Our
11 representative can go to the House and bring
12 back to us what is going on with the
13 government. And we, as citizens, we can give
14 input to our representatives when they come
15 together with us to meet. And it give us a
16 voice as citizens to be part of decision
17 making and helping solve problems and seek
18 solutions to the problems for our county.
19 Thank you. Again, I say please keep Marlboro
20 County in District 54.

21 REP. CLEMMONS: Thank you, Ms. Johnson. Next we
22 have Thomas J. Shealy -- Sheehy. I'll let you
23 pronounce it for me.

24 MR. SHEEHY: Thank you. Thomas Sheehy. I live 2535
25 West Edgefield Road in Florence. I'd like to

1 address two issues. First of all, the
2 continuity of House District 63. Currently,
3 it is a relatively compact contiguous area and
4 it needs to remain that way. Looking at the
5 spreadsheet, I see that there needs to be an
6 adjustment of about 1,000 members in that
7 district as you carve on it. And I request
8 that you be very careful in carving that we do
9 not lose what is a contiguous entity. Right
10 now it -- the social economic fabric of that
11 district is very consistent throughout the
12 district and you should strive to retain that
13 ensuring that that population has a
14 representative who represents them totally.

15 Going on to probably the bigger issue in
16 my mind is the formulation of the 7th
17 Congressional District. Currently the area
18 that I live in is in the 5th Congressional
19 District. You would not know that by talking
20 to most people in the 5th District because the
21 5th District is viewed as something up around
22 Charlotte, up in that general area of the
23 state, and even here in Florence it was viewed
24 as, oh, there's just a few houses in the 5th
25 District. The people in Florence, 5th

1 District, lost their voice because they were
2 overwhelmed by that that was from elsewhere in
3 the state. And that happens any time you
4 create a district that's spread over too great
5 an area. The people on the fringes become
6 lost. So when you create the 7th District it
7 needs to be one that is contiguous, has a
8 common economic and social interest throughout
9 the district. My observations of the
10 (inaudible) is that of the different options
11 that I've heard bandied about a 7th district
12 that ties Florence to Horry County and that
13 general area of the state makes sense from an
14 economic standpoint because they are engines
15 that drive one another. Additionally, having
16 a city and a county split between districts
17 purely, as the gentleman said earlier, for
18 Gerrymandering is wrong. It does no good for
19 the citizens of that area of that city or that
20 county. And both Florence and Sumter have
21 been split that way. And they do not end up,
22 as some would say, with the advantage of two
23 voices in congress. Instead they end up with
24 two that frequently are opposed to one another
25 and they do not speak with a common voice. So

1 in redrawing, hopefully 7th district, you will
2 get Florence County into one district. And if
3 you can't get the whole county, at least the
4 city into one district so that their voice is
5 not diluted by Gerrymandering. Thank you.

6 REP. CLEMMONS: Thank you very much, Mr. Sheehy.

7 The next on our list is Lynn Robb. Ms. Robb,
8 our drama major. One minute and a half she
9 promised me.

10 MS. ROBB: Hi. My name is Lynn Robb. I live at
11 3311 Dunhill Court in Florence. I live in
12 District 5, one of only about 8,000 who do so
13 in Florence. Even though I'm an officer in my
14 Republican party precinct, I'm here
15 representing strictly me. I believe in common
16 sense, not politics, should be the predominant
17 concept applied to redistricting. We can
18 divide ourselves politically and racially
19 seven ways from Sunday, but it doesn't change
20 where we lay our head every night and that
21 should be our main concern. Between '63 and
22 '73, South Carolina had rational congressional
23 districts. No counties were divided and they
24 were grouped contiguously. Compare that plan
25 to the one we have today which looks like it

1 was drawn by dipping a nightcrawler in ink and
2 letting it loose on a map of the state. We
3 are the Pee Dee. We are not the Upstate, the
4 beach, the Lowcountry or the Midlands. Do you
5 really think a representative from Myrtle
6 Beach, Rock Hill, Columbia or Charleston is
7 encyclopedic about our unique needs? When did
8 Florence, Darlington, Marion, Marlboro, Lee
9 and Williamsburg Counties wind up in different
10 congressional districts if the overarching
11 race was anything but pure politics. The
12 reason we are so deeply politically divided
13 today is because our representatives no longer
14 have to compromise. Their districts are safe
15 and they have become tenants in them for life.
16 Because districts are drawn to engineer a
17 preordained political result, a Godly minority
18 of the voters in them feel permanently
19 disenfranchised. As a conservative, I'm not
20 afraid of taking my message to an open market.
21 If the conservative message does not appeal to
22 50 percent plus one of the voters in our
23 district, it's time to retool the message, not
24 to present it in a way -- it is time to retool
25 the message not to present it in a way that

1 loads the dice and rigs the game. It is way
2 past time we brought both common sense and
3 common decency to the redistricting process.
4 Thank you.

5 REP. CLEMMONS: Thank you very much, Ms. Robb. I
6 next have a signature. It looks like maybe
7 Sam Hayes, 117 Main Street, Darlington. Does
8 that sound familiar?

9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: What was the name again?

10 REP. CLEMMONS: First name looks like Sam. Last
11 name is hard to read. It might be Hayes. But
12 the address is 117 Main Street in Darlington.
13 Is that anybody in the room? Okay. We'll
14 move on.

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (inaudible) Main Street in
16 Darlington.

17 REP. CLEMMONS: Very good. All right. We'll move
18 on to Murray Jordan. Mr. Jordan.

19 MS. (?): Mr. Chairman, may I say -- ask. But some
20 people have wanted to stay but they had to go
21 to work. And five kind of hit them at the
22 time they leave work, so it could be that.

23 REP. CLEMMONS: Thank you, Ms. Neilson, for the
24 clarification. That could be. Welcome to the
25 microphone, Mr. Jordan.

1 MR. JORDAN: Thank you.

2 REP. CLEMMONS: Yes, sir.

3 MR. JORDAN: I'm Murray Jordan, a life resident of
4 Florence, South Carolina. The address would
5 be 1006 Greg Avenue. And I should be thanking
6 you for the opportunity to speak to you, but
7 truth of the matter is I'm here because it's
8 my responsibility and you're here because it's
9 your responsibility. So let's just recognize
10 that we are both doing what we're supposed to
11 do.

12 REP. CLEMMONS: Well said.

13 MR. JORDAN: And I am a voting citizen. And as a
14 voting citizen, I am one of the highest
15 officers in the land. That's a voting
16 citizen. Redistricting is a most important
17 role that the government of South Carolina
18 has. That is to redistricting itself so the
19 districts protect the rights and interests of
20 all the people. All other roles of government
21 are secondary. Even the Constitution starts
22 with "We the people." It doesn't start with
23 "We the government." So this is very
24 critical. I live in the 6th Congressional
25 District. Due to Gerrymandering and

1 intentional voter dilution in the 6th
2 District, I feel like my vote does not count.
3 The 6th District does not even remotely
4 resemble the makeup of the citizens of the
5 general area and the state. The district is
6 Gerrymandering to favor the incumbent with his
7 ability to raise campaign contributions and
8 dole out political favors and build bridges to
9 nowhere. Now, this incumbent, Mr. Clyburn's
10 phone number in Florence is 661-2121. And I
11 have known that number since 1994. But when I
12 call, he does not return my calls. So what I
13 am telling you is for seventeen years I have
14 had no representation. Gerrymandering, first
15 practiced in 1812 in Massachusetts, it's
16 simply unconstitutional, morally and ethically
17 wrong. It is practiced here in South
18 Carolina, though, all the way down from the
19 congressional seats to county council, city
20 councils and school boards. Here in the City
21 of Florence we have two districts - And I'm --
22 let me change my page. - that are deliberately
23 illegal because they are Gerrymandered so as
24 to guarantee minority councilmen. Even the
25 percentages are askew, maybe as much as ten

1 percent. I don't remember off the top of my
2 head, but the unwritten rule of protection of
3 incumbent seats is pure billowing smoke.
4 Clyburn does not own the 6th District seat;
5 the people own the seat. I don't care if two
6 incumbents end up in the same district, I want
7 every district to meet the ideals and
8 principles of redistricting. In South
9 Carolina we have elected a female minority to
10 the governorship. In the 1st Congressional
11 District, a very conservative district, we
12 have elected a black to the seat. In the City
13 of Florence we have elected a black female to
14 an at-large seat. Similar results are
15 occurring all over the state, and I think
16 South Carolina is doing a credible job of
17 being fair and honest for all people within
18 the limits of the districting. Any district,
19 congressional, city, council, school board,
20 must be contiguous, compact and composed of a
21 similar population. A circle most achieves
22 these goals. I know that we cannot
23 redistrict the state with perfect circles.
24 And a square is next. I don't see any of
25 those shapes on this up here. It looks like a

1 kid just did splatter painting or something.
2 But that thought is to be in mind is you
3 create districts that take into account the
4 similarity and population and natural barriers
5 and population concentrations. What does
6 Florence have in common with downtown
7 Columbia? I'll answer that for you. Nothing.
8 When it comes to redistricting, I want
9 Florence and the surrounding area to be in the
10 new 7th Congressional District that includes
11 Horry County. I want my vote to count. I
12 want to be represented in congress. And I am
13 PO'd - That means properly outraged. - with
14 the current situation. Give me and the
15 citizens of this state the redistricting that
16 we deserve, not Gerrymandered districts to
17 empower political parties or to guarantee
18 seats to incumbents like James Clyburn, a man
19 who has publicly stated that we do things in
20 Washington that are not in the Constitution.
21 Give me my vote and my representation back.
22 Remember this - The highest office holder in
23 the land is the voting citizen and the secret
24 ballot, the vote, is the greatest right, not a
25 privilege, but a right of the people. You

1 have a difficult job to do, but is your
2 responsibility to do it right. Thank you.

3 REP. CLEMMONS: Thank you, Mr. Jordan. We
4 appreciate you being here with us. Mr. Bill
5 Pickle. And I note that you are the Chairman
6 of the Florence County Republican Party.

7 MR. PICKLE: Well, that's true, but I'm here
8 speaking for Bill Pickle.

9 REP. CLEMMONS: For Bill Pickle. Thank you, Mr.
10 Pickle.

11 MR. PICKLE: Thank you for having me here.

12 REP. CLEMMONS: Share with us your address, if you
13 would.

14 MR. PICKLE: Well, first of all, I went down my list
15 and just started checking things off, as you
16 suggested, and about half of it's gone. Tommy
17 here covered a lot of it. Mr. Sheehy covered
18 a lot of it. This gentleman back here covered
19 a lot of it. But one thing that they did
20 leave out is, yes, we are halfway between New
21 York City and Miami and we have a lot of land
22 to develop. But, you know, we have land to
23 develop both residential and commercial. We
24 have the highways. We have railroad. We have
25 airport. We have everything we need to

1 subsidize and help the betterment in this
2 area. One of the major things that we have
3 that hasn't been mentioned is being where we
4 are we are in wonderful shape and should be
5 proud of the fact that we have three major
6 medical facilities in this area. We have
7 McLeod. We have Carolinas. And as of today,
8 there's a partnership being worked out between
9 McLeod and Loris down at the other end toward
10 the coast. So we have the things that people
11 want in this area. And what they need.

12 Again, Tommy mentioned the colleges and
13 universities between the Pee Dee area. We
14 have any type of education anyone needs. Now,
15 one thing that wasn't mentioned -- well, let
16 me back up. First of all, let me say I'm in
17 District 63, House District 63. And I wish he
18 was here, but I've got a wonderful state
19 representative in Kris Crawford.

20 MR. (?): (inaudible) shrinking.

21 REP. CLEMMONS: Maybe now would be a good time to
22 recognize Representative Kris Crawford.

23 (Applause)

24 MR. PICKLE: Obviously he's sneaky, too, because he
25 came in and I didn't see him. Okay. But, you

1 know, I'm also lucky in the fact that I am in
2 congress district five, and I have a wonderful
3 Congressman in Mr. Mick Mulvaney. Now, then.
4 I'm very happy with where I'm at with those
5 two. However, I am part of the Pee Dee and I
6 am part of Florence County. The rest of the
7 Pee Dee and the rest of Florence County is not
8 that lucky. They are congressional district
9 six. And you've already heard a lot about
10 that district already. But I will tell you
11 this. I've only been in Florence for twelve
12 years. And that's about how many times I have
13 called the particular congressman and yet have
14 got a return call from anyone from his staff
15 or himself. I have emailed and not got any
16 information. So when people say that we are
17 lost, that we don't have any representative,
18 that is not an exaggeration. The only
19 thing I've ever seen of our congressman is
20 occasionally during election time there's a
21 couple of big billboards put up. And that's
22 the only time I've ever seen that man's face
23 except maybe on TV. So we are not
24 represented. We're kind of like Washington,
25 D.C. You know, they're taxed without

1 representation. We're taxed without
2 representation because we don't ever see our
3 congressman.

4 (Applause)

5 We have -- someone leaned toward this
6 just a minute ago, but I want to go further in
7 depth. We have absolutely nothing in common
8 with the other areas surrounding the Pee Dee
9 area. We are South Carolina. We are
10 independent. We like to do things our way.
11 We live the way we want to. We -- you know,
12 we're South Carolina. And we need to be
13 treated like South Carolina and we'd like to
14 stay with that part of South Carolina that
15 still likes those everyday freedoms to do what
16 we want to do, how we want to do it and
17 independence. So when you start looking at
18 that 7th District, please remember that we
19 want to be represented. We need
20 representation and we've gone too many years
21 without it. Thank you.

22 REP. CLEMMONS: Thank you, Mr. Pickle. Ms.
23 Wilhelmina Pegues.

24 MS. PEGUES: Pegues.

25 REP. CLEMMONS: Pegues. Ms. Pegues, would you

1 please come to the microphone.

2 MS. PEGUES: Good evening. I can guarantee you I
3 will not take as much time because I have
4 heard most of everything and I agree with most
5 of what I've heard tonight. But tonight I'm
6 here mainly because I want to keep our
7 representation and our House seat 54. And
8 besides -- Let me go back. I'm Wilhemina
9 Pegues, 116 Summer Street, Bennettsville,
10 South Carolina, Marlboro County. And I am
11 here asking in all the drawings of the lines
12 that you keep our House seat whole and keep
13 our representation at home. Thank you.

14 REP. CLEMMONS: Thank you, Ms. Pegues. All right.
15 Next we have Willy Gladdes.

16 MR. GLADDEN: Gladden.

17 REP. CLEMMONS: Gladden. Mr. Gladden.

18 MR. GLADDEN: This will be real short because I
19 agree with what Ms. Pegues say. My name is
20 Willie Gladden, 175 (?) Road, Marlboro County.
21 I'm on Marlboro County County Council. And we
22 need to keep our representative House 54 as a
23 whole. We do not need to have anyone else
24 come in to help divide our county up. And
25 problems that we have, she's working on it,

1 she's doing a good job, and we need to keep
2 her there and not separate our county. And
3 that's all I have to say for the night.
4 Everybody else done it.

5 REP. CLEMMONS: Thank you, Mr. Gladden.

6 MR. GLADDEN: Thank you.

7 REP. CLEMMONS: Thank you for sharing that with us.

8 REP. CLEMMONS: And next we have Brad Richardson.

9 MR. RICHARDSON: Good afternoon, panel. Ladies and
10 gentlemen, my name is Brad Richardson. I do
11 serve as third vice chairman of the Florence
12 County Republican Party, but I'm coming to you
13 today as just a simple, tax paying citizen of
14 Florence County. Today we are here for a very
15 important reason, a 7th Congressional
16 District. What you will decide will not only
17 impact us, it will impact generations to come.
18 We need representation local. We need to keep
19 everyone in line together. Horry County and
20 Florence County, what I have seen, would be
21 the ideal location for the 7th Congressional
22 District. Florence County works as engine
23 together. We need to all be united from all
24 the way to Johnsonville where I stay to
25 Timmons ville, Florence, and Lake City to bring

1 everyone together where we have the same
2 representation and the same representative
3 going to DC to work for us. Folks, we've
4 talked about Gerrymandering, is it Democrat,
5 is it Republican. It doesn't matter who we
6 send to Washington. It doesn't matter if
7 Clyburn stays two more years or 22 more years.
8 What matters is the man or the woman we go to
9 the polls and elect whether they have an R
10 beside their name or a D beside their name
11 is the person who can do the most for the
12 people of our area. And that's who we need to
13 elect and we need to have everybody together
14 on the same page. And just to touch on when
15 the 7th Congressional District is formed it's
16 going to shift some of the House seats, some
17 of the local Senate seats. That needs to
18 happen. Before I can leave my house and get
19 to my county seat it looks like a jigsaw
20 puzzle. Half of the area Senator Leatherman
21 represents. A portion of the area Senator
22 Williams represents. The House seats are
23 completely, completely divided. And everybody
24 says I want my house member. That's well and
25 good for this 7th Congressional District to

1 form. I will gladly give you my
2 representative from District 61, Mr. Brown.
3 Thank you.

4 REP. CLEMMONS: Okay. Thank you very much, Mr.
5 Richardson. Next we have Sheila Gallagher.

6 MR. RICHARDSON: (inaudible)

7 REP. CLEMMONS: That's right. Thank you, Mr.
8 Richardson. Ms. Gallagher.

9 MS. GALLAGHER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My name is
10 Sheila C. Gallagher. 1717 Raven Drive,
11 Florence 29505-3047. First, I appreciate you
12 all being here and taking the time. I realize
13 it is part of your job, but do appreciate you
14 being here. I also very much appreciate our
15 citizens being here. I had the opportunity
16 this past year to run for office, and it was
17 quite a learning experience. And, again, I do
18 want to congratulate Mr. Crawford on his win
19 in House District 63. But it was while I was
20 out campaigning that I saw more than I had
21 actually realized before just sitting in the
22 comfort of my middle class home. I am a
23 teacher, recently retired. And I am in a
24 district that is very interesting in the
25 variety of people that are out there. We go

1 from some really lovely kind of three-story
2 homes to your might want to call it a regular
3 middle class home and then there were other
4 homes that I visited in the district that I
5 was a little bit shaky about even walking on
6 the porch. So when we are discussing the need
7 for Gerrymandering, I think we might have to
8 go all the way back to the War of Northern
9 Aggression here to figure out why we got to
10 Gerrymandering and the need to be sure that
11 all people are represented and all of their
12 issues are on the table and presented for
13 them. One of the pieces that caused a problem
14 for me was this split precincts. And we can
15 talk about the towns, et cetera, but we
16 actually had precincts. And during the voting
17 process there were problems. So if you would
18 start with the map of looking at one trying
19 not to split precincts, that would be a nice
20 thought. Again, it's been emphasized the need
21 to be sure that we keep the towns together
22 versus splitting them. Another example is
23 that 5th and 6th District in Florence area
24 where you just have that one tip that is part
25 of Representative Mulvaney's, and then the

1 rest would be part of Congressman Clyburn's.
2 That that does present a problem versus trying
3 to draw the lines. And maybe instead of being
4 so tight on the numbers that we make sure that
5 these areas and representation within the
6 towns and cities are representative of what we
7 have. As far as the congressional seat is
8 concerned, I think that we need to look at the
9 issue of having at least two representatives
10 within the Democratic party and then we would
11 have the other five as representative of the
12 Republican party as our state now exists. I
13 think it's important that the areas are
14 redrawn. I think when I look at the 2nd
15 Congressional District that goes all the way
16 through the Lexington, Barnwell, Allendale,
17 Hampton, right down there at Jasper, Beaufort,
18 that's an awful interesting district when you
19 look at it, let alone our own six. And I
20 understand the Gerrymandering there. But I
21 think the issue needs to be looked at as to
22 the representation for the people and what our
23 issues are that are together, the Pee Dee
24 versus, say, the upper part of the state. And
25 we also believe that bringing that

1 congressional seat here might also help us
2 with bringing that industry here. As we found
3 out with the Governors Riley and Campbell,
4 with their sixteen years in office, being from
5 the upper part of the state, that's where all
6 the business went. And we sure could use some
7 of that down here. Again, I thank you very
8 much.

9 REP. CLEMMONS: Thank you, Ms. Gallagher. Next
10 we'll hear from Stephanie Rollingson.

11 MS. ROLLINGSON: Thank y'all for coming today. I am
12 Stephanie Rollingson. I live at 1825
13 Brigadeau Lane in Florence, South Carolina. I
14 am a -- one of Dr. Crawford's constituents.
15 But I own real estate all over Florence
16 County. I'm a commercial real estate
17 developer. I own farms in District 60. I own
18 some stuff down in 61. And I am here today,
19 one, because I'm the president of the Women's
20 Republican Group here in Florence County. I'm
21 also the first vice chairman of the Republican
22 Party here in Florence. The four things that
23 the Florence County Republicans want: One,
24 Florence needs and wants to be in the 7th
25 Congressional District. Florence County is 55

1 percent Republican, but yet, we are
2 represented in Washington D.C. by a Democrat
3 because we're part of a congressional district
4 which is designed for a Democrat. The lines
5 for District 5 and 6 are very complicated. I
6 worked in these polls. I understand exactly
7 what these ladies are saying about these
8 precincts being divided. It is a nightmare in
9 the polls when you have half of the people in
10 one precinct voting for District 5 and one
11 person voting in District 6. It causes mass
12 confusion. If you could please hold these
13 precincts within their congressional
14 districts, and even within their House
15 districts, it would be very, very helpful.
16 The lines are confusing. We want all of
17 Florence County in District 7. And we
18 wouldn't mind being joined with Horry County.
19 And the reason being is we function together.
20 Our news comes out of Horry County. When you
21 put us with Sumter County and with Columbia,
22 we don't get their news down here in Florence
23 County. We get Myrtle Beach news. All of our
24 news comes out of Myrtle Beach. Therefore, we
25 don't know what's happening within parts of

1 the 6th District. So, I'm asking you to
2 please put all of us in there together. We
3 want District 60 in Florence County and we
4 want all of districts -- the House District 60
5 in Florence County. With the growth in
6 southern and western and lower Florence County
7 we believe District 60 needs to be all within
8 this county. Currently District 60 is shared
9 with Sumter County, and this is just not a
10 natural fit anymore. While at one time
11 Florence and Sumter Counties were intertwined,
12 today they are no longer bedroom communities
13 of each other. Sumter now feeds out of
14 Columbia. Their news comes out of Columbia.
15 Florence feeds off of the beach. And our news
16 comes out of the beach. The people in these
17 areas have totally different needs from their
18 representatives. It would be much simpler to
19 represent people who have similar needs. It
20 would be a much more natural fit to add
21 Timmons ville, South Florence, Effingham, Elam,
22 Evergreen, Olanta and even portions of lower
23 Florence County into District 60 than to have
24 Sumter County in with District 60.

25 MS. ROLLINGSON: The bottom line is that we want

1 more Republican representation in South
2 Carolina House of Representatives. We want
3 three out of the five South Carolina House
4 seats in Florence County to be winnable by a
5 Republican. Based on the current South
6 Carolina House maps, Republican can only win
7 two seats -- two seats out of the five in our
8 County. Florence County is 55 percent
9 Republican, yet we only have 45 percent
10 representation by Republicans at the state
11 level. We deserve our 55 percent
12 representation. And I ask you to please give
13 it to us. The only other thing I want to say
14 is if you have any influence over our county
15 council districts, currently Florence County
16 has nine county council districts and only
17 three of those are winnable by Republicans.
18 We deserve our opportunity to have 55 percent
19 representation on our county council as well.
20 Thank you.

21 REP. CLEMMONS: Thank you, Ms. Rollingson. For the
22 record, we are dealing with South Carolina
23 House seats and U.S. Congressional seats and
24 we have no jurisdiction over the county
25 council seats. Next we have Mark Buyck. Mr.

1 Buyck. While you're coming forward, Mr.
2 Buyck, let me introduce a couple of folks that
3 -- additional members of the House that have
4 shown up with us. We have Thad Viers from
5 Horry County and we have Seth Whipper in the
6 back from Charleston County.

7 Thank you. Mr. Buyck.

8 MR. BUYCK: Yeah, I too want to thank y'all for
9 being here. My name is Mark Buyck, III. I'm
10 a lawyer here in Florence. My address -- my
11 work address is 248 West Evans Street here in
12 Florence. I live at 414 Seminole Avenue. My
13 home is a mile-and-a-half from my office.
14 The two are in different congressional
15 districts. I have -- I practice in a small
16 firm. There are twelve of us, but we do have
17 an office in Surfside. That's in the 1st
18 District. Historically, -- And I'm saying
19 this a little bit from a Republican
20 perspective. The first campaign that I was
21 ever involved in was in 19(?). Ray Harris
22 from Darlington was the Republican nominee for
23 the 6th Congressional District. At that time,
24 that district comprised of Darlington,
25 Marlboro County, Clarendon County,

1 Williamsburg, Horry. I believe Georgetown was
2 in it at that time. And historically that was
3 the 6th Congressional District. It centered
4 in Florence and with a little smaller piece
5 down in -- a little smaller spear of
6 influence in Horry County. Now, the -- over
7 the last 40 years, I think everybody here in
8 Florence will recognize that the tables have
9 turned a little bit and no longer is the news
10 from Florence and Myrtle Beach, but now it's
11 Myrtle Beach/Florence. We -- you know, we can
12 look at these maps and we can tell that Horry
13 County is growing and Florence, while it's not
14 shrinking, it's not growing at the same rate.
15 But the point I'm making is, historically,
16 there has been a community of interest between
17 Florence and Horry County. There are a number
18 of people in Florence that have vacation homes
19 in Horry County. There -- I had a great
20 grandfather that practiced law in Georgetown
21 with his cousin who practiced here in
22 Florence. And they shared offices together.
23 And, historically, there has been that
24 connection. And it only happened with the
25 redrawing of the 6th Congressional District I

1 guess after the 1990 census. But Florence,
2 the community of interest, is with the coast.
3 It's not with Rock Hill. It's not with York.
4 It's not with the bedroom communities of
5 Charlotte. Our community of interest is with
6 Horry County. Both industrially -- the real
7 estate markets are somewhat similar. The
8 farming communities between Florence and
9 Myrtle Beach are historically the tobacco
10 growing parts of South Carolina. Their
11 interests are very similar. And that's where
12 the district needs to be, the new 7th
13 district. You know, nostalgic if you want to
14 call it, the 6th District and name another one
15 the 7th, that'd be fine with me. But if we
16 got to settle for the 7th, as long as we got
17 Florence and Horry County together, I'd be
18 satisfied. But do keep that -- keep that in
19 mind. The community of interest in Florence
20 is not in the 5th District and it's not in the
21 6th District as it's currently drawn with
22 parts of North Columbia and North Charleston
23 and all the way into Beaufort County. Those
24 are not areas that we have a whole lot in
25 common with, other than the fact that we're

1 South Carolinians. Now, on the House
2 districts -- the state House districts, I want
3 to second what Ms. Rollingson said. I'm not
4 currently an elected officer of the Florence
5 County Republican Party, but I have been. I'm
6 a past County Chairman. And the District 63
7 is -- it is contiguous and it's a Florence
8 district. And I -- I'm certainly not
9 advocating carving House District 63, but
10 District 60, on the other hand, is 70 percent
11 of the population of District 60 is already in
12 Florence County. It has to crawl all the way
13 over to Sumter to get that extra 30 percent.
14 I think it makes more sense if rather than
15 crawling over to Sumter it would head more
16 into Florence County and stay in Florence
17 County heading south rather than going
18 southwest into Sumter. Again, we have the
19 population to support five house districts, 55
20 percent of the vote in Florence is Republican.
21 And I believe that there ought to be three
22 house seats in Florence County that are able
23 to elect a Republican. And, also, I second
24 every speaker that's come up here and
25 mentioned the practice of splitting these

1 precincts between homeowner districts, both on
2 the state level and the federal level. I've
3 been involved in a lot of elections, and it
4 causes nothing but problems. I've been in
5 front of several county election commissions
6 arguing cases. Inevitably, the confusion that
7 comes up from the splitting of these precincts
8 is the root of a lot of distrust and a lot of
9 confusion on election day that just doesn't
10 need to be there. Thank you very much.

11 REP. CLEMMONS: Thank you, Mr. Buyck. Yes, sir, Mr.
12 Sellers.

13 REP. SELLERS: For the record, Mr. Chairman, maybe
14 we need some clarification from Patrick or
15 anyone else here. But political party and
16 socioeconomic level of the voter are two
17 factors that are not taken into account when
18 we do this process, correct?

19 REP. CLEMMONS: I'll defer to counsel. There are a
20 myriad of factors that we take into
21 consideration. Exactly what factors we will
22 exclude and include is yet to be determined as
23 we put together our plans for this process.

24 REP. SELLERS: Thank you.

25 REP. CLEMMONS: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Buyck. Moving

1 on we'll now hear from Beverly Serma.

2 MS. SERMA: I am Ms. Beverly Serma, 394 Saholly
3 Lane, Florence, South Carolina. I've only
4 been here ten years. I'm in 63, and I'm
5 represented and, of course, seat six for the
6 congressional. I was a little confused about
7 the hearing today. I thought maybe you guys
8 would tell us a little information then we'd
9 stand up here. So, basically, what I was told
10 about six, you know, for years I'm thinking
11 what's going on with this, and I looked at the
12 map about a year ago and, you know, agree with
13 everybody here that it's really Gerrymandered.
14 And, to me, it seems almost criminal. But, I
15 guess, it -- I really have a question on
16 somebody said it's a federal lawsuit based off
17 the civil war and we can't do anything about
18 six? I mean, is that true or is six going to
19 stay the same if you're going to give us seven
20 or . . .

21 REP. CLEMMONS: We are here to receive input as to
22 how you would like to see the districts
23 crafted. This is the first part of the
24 process. It's too early to say what districts
25 are going to go where.

1 MS. SERMA: I thought -- I mean, I thought -- well,
2 talking to people I thought your hands were
3 tied because of a federal lawsuit that we
4 can't change from the civil war that we have
5 to have a minority in the federal government
6 in seat six? No? Am I totally wrong?

7 REP. CLEMMONS: We are required to meet certain
8 requirements required by law. In the -- the
9 current 6th District contains a
10 minority/majority population within that
11 district --

12 MS. SERMA: So you still have to have one --

13 REP. CLEMMONS: We are required by law to maintain -
14 -

15 MS. SERMA: You're going to have --

16 REP. CLEMMONS: -- no less than that
17 minority/majority if possible.

18 MS. SERMA: Is that ever going to be challenged?

19 REP. SELLERS: Currently there are 16 states that
20 fall under the Voting Rights Act of 1964, '65.
21 South Carolina is one of those 16 southern
22 states to fall under the Voting Rights Act.
23 Currently there has not been -- there have
24 been some challenges, but none of have been
25 successful. And, thus, we're here.

1 MS. SERMA: Because I agree with everybody else.
2 I'm totally, you know, disenfranchised with my
3 vote. It's almost like why go to the poll. I
4 mean, it just seems -- to me, it seems really
5 unfair and discrimination is just as bad as
6 reverse discrimination in my book. And, to
7 me, it's reverse discrimination. I mean, I
8 don't -- I know we don't have the money,
9 certainly now in the recession, to fight that.
10 But, I mean, so I guess -- well, I guess, my
11 only other choice is, yes, get seven. I'd
12 like to be in seven, then. And I'd like to be
13 with Horry County because -- and I agree with
14 what they said about seat 60. Sixty-three --
15 I vote in 63. I'm fine with that. But 60
16 goes to Sumter County and I agree with
17 Stephanie that that needs to be addressed.
18 But if you could ever do anything about the
19 federal lawsuit with six because I just think
20 that the people in six aren't represented by
21 Clyburn. I've also called him. I don't know
22 his phone number by heart, but I've called and
23 emailed and never got any response back
24 either.
25 REP. CLEMMONS: Thank you very much, Ms. Serma.

1 Thank you for sharing your remarks. Next
2 we'll here from Matthew Blewitt. Welcome, Mr.
3 Blewitt.

4 MR. BLEWITT: Thank you very much.

5 REP. CLEMMONS: Is the mic not tall enough for you?

6 MR. BLEWITT: It's not. I'm Matthew Blewitt. My
7 address is 3333 Ashland Stokes Bridge Road,
8 Hartsville, South Carolina. I would like
9 to address two different things, if I may.
10 First thing I'd like to address is the South
11 Carolina Congressional seat number seven. The
12 Pee Dee has been divided for way too long
13 between three different congressional
14 districts. And I believe that Darlington
15 County would be a better fit for the 7th
16 Congressional District tying into Horry
17 because when people travel from Darlington
18 County we travel to Myrtle Beach, not
19 Charlotte or York or Lancaster. And when we
20 travel short distances to do something
21 recreational, seeing as how we have one very,
22 very, very, very small movie theater, we have
23 practically no mall, we go to Florence because
24 that's where everything is. And Florence does
25 tie in with Myrtle Beach a lot better than

1 we do. And so with us tying into Florence we
2 should also tie into Horry. Also, when I
3 looked at the numbers from what each
4 congressional district, as far as population
5 is going to really need, I also realized that
6 the 7th Congressional District, assuming that
7 it ties in what I've heard so far is being
8 thought of as Horry, Georgetown, Marion,
9 Marlboro, Dillon, Florence it still comes up
10 about 100,000 shy of what a congressional
11 district is supposed to have. And Darlington
12 County would just take that -- would just take
13 an extra step in heading that district in the
14 right direction, as far as population goes.
15 So, first off, I'd like to say that I think
16 all of Darlington County needs to be in the
17 7th Congressional District. I am happy with
18 our current Congressman, as a few people
19 before me have said, which is Mulvaney. But I
20 think it is also very clear that we're not
21 going to be in his district anymore. And so I
22 would like to be in the 7th Congressional
23 District. I'd also like to address South
24 Carolina House District 65. We had never had
25 an elected Republican in northeast South

1 Carolina until House District 65 elected
2 Representative Jay Lucas about 15, 16 years
3 ago, I believe. And we are a 50/50 county.
4 We have voted pretty much directly down the
5 middle. We voted for Mark Sanford in 2006.
6 We voted for John McCain in 2008. And then
7 this last election cycle we were literally
8 less than 200 votes difference between
9 Mulvaney and Spratt. And we are -- we have
10 also been represented by three
11 representatives, two Democrats and
12 one Republican, even though we're a 50/50
13 county. And I do believe we deserve at least
14 the one Republican representative in House
15 District 65. Thank you very much.

16 REP. CLEMMONS: Thank you Mr. Blewitt. That
17 exhausts the list of folks that signed up to
18 speak. Now, I did see some folks come into
19 the room after we picked up our list and I
20 will invite you to come forward if you would
21 like to address the group. Yes, sir. Please
22 share your name and address and any group
23 affiliation that you might be representing
24 here today.

25 MR. WEATHERLY: Hi, my name is Mel Weatherly. My

1 address is 722 West Smith Street in
2 Timmonsville. I'm not here representing any
3 particular group. I am a teacher with
4 Florence School District One. I don't want to
5 make a case regarding race or specific numbers
6 or specific representatives, but what I do
7 want to point out, and it's been brought out
8 already, but I want to stress this point that
9 as a region, Florence and Myrtle Beach, we
10 share a corridor there. We are essentially
11 the gateway to Myrtle Beach since I95 was
12 built in the '60s. We really became a gateway
13 from other states to the Myrtle Beach area.
14 As was pointed out earlier, our news and all
15 is tied together with these communities. When
16 you look at these TV stations like WBTW, WPDE,
17 they spend a lot of money, these media groups,
18 lot of money doing research on marketing
19 demographics, et cetera. They know based on
20 their research that this is essentially one
21 region. That's why they invest the way they
22 do. That's why they market themselves the way
23 they do because Florence or Myrtle Beach is
24 essentially one region. We've had a lot of
25 connections in the past, but they are looking

1 at trends in the future. They know that as
2 the years go on we will be increasingly tied
3 together. The Pee Dee area is one area. And
4 to be split apart as we are from so many other
5 areas, but then tied into part of Columbia to
6 Orangeburg to North Charleston there is no
7 valid reason to do that other than
8 Gerrymandering, other than trying to rig the
9 game. That's the only reason to do that. But
10 if you look at natural regions that belong
11 together, regardless of how the numbers fall,
12 regardless of which party gains or loses or
13 whatever, because I'm not making a case that
14 we've got to demand so much representation for
15 one party or another. I'm just saying that
16 when you draw a district you need to look at
17 the commonalities, the interests that we have
18 together, the cultural ties that we have and
19 where we're going to be in the future. And
20 it's become obvious that the trend in this
21 region of the Pee Dee and Horry County is that
22 we are joining together more and more as one.
23 Twenty years from now, 50 years from now, we
24 really will be inseparable. So let -- I'd
25 just like to encourage you to keep that in

1 mind. Don't isolate parts of Florence County
2 into other regions, other districts where
3 they're going to lose representation. Don't
4 make it so hard for those who do run for
5 office from both parties because this
6 negatively affects candidates for both
7 parties. When they have to try to make it
8 into Florence to meet with their constituents
9 and then they've got to race down to
10 Charleston to meet with the constituents and
11 they've got to race up to Columbia to meet
12 with constituents, they really can't represent
13 any of us well. So please try and keep in
14 mind how the citizens of Florence County and
15 surrounding counties, the surrounding areas,
16 the Pee Dee that all are part really of the
17 Florence region because it's essentially
18 the hub of the whole Pee Dee. Keep in mind
19 how are the citizens of this area going to
20 best be represented regardless of other
21 issues. How are you best going to be
22 represented. We want one vote for one person.
23 Not half a vote for some people and two votes
24 for another. One person/one vote. Thank you.
25 REP. CLEMMONS: Thank you very much, sir. And I saw

1 another hand in the back here. Yes, sir, if
2 you'd come forward.

3 MR. LUPPE: My name is Michael Luppe. I'm 1009
4 Snyder Lane in the bustling metropolis of
5 Hartsville, South Carolina. I come to only
6 really representing myself. I have some
7 economic reasons really why I think Hartsville
8 and Darlington County as a whole should be
9 part of district seven. One of the reasons is
10 very simply if you look around the I20, I95
11 interchange you see a lot of business there.
12 And there's a reason for it. It's because
13 it's a very good roadway system that allows
14 businesses to flourish and move the raw
15 materials and finish goods. Well, a little
16 farther outside that radius you see a lot of
17 other businesses as well that are very
18 connected to that roadway. And I think that
19 by having Darlington County and Florence
20 County part of district seven it would get
21 the representation they need to be able to
22 maintain that and to progress it forward. So
23 there's economic complimentary reasons that I
24 see. For instance, there's a reason why this
25 institution of education is called Florence-

1 Darlington Tech and not just Florence Tech.
2 To look at it on a larger scale, if you look
3 at the Carolina Panthers, they're called the
4 Carolina Panthers and not just the North
5 Carolina Panthers. So, you know, in this
6 state of a major recession that we've all felt
7 I think in one shape or form or another,
8 consider the job opportunities that can be
9 expounded upon by keeping a little bit of a
10 unified front in making Darlington County, as
11 well as the whole of Florence County, part of
12 district seven. Thank you.

13 REP. CLEMMONS: Thank you, Mr. Luppe. Yes, ma'am?

14 MS. GRAVES: A little nervous. I'm new at this. My
15 name is Toni Graves, and I'm 424 Tupelo Drive
16 in Dillon. And there's two things I wanted to
17 point out. In Dillon for the House seat, I
18 just want to see that it is kept into one.
19 That's the main focus. And the other thing
20 is, like I said, this is all new to me. And
21 I'm here because I wanted to be able to come
22 and get some history lessons and to hear from
23 different people from different parts of South
24 Carolina to see what their ideas, what their
25 perspective or what's going on with our state.

1 And from what I'm hearing, I'm a bit confused,
2 a bit disappointed into what we have arrived
3 to this present day. And what I'm saying is I
4 heard a lot of talk about Gerrymandering and
5 how it is reverse discrimination. But when I
6 look at the world news, I turn to Fox, CNN,
7 MSNBC and when I look at all the
8 Representatives in the congressional district
9 what I see is I don't see a lot of people that
10 look like me. So when I hear people talk
11 about Gerrymandering is so unfair or it's
12 reverse discrimination, I'm trying to
13 understand exactly what it is that is fair.
14 What is fair? It's my understanding that
15 these states that you made mention to is kind
16 of like protected for certain reasons. And we
17 all know that South Carolina started the Civil
18 War. And what I'm saying is I wish we all
19 could -- you know, there are different things
20 that divide us. There are socioeconomic
21 status. There are different things that keep
22 us divided. And that's what I've been hearing
23 here, division, division, division. But I
24 think everyone will like representation,
25 representation, representation. I may not

1 always agree with my representatives on a
2 state level or on the, you know, federal
3 level. But the thing about it is they were
4 voted in by the majority, okay. Especially
5 when you have a congressional district that
6 voted in 90 percent. And when you say the
7 opposite of I don't have any representation,
8 are you saying that the 90 percent should not
9 have representation? I'm just -- I'm new at
10 this. I'm trying to understand, and I did get
11 a lot of information from everyone that spoke
12 and I highly respect everyone's position,
13 opinion, statements, observation and
14 experience. And I don't have a lot of
15 experience in this, and I haven't been around
16 to various states, you know, counties in South
17 Carolina. But what I can tell you is that as
18 an African-American female, that it is very,
19 very important that we have a voice on the
20 local, state and federal level, and that if
21 certain things are not protected within South
22 Carolina I think when I do turn on the news
23 that it will take us a step backwards. And I
24 think we've just come too far to talk about,
25 you know, we say that Gerrymandering is

1 unconstitutional. Then I hear things such as
2 we deserve five Republicans or we deserve this
3 or we deserve that. So I'm just confused and
4 I just wanted to say whatever, you know, we
5 do, let's just do what's best for everyone. I
6 don't think that any particular person can say
7 that I'm 100 hundred percent satisfied with
8 everything that's going on with the
9 redistricting or their representative. I
10 don't think anyone can say that. But I do
11 just wanted to make sure that we, as an
12 African-American, that we do have a voice,
13 that it is continued to be protected. And I
14 think it's going to be protected. It was for
15 45 years, and I think it's going to continue
16 for the next 25 years, if I understand the
17 literature that I was reading. But I think
18 that that is just so important that everyone
19 has a voice; not one segment of the community;
20 not one, you know, political affiliation;
21 not one upper class or whatever. I just think
22 that whenever the lines are drawn that they do
23 take those type of things in consideration.
24 So even though we send someone from South
25 Carolina that one individual has to agree with

1 all the other Representatives that the people
2 send there so we still have a voice. We still
3 have a voice because there's not one
4 Representative, one Senator or whatever that
5 can get the job done by themselves. But I
6 think it's just more of a benefit to the
7 people to have someone that can represent them
8 in a, you know, on all levels rather than
9 whatever political affiliation, whatever
10 social economic status. I just think that
11 everyone needs to have representation. Thank
12 you.

13 REP. CLEMMONS: Thank you very much, ma'am, for your
14 remarks. Is there anyone else? Yes, sir, in
15 the back here.

16 MR. ROBINSON: Good afternoon. My name is Ed
17 Robinson. I'm a member of Florence City
18 Council for the past 22 years. And I want to
19 applaud you because you basically said
20 everything I wanted to say. And thank God for
21 the Justice Department. I mean, as you heard
22 here today, that's why Florence, South
23 Carolina falls under the offices of the
24 Justice Department because everybody wants all
25 this Republican stuff. And Republicans are

1 not in the best interest when it comes down to
2 South Carolina of black folk. And we have
3 suffered that for all these years. And if you
4 don't believe it, look at where I live and
5 where the Republicans live. I mean, it's just
6 ridiculous. They have it all. When you look
7 at all the state elected officials, what do
8 you got? Republicans. We've got all of that
9 and we want more. You got my heart, now you
10 want my soul. I can't give that up. I got to
11 fight for that. And what you said is it's not
12 a matter of Republicans or Democrats. It's a
13 matter of fairness. Everywhere I go, out of
14 state, every time they always says South
15 Carolina is the laughing stock of the nation.
16 And it's sad that we don't have more
17 Democrats here fighting for our rights. Jim
18 Clyburn, the only black Democrat -- only black
19 Congressman this state has ever had until
20 November. But yet, he was torn down like he
21 was nothing. I mean, why weren't you doing --
22 attacking up all the white congressmen were
23 fine. So it's a thing where if we could do
24 away with all these black folk and let's bring
25 in white folk. We have to maintain black

1 representation within the city. I'm a city
2 council person. I'm frustrated right now with
3 the City of Florence because we don't have any
4 blacks. The representation with black
5 officers is down. And we are being treated
6 poorly as a result of it because black folk
7 can see the need of black folk more so than
8 white folk. And we need that equitable mix
9 there in order for us to have fair and
10 equitable representation. I think it should -
11 - you should see why it's just shameful that
12 so many people come up here and say we've got
13 to have Republicans, we've got to have
14 Republicans. That's not in the best interest
15 of all the folk that live in South Carolina.
16 We've got black folk here too. And
17 Republicans, as you can see over the news,
18 have not been for the best interest of black
19 folk because this recession is going to -- the
20 cure for this recession is going to be born on
21 the backs of overwhelmingly black folk. And
22 the Republicans are the ones who are trying to
23 inflict this pain upon me. So we need -- I
24 hope you keep in mind that we have to have a
25 good mixture when it comes down to

1 representation, especially in the state of
2 South Carolina. Thank you.

3 REP. CLEMMONS: Thank you very much. Let's see.
4 Sir, I think you had your hand up first. Come
5 on and --

6 REP. SELLERS: And then you got that guy right
7 there.

8 REP. CLEMMONS: I do. We'll get to you, Sir.

9 MR. Munnerlyn: That's a tough act to follow.
10 Councilman Robinson, I wish you had been after
11 me, before me. My name is Ron Munnerlyn. I
12 live at 611 East Main Street in Bennettsville.
13 I'm the Chairman of Marlboro County Council.
14 On behalf of Marlboro County Council I wanted
15 to come tonight and just ask that you do your
16 best to maintain Marlboro County as one state
17 House district. We are, perhaps, the poorest
18 county in the state. We have challenges with
19 education -- challenges with economic
20 development, education, you know, just a whole
21 range of issues. And we feel very strongly
22 that having a unified voice in the House will
23 help us overcome some of those challenges.
24 Our county is -- as you all are looking at
25 redistricting our county council seats and

1 recently had a presentation from Bobby Bowers
2 of Budget Control. And he explained the
3 process and talked a lot about maintaining
4 majority/minority districts, which I believe
5 we are in the House, and also grouping people
6 of like interest when you could. Because of
7 Marlboro County's low population and
8 geographic location, I believe it's pretty
9 easy to do that and maintain one House
10 district. And, again, we would ask that you
11 all consider that. We feel that that's in the
12 benefit of Marlboro County. Thank you.

13 REP. CLEMMONS: Thank you very much. I must ask are
14 you any relation to Representative Munnerlyn?

15 MR. MUNNERLYN: Yes, but it has nothing to do with
16 why I'm here.

17 REP. CLEMMONS: Why don't you go sit with her?

18 MR. MUNNERLYN: (inaudible)

19 REP. CLEMMONS: Okay. Thank you so much for those
20 remarks. Yes, sir, right up front here.

21 MR. PAGE: My name is (inaudible) Page from
22 Darlington, South Carolina. 144 Spring
23 Street. First off I'd like to say God bless
24 Tim Scott. I would very much like Darlington
25 County to stay together and to be a part of

1 the new 7th Congressional District. Just a
2 little fact that Horry County grew this past
3 census more than the entire population of my
4 county. I believe almost twice. Maybe more
5 than that. I think they grew 130,000, I
6 believe. Y'all know that information --

7 REP. CLEMMONS: That's about right.

8 MR. PAGE: -- better than do.

9 REP. CLEMMONS: Yeah.

10 MR. PAGE: I would like Darlington County to be
11 associated with a demographic that is growing
12 immensely. Thank you and all the
13 Representatives, about five or six of them who
14 are here today. Thank you very much.

15 REP. CLEMMONS: Thank you very much, Mr. Page. Is
16 there anybody else that would like to address
17 the assembled group? Representative Crawford?

18 REP. CRAWFORD: I don't have anything substantitve
19 to add. I think you all have heard and you've
20 probably given the representation of the Pee
21 Dee. Some of us who are here in the room, you
22 understand why we behave the way we behave
23 when we're on the floor at the House, and
24 welcome to Florence and the Pee Dee. I just
25 wanted to say I think on behalf of actually

1 everybody here, we apprecaite -- I know it's
2 your duty to come and tour state, but I think
3 everybody appreciates the fact that you guys
4 will hold committee meetings all over the
5 state. And there is no way we would have
6 gotten all these fine people over to Columbia
7 to testify before you. And I just wanted to
8 say I know it's trouble to, you know, a) to
9 hold a job, but b) to hold a job all over the
10 state, so thanks for coming, each and every
11 one of you, and thanks for giving everybody
12 the time. Thank you.

13 REP. CLEMMONS: Thank you, Representative Crawford,
14 we apprecaite it. It's certainly a good
15 friend of ours that this dias once said in
16 debating a bill, "ask yourself is the juice
17 worth the squeeze." Well, the juice is worth
18 the squeeze to be here in Florence. I saw a
19 hand raised. Yes, ma'am, would you like to
20 address us?

21 MS. POWE: My name is Lenora Powe. I live at 6730
22 Highway 1, Patrick, South Carolina.

23 REP. CLEMMONS: I'm sorry, your last name again?

24 MS. POWE: P-o-w-e.

25 REP. CLEMMONS: Thank you, Ms. Powe. Go ahead,

1 please.

2 MS. POWE: I live in Chesterfield County and, of
3 course, I've been listening to everybody.
4 Nobody seemed to say anything about
5 Chesterfield County. We do have -- we have a
6 unique situation in our County. We are
7 represented now by four House members, three
8 of whom are here tonight. And as -- we like
9 them all. We have Representative Neilson,
10 Representative Munnerlyn and Representative
11 Jay Lucas, who's the only Republican in our
12 county. But we like him and we'd like to keep
13 him also. So I just -- and I'm a Democrat and
14 I'm on the County Council in Chesterfield
15 County, which has nothing to do with this.
16 Also when we were looking at the House
17 districts -- the congressional districts,
18 we're kind of in the middle of nowhere because
19 right now we are represented by the 6th
20 Congressional District. And we are kind of
21 hoping maybe we could get somewhere else, but
22 the way it looks now I guess we'll have to
23 keep what we got because I guess we're more of
24 a bedroom community of the Charlotte area than
25 we are right now of the Florence. But we all

1 (inaudible) Pee Dee (inaudible), so that's
2 going to make -- that's going to do a little
3 dancing when we look at when we start
4 splitting these up. But I just wanted to say
5 that Chesterfield County is still a part of
6 the state. And don't forget us in when you're
7 looking at your redistricting. Thank you very
8 much.

9 REP. CLEMMONS: Thank you, Councilwoman Powe. And
10 Chesterfield County is a beautiful part of
11 this state. Yes, ma'am, here. I believe you
12 had your hand raised.

13 MS. IRVING: Good afternoon. My name is Teresa
14 Myers Irving, and I'm also a member of the
15 Florence City Council. And I simply want to
16 stand to agree with the young lady from
17 Dillon. As I listened tonight, I was hoping
18 to hear more positive things about what we can
19 do. My main concern is that we do look at
20 what has happened in the history of South
21 Carolina and be prepared to draw lines that
22 will maintain representation that will
23 continue to give diversity to the
24 representation from the State of South
25 Carolina. We do not need to be (inaudible)

1 just particular where any particular race or
2 any particular party. We need to be divided
3 in such a manner that people can actually
4 network together and be able to have
5 representatives who can see beyond color, race
6 and just individual incomes. So I would like
7 to encourage you as a panel look at our
8 history. Remember our history. But look at
9 our future as well because our history do have
10 a very heavy impact. I always tell my
11 children always remember there's always one
12 generation left to teach the next generation.
13 There are things that will not be taken out of
14 our presence until a lot of the old mind sets
15 are phased out. But all the old mind sets are
16 not phased out yet. So while you're making
17 our future decision, look at our past. But
18 look at our future and help us get there with
19 a better representation of diversity. Thank
20 you.

21 REP. CLEMMONS: Thank you, Ms. Irving. Is there
22 anyone else that would like to be heard?
23 Hearing none. It's been a pleasure to be with
24 you here tonight in beautiful Florence. We
25 appreciate the energetic involvement tonight

of the community. We are refreshed to see that. We've not seen such level of involvement in some of our other hearings. We're pleased to see that here. It might have a lot to do with the excellent representation you have by your local members of the House of Representatives, whom I thank for being here tonight. And, with that, we will adjourn this meeting of the election law subcommittee.

[Applause]