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VIDEO TRANSCRIPTION

November 16, 2021

SC House Judiciary Ad-Hoc Committee

Redistricting Hearings

REPORTER: Kathryn Bostrom

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STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
HOUSE JUDICIARY AD-HOC COMMITTEE
REDISTRICTING HEARINGS

The within hearings, before the South Carolina House
Judiciary Committee, transcribed by Kathryn B Bostrom,
Court Reporter and Notary Public in and for the State of
South Carolina; said hearings were taken in Columbia, South
Carolina, on Tuesday, the 16th day of November, 2021.

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APPEARANCES:

House Judiciary Committee:

- Wallace "Jay" Jordan, Chair
- Justin Bamberg
- Neal Collins
- Patricia Henegan
- Beth Bernstein
- Jason Elliot
- Weston Newton

Staff Present:

- Emma Dean

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EXHIBITS

There were no exhibits marked during these hearings.

Court Reporter's Legend:

dashes [--] Intentional or purposeful]

interruption

[ph] Denotes phonetically written

[sic] Written as said

1 P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S
2 REPRESENTATIVE JORDAN: Call the meeting to order. We
3 are now at full strength. Thank you to the
4 members of the committee for being here.
5 Representative Bernstein had a very, very long
6 walk to get here, but she made it. We're
7 thankful -- very thankful to have her. Thank you
8 to those here in attendance this morning. I see
9 some familiar faces in the audience today here in
10 the Blatt Room. Thank you to those that are
11 participating virtually as well through our
12 statehouse website. Of course, many of you
13 hopefully know me by now. My name's Jay Jordan.
14 I have the pleasure of chairing this
15 redistricting ad hoc committee of the South
16 Carolina House of Representatives and of course,
17 it is, as always, my pleasure to introduce my
18 colleagues: Representative Henegan,
19 Representative Bernstein, Representative Newton,
20 Representative Elliott, Representative Bamberg,
21 as well as Representative Collins to my far left.
22 And it has been truly my pleasure, ladies and
23 gentlemen, to serve with y'all in this process
24 and to introduce you all these times. Also want
25 to say another thank you to our staff that has

1 worked so hard and tirelessly through this
2 process. Y'all are truly appreciated and on
3 behalf of this committee and the Judiciary
4 Committee and the full House, thank you so much.
5 Also thank you to my fellow members that are here
6 today. I see some of you here with us that are
7 taking time to be here today. Thank y'all for
8 coming in a little bit early today. As I have
9 said many times, this is an important part of the
10 overall process of redistricting. The hearings
11 that we've conducted over these past several
12 months, I think I've called them "keystones," and
13 I think that's a good descriptor of what we are
14 or what we've tried to do in this process. We've
15 taken to heart the input and the insight that has
16 been provided to us throughout this process and I
17 thank everyone who took time to participate in
18 that process and give us that input and insight.
19 This committee has traveled literally thousands
20 of miles across the State of South Carolina to
21 hear from our constituents. Last Monday, to sort
22 of bring us all up to speed to where we are,
23 November the 8th, we posted on our -- we posted
24 our working draft plan; and then on that
25 Wednesday, November 10th, we heard again from the

1 public through testimony and other type -- and
2 emails and submissions and those type things and
3 based on those, we listened and decided to
4 reconvene here today. That allowed us again to
5 leave the record open, so to speak, to hear
6 additional feedback and we've heard that. As of
7 yesterday, we received additional written
8 submission from several important public interest
9 groups, such as the League of Women Voters and
10 the NAACP, and we've collected that data or that
11 information and considered it as we further
12 drafted and evaluated the plan. I want to be
13 extremely clear as I hope I have been in the
14 nearly four months that this committee has worked
15 that this task is, of course, extremely
16 difficult, but extremely important to our state.
17 We did not consider any comments insignificant
18 and we believe all of theM offered to us for the
19 considerate -- for our consideration was of
20 value. he reality is we are blessed to have
21 tremendously -- to have grown tremendously in
22 size since 2010, but the other side of that coin,
23 the reality is we must address that the growth
24 was not consistent across the state and we have a
25 number of smaller counties or more rural areas

1 that lost population. Our constitution provides
2 that 124 House of Representatives are to be
3 apportioned among the inhabitants of this state
4 and based on the 2020 census -- US census, each
5 district should ideally be 41,278 in population.
6 The fundamental goal of this committee and the
7 House has been to develop a plan that assures
8 South Carolina Legislative Districts provide for
9 equal voting rights: one person, one vote. This
10 is our constitutional mandate and our guiding
11 principle of law as we work to redraw the
12 district lines to account for changes in South
13 Carolina's population, and with this population
14 mandate in mind, we also considered the important
15 social, cultural, historical context to our
16 communities. We do believe the working plan
17 realizes the fundamental constitutional goal of
18 equality in voting, and likewise accords with the
19 guidelines and criteria adopted by this committee
20 on August 3rd of 2021, in that our working plan
21 complies with the United States Constitution, the
22 South Carolina Constitution, and Federal and
23 State law, is contiguous, compact, and properly
24 considers communities of entrance -- interest and
25 incumbency. The ad hoc committee's working draft

1 plan was released on November 8th. We heard
2 public testimony on November 10th, received
3 written testimony from our members, our
4 constituents, public interest groups, as I
5 already said. We have reviewed those submissions
6 and taken them into consideration. I can tell
7 you it is my understanding that there are several
8 amendments to be presented to the full judiciary
9 committee; however, the judiciary committee needs
10 a starting place which we believe the ad hoc
11 committee's working plan provides. And just for
12 the record, as for the prior proceedings to date,
13 this hearing is being recorded, it will be
14 transcribed, and made available to the public.
15 We are not taking public testimony at this
16 hearing, but we have convened to consider the
17 working plan and determine as a committee what
18 our recommendation will be to the House Judiciary
19 Committee later today. Thank you again for your
20 interest in this important process throughout
21 this process. So all that to sum up: We have a
22 plan that we've heard a tremendous amount of
23 input -- that has received a tremendous amount of
24 work. As I've also said, there are amendments
25 that will be considered later today by full

1 judiciary, that of course, all of us will get to
2 participate in that process. I think some of
3 those amendments are going to be very good
4 amendments, necessary amendments, but again, as I
5 said, we need a starting point for the next phase
6 of this for the full judiciary to be able to take
7 the ball from us and run with it. So any
8 questions, concerns, or do I hear a motion? All
9 right, so --

10 UNKNOWN REPRESENTATIVE: Mr. Chairman, move approval
11 of the working plan.

12 MR. JORDAN: All right. So we have a motion to amend
13 4493 with the working draft that we adopted last
14 week. That's -- all right. Second by
15 Representative Henegan. All right. I believe we
16 need a roll call. So therefore roll call is
17 required and ordered.

18 MS. DEAN: Thank you. Chairman Jordan.

19 CHAIRMAN JORDAN: Aye.

20 MS. DEAN: Representative Bamberg.

21 REPRESENTATIVE BAMBERG: Aye.

22 MS. DEAN: Representative Bernstein.

23 REPRESENTATIVE BERNSTEIN: Aye.

24 MS. DEAN: Representative Collins.

25 REPRESENTATIVE COLLINS: Aye.

1 MS. DEAN: Representative Elliott.

2 REPRESENTATIVE ELLIOTT: Aye.

3 MS. DEAN: Representative Henegan.

4 REPRESENTATIVE HENEGAN: Aye.

5 MS. DEAN: Representative Newton.

6 REPRESENTATIVE NEWTON: Aye.

7 MS. DEAN: Receive as a favorable as amended report.

8 CHAIRMAN JORDAN: All right. Ladies and gentlemen,
9 that will take care of the business at hand for
10 now. We'll, of course, meet back up in about an
11 hour and twenty minutes in this room I believe.
12 Is that right, Ms. Dean? All right. In this
13 room. And then we will participate with full
14 judiciary as we consider the plan we've sent to
15 them. Seeing no further business, I believe we
16 are adjourned.

17 (There being nothing further, the
18 hearing is concluded)

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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

I, KATHRYN BOSTROM, COURT REPORTER AND NOTARY PUBLIC
IN AND FOR THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA AT LARGE, HEREBY
CERTIFY THAT I TRANSCRIBED THESE HEARINGS HELD ON TUESDAY,
THE 16TH DAY OF NOVEMBER 2021, THAT THE FOREGOING 10 PAGES
CONSTITUTE A TRUE AND CORRECT, TO THE BEST OF MY ABILITY,
TRANSCRIPTION OF THE PRE-RECORDED HEARING.

I FURTHER CERTIFY THAT I AM NEITHER ATTORNEY NOR
COUNSEL FOR, NOR RELATED TO OR EMPLOYED BY ANY OF THE
PARTIES CONNECTED WITH THIS ACTION, NOR AM I FINANCIALLY
INTERESTED IN SAID CAUSE.

I FURTHER CERTIFY THAT THE ORIGINAL OF SAID TRANSCRIPT
WAS THEREAFTER SEALED BY ME AND DELIVERED TO EMMA DEAN,
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RESPONSIBLE FOR FILING SAME WITH THE COURT PRIOR TO TRIAL
OR ANY HEARING WHICH MIGHT RESULT IN A FINAL ORDER ON ANY
ISSUE.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I HAVE SET MY HAND AND SEAL THIS
11TH DAY OF JANUARY 2021.



KATHRYN B. BOSTROM, COURT REPORTER

MY COMMISSION EXPIRES AUGUST 28, 2022

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