

PUBLIC MEETING

OF

THE ARKANSAS APPORTIONMENT BOARD

(Taken June 14th, 2011, at 6:00 p.m.)

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APPEARANCES

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EXHIBITS

- Exhibit 1 -- Letter from State Representative Jon Woods**
- Exhibit 2 -- Map from Senator Cecile Bledsoe**
- Exhibit 3 -- Comment submitted by Annie Crochet**

1 PROCEEDINGS

2
3 OPENING REMARKS BY MR. WOODSON:
4

5 Let's go ahead and get started. Can you-all hear
6 me okay? Yes? Okay. Well, my name is Joe Woodson,
7 Jr. I am the Redistricting Coordinator for the
8 Arkansas Board of Apportionment, and there's all my
9 contact information, phone number, email, mailing
10 address, in case you want to talk to me or you want to
11 send something to the Board. We've got email and all
12 of that, and we'll receive your comment that way.

13 Fayetteville is my home away from home. I spent
14 six years in school up here, and -- part of it was law
15 school. But anyway, it was that particular time. I
16 love Fayetteville, I love being up here. My mother
17 and father-in-law live here. I thought about having
18 everybody call the hogs tonight, but I'll refrain
19 from doing that. Anyway, I thought it would be a good
20 ice-breaker.

21 We've got a lot of ground to cover, and I want to
22 take the first few minutes and cover some basics about
23 the process. And then, just so you know, after I get
24 done talking about the basics, I'm going to open the
25 floor up. And anybody who has anything to say is

1 going to have the opportunity to say it. I know some
2 people have some prepared statements that they want
3 to read. You'll have an opportunity to do that.

4 If you want to, you can just, you know, raise
5 your hand from where you're sitting, ask a question,
6 make a comment. I've got a court reporter here. And
7 please identify yourself when you do say something,
8 because we're making a record. And the whole point of
9 this, from my perspective, is to gather as much
10 information as possible so that we as staff members
11 can relay that information to the three on the Board,
12 and they can make an informed decision when it comes
13 to the final map.

14 So I'm very interested in what everyone has to
15 say, and I'm very interested in trying to get it into
16 the record, too. And the other thing is, I want this
17 to be a conversation. I'm not here to preach to you
18 or give you a sermon. I'm not here to sell you a map,
19 and I'll reiterate that here in a few minutes. I'm
20 here to get your input about what you like, what you
21 don't like, what makes sense, what doesn't make
22 sense. So having said that, we'll get started. By
23 the way, here's our website. You can go on there and
24 email, arkansasredistricting.org. There's a ton of
25 information on there. There's the home page. You can

1 find out about the Board, you can find out about the
2 process.

3 I'm about to go over, here in a few minutes, a
4 summary of the legal criteria. There's more detailed
5 information right through here about what the law and
6 the process is. We've got a calendar, in case you
7 want to come down to Little Rock for one of the
8 meetings, which is what we'll do next week. We've got
9 links to a variety of other resources, like the
10 Constitutional officers, the Census Bureau, et
11 cetera. Documents that I have received, transcripts
12 of other meetings, those are posted online. And last
13 but not least, we've got maps, which we'll come back
14 to in a minute. And there's current maps, past maps.

15 And so everything that I have in my possession is
16 already on the website. The maps that are back there
17 on the posterboards are just a few that I picked out
18 because I think they've generated the most
19 discussion, and we're going to just use those as a
20 reference point, not because those have been endorsed
21 by the Board or because those are ones that I want to
22 see adopted.

23 Let me give you an extreme example. And I know a
24 lot of you already know a lot of this, but some of you
25 may not know all of it. Some of you may not know any

1 of it. And here's my extreme example. Let's say
2 instead of 35 State Senate seats in Arkansas, we only
3 had two. The Census Bureau says that the state
4 population of Arkansas as of last year was 2,915,918.
5 Let's say the 100 people in this room -- or 150,
6 whatever it is, let's say you-all got to elect one
7 State Senator, and the other 2.9 million people got to
8 elect the second State Senator. Well, obviously,
9 you-all in this room would have a disproportionate
10 influence on the process.

11 And so the courts, beginning in 1964, in a U.S.
12 Supreme Court case, said that equal population is the
13 cornerstone of all redistricting. And whenever any
14 jurisdiction goes through the process, they need to
15 try to get it as close to one person, one vote as
16 possible. So if you divide the total population by
17 100 House seats, you get an ideal district size in
18 Arkansas of 29,159. Same thing for the Senate.
19 Divide it by 35, ideal district size of 83,311.

20 One of the things I'll talk about just a little
21 bit more is the overall range. We all know that the
22 General Assembly just finished with Congressional
23 redistricting drawn for the Congressional seats. The
24 General Assembly had to work within a smaller
25 variance. They had to be -- as a practical matter,

1 each of the four Congressional districts had to be
2 less than 1 percent different in population.

3 In Arkansas -- well, not in Arkansas, but any
4 legislative seat in the Senate, the House and Senate
5 seats, they get the luxury of having a 10 percent
6 overall range. What I mean by that is if, for
7 example, your ideal district size is 100 people, not
8 83,000, but for this example 100 in the state. And
9 the smallest district in the state is 95, and the
10 largest district in the state is 105, well, 105-95 is
11 10 people, or 10 percent. So you would be within the
12 legal variance. And so when we were looking at the
13 83,000 and the 29,159, we get to have that plus or
14 minus five percent when we redraw the district sizes.

15 Now, this right here will take your breath away.
16 It takes your breath away in a good way if you live in
17 northwest Arkansas, in a bad way if you live in south
18 Arkansas. In Washington and Benton Counties
19 currently, there are four Senate seats. If you take
20 the actual population of those two counties and those
21 four -- not the two counties, but the actual
22 population of those four districts, which is 417,000
23 divided by the ideal district size, you get five
24 Senate seats. So in other words, the population of
25 these four -- the actual population of these four

1 Senate districts is going to support five Senate,
2 State Senate seats.

3 Same thing with the House. Currently, there are
4 11 House districts, with a total actual population of
5 402. You divide by 29,159, and you get right under 14
6 seats. So you're going to see northwest Arkansas grow
7 from 11 to probably right under 14, depending on --
8 it's not an exact one-for-one equation, because you
9 might have part of one district in the counties, et
10 cetera, et cetera. But you're going to see, you know,
11 around 14 House seats, whereas now you have 11 in just
12 these two counties.

13 One other way to demonstrate this incredible
14 change in population density. It's a little bit
15 washed out up here. All of this right here on my
16 screen is green. All these are green. And the green
17 indicates that these areas of the state are
18 underpopulated. In other words, they don't have
19 enough people in their district to meet that minimum
20 Senate district population size. And so they have to
21 grow and stretch geographically to bring more people
22 in. The orange and the red right here in Central
23 Arkansas, certainly in northwest Arkansas, and a
24 little bit over here in Jonesboro, the population
25 density, as you-all know, has increased. And those

1 existing districts will shrink, and in some cases,
2 we'll end up adding the districts to that geography.
3 Same thing for the House. Same story. Central
4 Arkansas, northwest Arkansas have denser populations.

5 Now, before we -- just a couple more things. I
6 want to talk about the law. And I'm going to briefly
7 show you the software. These ten bullet points are a
8 quick summary of the criteria that the Board has to
9 use and look at when it's drawing maps. Now, we've
10 already talked about the first one, and that's the
11 cornerstone of all redistricting, the one person, one
12 vote. And we've already talked about how
13 Congressional districts have a different standard as
14 opposed to what we're doing here at the Board, which
15 is a legislative district. And that's because they
16 are going by two different legal standards.

17 The next one on the list is compliance with the
18 Voting Rights Act of 1965. Most of you probably
19 already know that the federal government passed the
20 Civil Rights legislation in 1965 and made it illegal
21 to discriminate against any racial or language
22 minority through any practice or procedure or
23 anything that could have a discriminatory effect and
24 according to where you drew the maps, and that was
25 illegal. And so we have to be careful that we don't -

1 - in drawing our maps, we don't violate the Voting
2 Rights Act of 1965.

3 At the same time, beginning in the '90s, the U.S.
4 Supreme Court went through a series of trial cases,
5 and now it said, we don't want any place in the
6 country drawing districts based exclusively or
7 primarily on race. In other words, the Supreme Court
8 said, "We want you to be color-blind as best you can."
9 And that, of course, is a wonderful goal. They went
10 on to say that, however, even though we no longer --
11 even though we do want you to be color-blind, you can
12 still use race or language as a primary factor if
13 you're trying to avoid a Section 2 violation of the
14 1965 Voting Rights Act or a Section 5 violation of the
15 Voting Rights Act to remedy past discrimination. So
16 we've got these sort of competing ideas out there,
17 although they're not really competing. It is
18 possible to be in compliance with both at the same
19 time, but those are things that the Board is looking
20 at.

21 Next, you want to be geographically contiguous.
22 And that's -- that is what it sounds like. You can't
23 have a district that has a separate island to itself.
24 Districts need to be connected geographically
25 somewhere at some point. You can't have two parts of

1 the same district that are completely unconnected
2 geographically.

3 The courts like geographically compact districts.
4 They -- you know, a circle or a square would be a
5 really good district and sort of the ideal district.
6 In practice, we know that no district looks like that,
7 that it's got some irregular shape to it.
8 Nevertheless, the more bizarre the outline of your
9 district shape, the less the courts are going to like
10 it. So appearances do matter in redistricting, and
11 that's one of the things that we're looking at when we
12 draw the maps.

13 And then lastly, you come to these right through
14 here. And the thing I want to point out first is
15 they've got all these qualifiers on here. "Minimize
16 where possible; where possible; where possible.
17 Minimize." And that's the language that the courts
18 use. You know, nothing is absolute in redistricting.
19 The closest thing that you have to an absolute in
20 redistricting would be the population sizes, but even
21 that can be violated if you've got a good enough
22 reason. And I don't anticipate that being violated in
23 Arkansas, but theoretically it could be. Certainly
24 when you get down to this part of the list, you're
25 talking about sort of how far you go down one

1 continuum or the other. And they've got these
2 qualifiers on them.

3 And so as best you can, the courts have said
4 boards and -- in redistricting, of course, you need to
5 minimize the political jurisdiction. And again,
6 that's what it sounds like. To the extent that you
7 can, you want to keep whole counties, whole cities,
8 whole voting precincts intact. Maintain the core of
9 existing districts. What's the historical core of
10 Senate District 7? It's Fayetteville. Right? And to
11 the extent you can, you would want to keep
12 Fayetteville part of that district.

13 Maintain continuity of representation. And the
14 rationale for this is, if a particular district has an
15 incumbent, then they ought to be able to be given the
16 chance to continue to elect that incumbent. So the
17 courts have said, don't make incumbents run against
18 each other where possible. Now, again, that's not an
19 absolute. And we might have a situation or two where
20 we do have two incumbents running against each other.
21 But the courts -- the courts say, try not to do that.

22 Maintain communities of interest. That's the
23 best shorthand way for most people to talk about
24 redistricting. What do these communities have in
25 common, socially, economically, politically? What do

1 the school districts look like? What do the court
2 circuits look like? What do we have in common? What
3 does central or northwest Benton County have in
4 common with northwest Washington County, if anything?
5 And so I'm not saying it does, but those are things
6 we're looking for. Those are factors we're looking
7 for.

8 And finally, minimize partisanship. The most
9 recent Supreme Court case has said that it's possible
10 to bring a lawsuit saying one party politically
11 gerrymandered the other. But what they didn't do is
12 say whether it is or is not legal for the State to do
13 that. So there's a great deal of uncertainty with
14 respect to the partisanship, and of course, the best
15 course of action for us is to minimize that. If I
16 were -- all of these bullet points are court-made
17 rules that served as limitations on a party taking
18 unfair advantage of the other. And so you have these
19 limitations out there that the Board has to work
20 within.

21 Any questions or comments about all of that? All
22 right. Well, this is the last thing I want to do
23 before we open the floor and start talking about maps.
24 This is our map right here. It's a widely-used
25 mapping program that is used in all sorts of

1 applications all around the world, I guess. And
2 there's a program that goes on top of it called
3 AutoBound. And AutoBound is a computer program that
4 takes all of the census data, all of the total
5 population figures, all of the race figures.
6 Everything, every bit of information that the census
7 collects is loaded into this AutoBound program, which
8 automatically does the tabulation for us.

9 And so what I wanted to show you is in practice,
10 how we're actually drawing these maps. And this is
11 the way we do it. And when I say "we," it's the staff
12 of the three bosses and myself. If you look at Senate
13 District 7, currently there's 93,757. The ideal is
14 83,312. It's overpopulated by 12.54 percent or
15 10,000 people.

16 So what you have to do is you come in here, and
17 you say, I'm going to unassign, right here, at the
18 precinct level -- that's a VTD is -- and I've turned
19 this on. That's what all these little yellow lines
20 are. These are voting precincts. And I'm going to
21 assign this area right here, I'm going to assign it to
22 "unassigned." In other words, I'm just going to take
23 this population in this precinct out of District 7,
24 Senate District 7, and see what happens.

25 Okay. So that turned white on the map. We come

1 back and look at the 7th. It dropped about two
2 percent. All right. Now it's 9100 people over, so it
3 hasn't taken enough out of Senate District 7. So I'm
4 going to grab these three precincts and see what
5 happens then. Okay. So now 7 is still a little bit
6 overpopulated at 86,000, but it's -- the number
7 turned green because it's within that plus or minus
8 five percent. So it's up -- it's overpopulated by
9 3600 people, but that's a legal number there. It's
10 within that plus or minus five percent. Anybody have
11 any questions about that? Okay. Very good. Let me
12 close this, and we will start talking about some of
13 the maps.

14 Let me again preface our conversation about the
15 maps with this: I'm not here to sell you a map. I
16 don't -- haven't seen any map that's been endorsed by
17 the Board. My primary purpose here is to gather
18 information. I know in some of the maps there's
19 strong support and strong objection at the same time,
20 and I intend to talk about all of that. If there's a
21 map that I don't just bring up automatically, feel
22 free to ask me, and I'll try to bring that up. Let me
23 -- the four I put on the board -- I'm sorry. The
24 eight, the four Senate and four House maps were just
25 ones that I picked because those are the ones that

1 I've heard the most conversation about. And don't
2 read anything into it other than that. That's why I
3 chose those, and that's why I'm about to show you
4 these, is because I've heard the most buzz about
5 those, both pro and con.

6 We'll start with the Senate. We'll talk about
7 the Senate maps, and then we'll talk about the House
8 maps. So this is the May 3rd Senate map that was
9 submitted by the Secretary of State's staff. And what
10 I did was I tried to wrangle a copy of that May 3rd
11 map into what I'm now calling the June 11th map,
12 because I just put it out on the website a few days
13 ago. But it's intended -- copy of the May 3rd -- it's
14 intended to be very similar to the May 3rd map.

15 And it's a little bit different right here. This
16 green district, Benton down into Washington County,
17 because on my software, it didn't need the
18 population. Senator Prichard's district extended
19 over a little bit further to the left, because it did
20 need the population. I kept this little part right
21 here because it's part of the existing Fayetteville
22 district.

23 Nevertheless, you'll see there's one, two, three,
24 four -- there's five Senate districts in these two
25 counties per those population numbers. That is -- and

1 again, this is just based on what I've heard. And the
2 floor is going to be open to talk about anything.
3 That is in contrast to, again, another map that's out
4 on the website, which is the May 4th version.

5 Again, I drew this. This, for example, is -- the
6 red lines are Senator Pritchard's current Senate 35
7 district. And what I did, not only with northwest
8 Arkansas on this map, but the whole state is that --
9 now, my premise with this map was -- if you will, was
10 -- I want to go back. And I'm just going to shrink,
11 geographically, all of the districts that have to
12 shrink, and then I'm going to come back and sort of
13 fill in the holes.

14 And so this is what happened here. I shrunk in
15 35, because the population in this dark, little area
16 is the same as Hennessy. And then the -- this eastern
17 half got put into Senator Laverty's, too. Senator
18 Bledsoe's district got pushed over to the west,
19 because, again, the total population up and down
20 Highway 71 with Rogers and Bentonville, and on and on.

21 So having said that, again, I'm not here to sell
22 you a map. I'm not here to say one is better than the
23 other. We're here to hear what you have to say, and
24 that's where we're at in the program. I will invite
25 any of you-all to start making comments or asking

1 questions, and we want to know. Yes, sir. You don't
2 have to come to microphone, but feel free to if you
3 would like.

4 JOHN BURROW: I'm John Burrow. I'm the
5 chairman of the Washington County Election
6 Commission. With me tonight are Tom Lundstrom and
7 Pete Morris, Jennifer Price, and, I believe somewhere
8 in the room is Karen Pritchard, our wonderful county
9 clerk. We're here tonight simply to ask you-all to
10 drive home and to reinforce that number three on your
11 list of criteria, that we have 128 precincts in
12 Washington County right now. We've got all the
13 precincts we need provided for you to the state. If
14 you could be sure to use the existing precincts as
15 much as you possibly can so that there will be no
16 making life any more complicated, I would appreciate
17 it. It's a simple request, and with that, we're done.

18 MR. WOODSON: Well, thank you. And that
19 is one of the legal criteria, to try to maintain --
20 and ideally, we would like to. That's not a promise
21 that we won't split anything, but it makes it easier
22 on everybody. And one of the things I haven't
23 mentioned is, you know, there's a lot of downstream
24 folks waiting on us to get through with our maps,
25 county clerks, county board's election commissions

1 are going to redistrict the JP lines, cities are going
2 to redistrict their wards. School boards are going to
3 redistrict next year. And so there's a lot of folks
4 waiting to see what we do. Your point's well taken,
5 and we will certainly consider it. Thank you.

6 JOHN BURROW: Thank you.

7 MR. WOODSON: I'm sorry. If you'll go
8 next. Go ahead.

9 STEPHANIE VAUGHN: I'm Stephanie Vaughn,
10 from Springdale, and I'm representing a group called
11 Citizens For A Future Springdale. And I'm also here
12 to read a statement by Representative Woods. If
13 you'll allow me, I have some --

14 MR. WOODSON: And by the way, you can --
15 if you have something written, you can attach it and
16 bring it up here to the court reporter, who will make
17 it part of the record. And if you want to submit
18 something written at a later date, you can send it to
19 me or the Board. Okay.

20 STEPHANIE VAUGHN: Now, my group in
21 Springdale, Citizens For A Future Springdale, we
22 technically -- we have -- historically, we have never
23 taken a side on an issue we didn't believe in. When
24 we started seeing some of the reapportionment maps
25 that had Springdale cut up like a pizza pie, we

1 decided that we would take a stand. And we would like
2 to thank you, Mr. Woodson, for this map, the May 4th
3 map. We find that it's keeping most of the
4 communities intact, like the law is stating. It's
5 keeping the areas compact as much as you possibly can,
6 because we do have a lot of rural area. It may not be
7 what a lot of people like, but it seems to be a very
8 fair map.

9 Each major town -- Bentonville, Rogers,
10 Springdale and Fayetteville -- will all have their
11 own senators. And we find this to be very fair. And,
12 you know, the one voice, the one vote. You know, it -
13 - true representation in Little Rock. And I think
14 that's what everybody is really, truly looking for.
15 You know, the people out there voting. Mr. Woods
16 would ask you to let me read this letter.

17 MR. WOODSON: Okay.

18 STEPHANIE VAUGHN: (reading)

19 "Members of the Board of Apportionment, I have
20 prepared this statement due to an unexpected
21 scheduling conflict. I had planned to be at the forum
22 when it was originally scheduled for the seventh.
23 However it is time to hear from the city council
24 members, mayors, other elected officials, and most
25 important the people. I feel that it is my obligation

1 to inform the Board of Apportionment that the vast
2 majority of citizens of northern Washington County
3 would prefer a state senate seat comprised of the
4 communities of Johnson, Tontitown, Elm Springs &
5 Springdale.

6 "These four communities share the same school
7 district, work together on many projects, the same
8 water supply, most residents of these areas have a
9 Springdale mailing address and the area is moving
10 towards the same district court jurisdiction.
11 Without any doubt a senate district comprised of
12 these communities would meet the redistricting
13 criteria approved by the courts.

14 "The first and most obvious reason is that these
15 towns comprise a single community of interest:
16 "Preservation of communities of interest describes
17 the goal of maintaining a group of people in a
18 specific geographic area where those individuals
19 share common interests, common economic, social,
20 cultural, ethnic, religious, or even political
21 interest.

22 "Also such a district would be geographically
23 compact: "Geographically Compact Districts: The
24 Courts have held that geographically compact
25 districts are ideal. For example, a district shaped

1 like a circle or a square" -- as you've said. I'm
2 sorry. I'm repeating -- "would be 'geographically
3 compact.' In practice, most districts have some
4 irregularity in shape; nevertheless, the more bizarre
5 the district shape, the less likely it is to be
6 approved by the courts.

7 "Additionally these communities clearly represent
8 the core of the current senate district:

9 "Preservation of the 'cores' of existing districts is
10 a redistricting principle. When district liens are
11 re-drawn, the map makers can take into account the
12 existing districts, their geographic location, and
13 the current population. It is better to keep the core
14 of an existing district where possible.

15 "Sincerely, Jon Woods, State Representative District
16 Number 93."

17 I know you've received letters from the mayor of
18 Tontitown, the mayor of Springdale, the mayor of
19 Johnson and the mayor of Elm Springs. Tonight, we
20 have handed you copies. The originals will be sent to
21 you, but these also have the city council members from
22 these town where they assigned letters. We feel that
23 it's very important that we stay within the
24 guidelines with the Constitution, that everybody has
25 good representation. And I think that's the key.

1 That's what America -- that's why we became a
2 republic. And so we need to keep those things that
3 our founding fathers wanted for us, and that's more
4 representation when it comes to government, whether
5 it is at state level, county, whatever. So thank you
6 for listening to me this evening, and thank you for
7 the map on the May 4th.

8 MR. WOODSON: Thank you. Okay. Back
9 here. Yes, sir.

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: First thing, sort
11 of a technical request. AutoBound does a lot of
12 different things, but as I'm sure you're aware, you
13 can go to the Web and do everything you can do on
14 AutoBound on Dave's Redistricting.

15 MR. WOODSON: Yeah.

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: If you're not
17 familiar with that, there's a -- there's a website
18 called Dave's Redistricting that literally does
19 everything that AutoBound does, except better. It's
20 much easier, to us. I would request that any map you
21 put forward, at the same time you should put a
22 redistricting -- Dave's Redistricting file that
23 anyone can download and play with and pull the
24 statistics out of it. It's easy to do, as I'm sure
25 you're aware, and everybody in this room can build

1 their own maps like that.

2 (Snaps fingers.)

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So that's what I
4 request. I'd love to see it.

5 MR. WOODSON: Yeah. Let me speak to
6 that. Yeah. I completely agree. Last week in
7 Monticello, we told the folks there, and I'm glad you
8 reminded me, that Dave's Redistricting is infinitely
9 easier to use than the software. It assigns
10 population, but at the voter precinct level. It gives
11 you a matrix where you can look at the population
12 totals to see if you're within the variances.

13 The one thing it doesn't do -- this is the
14 limitation that, for most people, won't matter. For
15 the staff of the Board, we've got to use this because
16 Dave's -- and by the way, it's Dave's Redistricting.
17 You can just Google that, and you click on it and you
18 can upload a copy and start drawing. The limitation
19 is it can't drill down as low as specific as this
20 software, which, ultimately, we'll have to do when we
21 get to a final plan. Things like minority populations
22 and, if you're trying -- Dave's won't go down to the
23 block level, which is the most basic, smallest piece
24 of information that the Census provides. This will.
25 This is -- that's why we have to ultimately use this,

1 but yeah, you're right.

2 When we first got started, especially all of the
3 staff, we were roughing in maps on Dave's. And
4 everything that I have -- if you go to -- if you go to
5 Dave's, and you go on, there's a toolbar at the top,
6 where it says "Views." You click that open, and you
7 can make a JPEG photo of whatever map you draw. And
8 you can email it to me, and I'll post it. And, in
9 fact, I've got a few up there right now under
10 miscellaneous maps. And so an excellent point.

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: When you save your
12 file and post the file, you can trade files. That's
13 easy to do.

14 MR. WOODSON: But -- okay.

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So that way, you
16 can drill down at whatever level you want to, and then
17 you take the files and post them.

18 MR. WOODSON: So just post the files, is
19 what you're saying.

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Post the file, and
21 anybody can do whatever they want, either with the
22 whole state or whatever. It's much more flexible. It
23 would be much easier for the public to comment on
24 specifics and plans. Can I ask about these?

25 MR. WOODSON: Yeah.

1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I can't tell, is
2 this precinct 23 or 20 -- I can't see.

3 MR. WOODSON: No, that is --

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So it would be
5 much better to put that information out there where
6 people could see it.

7 MR. WOODSON: Very good point. And not
8 only that, but I've worked with some of our IT folks
9 at one of our most recent meetings. Again, folks
10 wanted to see more detail down at, like, the street
11 level. And as a preface to that, so far the maps that
12 you're seeing are rough drafts in the sense that we
13 haven't really tried to fine-tune very much, because
14 we're still trying to figure out what will work in
15 broad strokes. But the information is there,
16 and I'm working with the IT folks to see if we can
17 develop an application that we can take any of these
18 existing maps and lay on top of that and folks can go
19 to the website and drill down. And I hope to have
20 that up soon, and they're helping me on that. So
21 that's a good point.

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Well, you can't
23 see any of the of the counties, so -- is this

24 MR. WOODSON: Correct. Yes.

25 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I just wanted to

1 mention that. It's free.

2 MR. WOODSON: I see your point. Yeah.

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It's free.

4 MR. WOODSON: No, it's great. Yeah. That
5 site is great.

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You can look and
7 see where this cul-de-sac is, and I certainly can't do
8 that on one of your maps as you're posting them
9 currently --

10 MR. WOODSON: Yeah.

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- on the website.
12 So anyway, keep that in mind.

13 MR. WOODSON: Yeah.

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The second thing I
15 wanted to bring up, I don't know how you can answer
16 this point, but I just wanted -- as I'm sure you're
17 aware, the African American population in Arkansas
18 has historically been under-represented. And so the
19 question I have is, will there be 15 percent of the
20 House districts and 15 percent of the Senate
21 districts that are going to be a minority majority, as
22 the Voting Rights Act certainly says we should try to
23 do?

24 MR. WOODSON: Well, I --

25 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So I pose that.

1 MR. WOODSON: I disagree in the limited
2 sense that the courts have said that the Voting Rights
3 Act does not require proportional representation. In
4 other words, if there's 15 percent minority --

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It's pay back
6 time.

7 MR. WOODSON: -- you don't have to have
8 15 House seats. What they have said is where the
9 minority of the district is sufficiently large enough
10 and cohesive enough and can show that they would vote
11 typically as a group, you can create minority
12 districts based on that. It's a fine point. The only
13 thing I'm taking issue with is the proportionality.
14 The courts, they say no on proportionality but yes on
15 this other. So that's my limited point.

16 To the larger question of minority districts in
17 Arkansas, my response would be this, that as most of
18 you know, 1989, the Federal Court in Jeffers v.
19 Clinton said that Arkansas had violated the Voting
20 Rights Act of 1965 and ordered Arkansas to redraw the
21 maps, and then created four minority -- 13 minority
22 House seats. We're only one redistricting removed
23 from that. That case came down in 1989, when the
24 Court retained jurisdiction over Arkansas -- that was
25 in '90, '91, and it approved the '90s plan.

1 And so we've only redistricted once since then.
2 And so now we're looking at the second since then, and
3 to answer your question, my -- I don't know of any
4 political will out there not to keep those minority
5 districts. And so my impression, although I won't
6 speak for the Board, is that we will probably see, you
7 know, an effort to try to maintain the minority
8 districts that exist. But --

9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: My understanding
10 is that the Senate would be 15 percent then.

11 MR. WOODSON: But, I guess, my point is,
12 currently there are four. I think -- my impression is
13 that the Board would want to keep at least four. I
14 don't think the courts allow the proportional
15 representation that you're talking about, although I
16 understand what you're saying. That's not my reading
17 of this law. But I do think that the political will
18 out there is to keep, or try to keep, what we've got
19 in terms of minority districts, House and Senate.
20 Thank you.

21 MICHAEL LINDSEY: Thank you. Michael
22 Lindsey of the Rogers-Lowell Chamber. First, I'd
23 like to welcome you back home.

24 MR. WOODSON: I love it.

25 MICHAEL LINDSEY: Thank you for coming

1 back up here.

2 MR. WOODSON: I love it here.

3 MICHAEL LINDSEY: And also for
4 representing the Board of Apportionment. At the
5 Chamber, we don't want to speak for or against any
6 single --

7 MR. WOODSON: Can you speak a little
8 louder?

9 MICHAEL LINDSEY: At the Chamber, we
10 don't want to speak for or against any single map.
11 But we did want to make a comment about how we see the
12 problems in redistricting. In our opinion, we would
13 like to see -- this is solely on the Senate side. We
14 would like to see the Senators represent each of the
15 five major cities in Washington and Benton counties.
16 There are five of them, five over 20,000. Let's not
17 forget about Bella Vista.

18 But it's our opinion whenever you cross the
19 county lines, however they fall out, each of these
20 major cities may suffer. You need to preserve them,
21 the city zones, as much as possible, keep the lines as
22 close to the county borders as possible, at least.
23 That's our comment.

24 MR. WOODSON: I think, to a certain
25 extent, the population densities will dictate that.

1 Now, that's not an absolute, but where you have -- for
2 example, Fayetteville, I mean, there's a dense
3 population and it's just going to almost mandate a
4 certain district size. Now, you do also get into --
5 when you say communities of interest, your point's
6 well-taken about the cities. But then you have rural
7 areas, too. It's not an exact science is my only
8 thought.

9 MICHAEL LINDSEY: And I understand that.
10 What we want you to keep in mind is that the majority
11 of the population in the two counties is more than 60
12 percent urban, according to the 2005 Census. You have
13 many more people in cities. And that's -- I mean,
14 when you're looking at urban and rural, I think that
15 the density is a primary difference between the
16 counties. Much more urban than rural. It's just --

17 MR. WOODSON: Yeah.

18 MICHAEL LINDSEY: -- that we want to see
19 you consider that. Thank you. We appreciate you.

20 MR. WOODSON: Thank you. I appreciate
21 you coming. Senator?

22 SENATOR BLEDSOE: Thank you. For those of
23 you who don't know, that lime green area at the very
24 top of the map is my civic district.

25 MR. WOODSON: I can take this off if you

1 --

2 SENATOR BLEDSOE: That would be good.
3 Thank you. The lime green area on this map is my
4 Senate district. And I know that there are people who
5 like that map, but as the Senator from District 8, I
6 cannot. And I'd like to explain why. I've already
7 talked to Joe. So Joe, if you don't mind, I think
8 I'll kind of turn my back this way.

9 MR. WOODSON: Oh, sure. Sure.

10 SENATOR BLEDSOE: This map -- and, of
11 course, this is my opinion as the Senator from that
12 area -- it fragments Benton and Washington counties.
13 And it does that by unnecessarily stretching the
14 state senate districts into multiple counties. In
15 some cases, instead of making them more compact,
16 which would be logical in an area with the growth in
17 population, as we have had in Benton and Washington
18 counties.

19 Number two, the common interests that would be
20 expected from the proximity have been ignored, such
21 as the trade district. On that map, I lose Garfield
22 and Gateway. And the trade district for the both of
23 Garfield and Gateway is Rogers. It's not Harrison.
24 And on this map, that area is extended all the way to
25 Harrison.

1 Number three, the map unnecessarily divides the
2 mix of urban and rural that we now enjoy. I like
3 representing a district with a mix. In the May 4th
4 map, it is generally either urban or rural, not both.
5 And then four, without reason, this map destroys
6 long-term relationships with legislators. An area
7 that is the second most populous in Arkansas should
8 not be represented by a senator who lives a county or
9 two away from it. I was in that House in 1999. I
10 started representing Lavoca and Garfield and Gateway
11 in 1999. I would like to continue. This map takes
12 that away from the city senator in Benton County.

13 I believe that this map is not in the best
14 interest of northwest Arkansas, and therefore, I
15 cannot support it. However, the proposal for
16 redistricting the Senate District 8, which I do
17 support. I have a copy, I'm giving it to Joe. I
18 think it will be on the Internet or on the website,
19 anyway, in the next few days. But that's just the
20 opinion of one senator. Thank you.

21 MR. WOODSON: Thank you.

22 DYLAN FARRELL: My name is Dylan Farrell,
23 and I have not seen a perfect map yet. I think that
24 all maps have some good points and some shortcomings.
25 Of the maps that I've seen, I've not seen Senator

1 Bledsoe's map, obviously, yet, so it would be hard for
2 me to comment on that. But of the maps that have been
3 posted so far, I like the May 4th map the best,
4 because it keeps the communities of interest
5 together. It keeps the cores of current Senate
6 districts together, of the Senate District 7 and of
7 course, Fayetteville, and continues down through the
8 city of Fayetteville. That makes a lot of sense.

9 The core of 35 is the cities of Springdale,
10 Tontitown, Johnson, and Elm Springs. And, actually,
11 in my opinion, the May 4 map is the one that keeps the
12 most of Springdale physically together on the map. As
13 you may or may not know, Springdale actually does
14 spill into Benton County a little bit at its longer
15 edge. And this map does show District 35 going and
16 grabbing some of that, which would be the ideal
17 situation, to have each of the -- especially the four
18 corridor cities having their own Senator. And each of
19 the cities stay intact, not be having the cities cut
20 up into parts. The cities of Bentonville, Rogers,
21 Springdale and Fayetteville.

22 Each one of those areas is growing now, and I
23 think numerically, Springdale is growing the largest
24 out of those. And we've seen a district that once
25 stretched the entire length of northern Washington

1 County and had that shrink down a considerable
2 amount. And I believe that keeping the core of the
3 district together, like I said, those counties, is
4 going to be -- would be the -- it would make the most
5 sense. It certainly is in keeping with the criteria
6 set forth by the Board and by the courts. So that's
7 why so far out of the maps, I would advocate for the
8 May 4 map.

9 MR. WOODSON: Thank you. Let me say this
10 about the May 4 map. And I certainly appreciate the
11 folks who like it, but I appreciate just as much the
12 folks that don't like it. If you'll notice, one of
13 the things I did here -- and I'm certainly aware, at
14 this point, I drew Senator Pritchard out of his own
15 district, which isn't good. And I can understand
16 that.

17 And again, like I said, I'm strengthening the
18 population, through the densities. One of the things
19 I did -- and I'm certainly aware of some of the
20 support and some of the criticism of this May 4 map --
21 I went back and, as I mentioned earlier, I essentially
22 tried to copy the SOS map from May 3rd with an eye
23 towards these communities of interest that we've
24 discussed. We've got Fayetteville here, Springdale,
25 Tontitown, Elm Springs. We've got Rogers,

1 Bentonville here, and then Bella Vista's slid up at
2 the top. Now, Senator Hendren, this changes your
3 district, or what was your district, substantially.
4 And that's a lot of rural, and then Senator Bledsoe
5 gets the eastern part and it changes more than a third
6 of her existing district.

7 What's the thought on this map? I mean, I drew
8 this to kind of give equal billing for the May 4th map
9 and try to even it out, for discussion purpose. To my
10 way of thinking, this addresses many of your points
11 about keeping a central Springdale district. Yes, it
12 does keep the eastern half of 35 over to the eastern
13 border of the county. Any thoughts on that? Any
14 objections or support for that?

15 STEPHANIE VAUGHN: Mr. Woodson?

16 MR. WOODSON: Yes?

17 STEPHANIE VAUGHN: Now, looking at this
18 map, without seeing each little individual street.

19 MR. WOODSON: Yeah.

20 STEPHANIE VAUGHN: How much -- how badly
21 does Rogers split?

22 MR. WOODSON: Well --

23 STEPHANIE VAUGHN: Because I do know that
24 that is I-540, and I-540 pretty much is a dividing
25 line between Bentonville and Rogers. So you're

1 looking at -- that is I-540 going north.

2 MR. WOODSON: No. This is the existing -
3 - I don't have it on this map. Let me see if I can
4 pull that up. I'm looking for it. I think this is it.
5 And again, not to advocate for one or the other. My
6 goal here is to solicit comments and feedback, so that
7 we can make our record and report back. Here's the
8 software working. What you have to do is, you come in
9 here and then you turn the streets on and layer.

10 STEPHANIE VAUGHN: That's I-540.

11 MR. WOODSON: As the gentleman said
12 earlier, Dave's is so much faster. And when the --
13 when you're working with the software, the more
14 detail, the lower down you go, the more detail you
15 bring up, the slower the software works. So it's
16 practically there. It can be frustrating when you're
17 trying to draw a map. So you have -- I think Rogers
18 is split a little bit up there.

19 STEPHANIE VAUGHN: And that -- and that's
20 why I would object to that, because of the citizens of
21 Rogers. And I know -- I know how the citizens of
22 Springdale would feel. I think they feel, you know, a
23 house divided is a house that falls. We all know
24 that. And that would certainly break up the community
25 there in Rogers where it happens to be on this side.

1 So again -- and I'm not advocating any particular
2 map. The May 4th seems to be the best one out there
3 at this point in time, because it does keep these
4 large communities together and gives continuity.
5 And, of course, you know, what may be good for the
6 green part or what -- the majority of Bentonville may
7 not be good for, you know, that half of Rogers that
8 that map represents.

9 And I'm also a real estate appraiser. And a lot
10 of times, you know, we try not to cross I-540 if we
11 don't have to. It's just two different worlds. But,
12 like, Little Flock. You know, they -- Little Flock is
13 kind of close to Bentonville. You've got some good
14 highways over to Bentonville, but it's right between
15 Pea Ridge and Rogers, and people in Little Flock go to
16 Rogers and shop.

17 MR. WOODSON: Right.

18 STEPHANIE VAUGHN: So there's a lot of
19 things that are going on there that -- but you're
20 splitting a community. You know, you're splitting
21 the community area and breaking up the continuous
22 compact geographical -- in my opinion.

23 MR. WOODSON: Sure. Okay. Thank you.
24 Yes, sir.

25 DWAYNE NEAL: I'm not wanting to address

1 either one in particular, but I would like to thank
2 you and your staff for coming to this part of the
3 world and allowing us to give you input. In addition
4 to the criteria that you outlined, there's one thing
5 that you didn't include and I think should be
6 considered in redistricting, and that is the fast-
7 growing areas, or, as you pointed out are central
8 Arkansas and northwest Arkansas.

9 We're the fast-growing areas, and if we
10 underweight those areas in the Senate district, we
11 would come up with a Senate district of about 79,146
12 rather than the 83,312. With that calculation -- I
13 live in Benton County in Bentonville, and my name is
14 Dwayne Neal. With that calculation, Benton County
15 will have earned 2.75 Senate districts.

16 So -- and on that basis, Benton County should
17 have two full Senate districts and three-quarters of
18 another district within Benton County. The May 4th
19 map that we've discussed previously has five Senate
20 districts lying in Benton County, five Senate
21 districts lying in Washington County, and we only get
22 five total. So why do we spread them out like that?

23 And the map, the May 4th map, I have designated
24 as the "Harrison Detour," because Harrison has almost
25 nothing to do with this part of the world. It's not

1 geographically part of this, it's not part of the gray
2 area. So why should a senator from Harrison represent
3 eastern Benton County or eastern Washington County?
4 So I think -- I think the May 4th map looks like it
5 was designed at a New Year's Eve party, and a poor job
6 at that.

7 The latest map that's shown up on the Internet
8 has been the 6/3, June 3rd map. And that map I have
9 designated as the "Fayetteville Horseshoe." It
10 starts in eastern Benton -- eastern Benton County and
11 goes down into Washington County south of
12 Fayetteville, back to the west of the border, and then
13 back up into Benton County. It's not quite as bad as
14 the "Fayetteville Theater," but it's close. Thank
15 you.

16 MR. WOODSON: Thank you. With respect to
17 your first point about having districts -- letting
18 districts have room to grow, I would just add to that
19 there are certainly things on discussion of that, and
20 the Board and their staff are aware of that, that
21 ideally that would be the case. My caveat to that is
22 I think it's going to be hard enough to draw a new map
23 now within just our basic criteria. That's sort of a
24 wish list that we want to do. If we could, it would
25 be great, but --

1 DWAYNE NEAL: That one thing, the
2 overgrowth, was not considered in 1990, and it was not
3 considered in 2000. But I think the pattern has been
4 set. We know where the growth is going to be in
5 Arkansas, so please carry that message.

6 MR. WOODSON: I will. Thank you. And
7 this is the June 3rd map that he was talking about,
8 and the horseshoe here. And I've just added on the
9 map that I've gotten some feedback, some good and bad,
10 on the website. This was -- came out, it was the June
11 3rd map. I put this out most recently, and I
12 initially called it the May 3 map just because I was
13 plagiarizing this map. But anyway, I just wanted --
14 the reason I did that was I wanted everyone to be
15 clear about what that -- what I was trying to do. But
16 I went -- there was some confusion, so I went back and
17 renamed it June 11th. Yes, sir?

18 BILL HARRIS: My name is Bill Harris.
19 I've lived in Arkansas for five years. I'm a little
20 curious about the judicial restraints on
21 redistricting. It comes to my attention that if we
22 take 20 white districts and under-populate them by
23 five percent, that leaves us enough population
24 together to make an extra district. But in order --
25 since we have a limited number of districts, in order

1 to pull that off, you would have to find 20 black,
2 predominantly black districts and overpopulate them
3 by five percent to cheat those people out of
4 districts. Are there any judicial restraints on that
5 kind of out-of-balance overpopulating? This five
6 percent seems like a pretty loose restraint. It --
7 and it adds up to ten percent, and that's really
8 loose, really sloppy.

9 And I wonder if the Court has ever made any
10 decision, or the legislature, as to any dichotomy,
11 black and white, rural or urban, or any other
12 dichotomy, that the number of overpopulated and
13 underpopulated districts must even out?

14 MR. WOODSON: If I understand your
15 question correctly, my response would be this: that
16 there is a tremendous amount of discussion in the case
17 log about purposeful -- what the courts call "packing
18 and fracturing." There's, basically, two mechanisms
19 to discriminate against any racial group or any
20 language group or any political party, for that
21 matter, either. You either pack as many of your
22 opposing groups into one district that you can and
23 thereby diminish their influence in the other
24 district. Or, conversely, you spread out your
25 opposing group as much as you can into all of the

1 districts, so they'll never have a chance of winning
2 an election. The courts call it packing and
3 fracturing.

4 And so that exists out there in the world. My
5 belief and my hope is that we won't be doing that in
6 Arkansas, and if we did, we would be in danger of a
7 legal challenge and all that goes with that. Does
8 that answer part of your question?

9 BILL HARRIS: Well, the courts would
10 recognize a challenge based on that kind of
11 statistic?

12 MR. WOODSON: Of course, you'd have to
13 prove it. But certainly there's been quite a bit of
14 attention about that type of thing in the courts.
15 It's possible to bring a case based on that type of
16 subject matter.

17 BILL HARRIS: Okay. Thank you.

18 MR. WOODSON: You just need to have
19 evidence in support of the problem. Yes, ma'am?

20 DOROTHY SCHUMAN: I'm Dorothy Schuman of
21 Bentonville. I've traveled from Bentonville down
22 through Washington County as far as my case
23 management work. I would see no reason on earth to
24 connect part of Benton County down to Crawford.
25 There's no relationship between Lincoln and

1 Bentonville or Bella Vista. I think the Senators will
2 get an advantage to spread out over that odd-shaped
3 district.

4 Bentonville needs a rural influence in a
5 district. But this stretches -- I've been on those
6 back roads. I've been to Little Flock all the way
7 through Washington and Benton County. And I can't see
8 this going down in any way shape or form Crawford
9 County. It doesn't make any sense. Drive those back
10 roads, believe me, you'll know it. And it puts a
11 Senator at a very unfair advantage.

12 MR. WOODSON: Yeah. Consistent with what
13 you're saying, do you want to go back to that map
14 there?

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Can you repeat the
16 question? I couldn't hear her.

17 MR. WOODSON: Sure. Let me see if I can
18 pull it up. She was saying -- well, go ahead. You
19 can say it.

20 DOROTHY SCHUMAN: I said to connect Bella
21 Vista all the way down to Crawford County in a Senate
22 district doesn't make sense. There is no
23 relationship between Benton or Prairie Grove with
24 Bella Vista. They're shockingly different,
25 according to this criteria, it doesn't make common

1 sense. I don't know who drew that map, but --

2 MR. WOODSON: I did.

3 DOROTHY SCHUMAN: Oh, okay. It doesn't
4 make sense. I don't approve. It doesn't make any
5 sense.

6 MR. WOODSON: Yeah. But, you know,
7 consistent with what you're saying, this black line
8 is Senator Hendren's current district boundary. And
9 in making these four districts, that map, all of those
10 populations, this crosses Senate 35 all the way into
11 the current Senate 3. And that -- you're right. It
12 is a massive district. It is rural. It cuts across
13 other district lines.

14 So my only point in that is, your points are
15 well-taken. There's very much an argument to made for
16 your side of it.

17 DOROTHY SCHUMAN: And also, Bentonville
18 and Rogers have been in competition since the day I
19 was born, and much before. And we don't want to be in
20 the same district.

21 MR. WOODSON: I can tell you that I have
22 found that to be true all over the state, that there
23 are certain communities that, from a distance, look
24 like they would have a lot in common, but if you talk
25 to most folks, they say, no way, we don't have

1 anything in common.

2 DOUG SPROUSE: I'm Doug Sprouse, Mayor of
3 Springdale. And I think I sent you-all a letter.

4 MR. WOODSON: Yes. I got it.

5 DOUG SPROUSE: I appreciate your work.
6 And I just wanted to just reiterate publicly from
7 Springdale's perspective. We -- from the maps we've
8 seen, we support the May 4th version, the Senate
9 version. I understand that there are other issues
10 with that map that others have problems with, and
11 those are their problems to deal with, and I
12 understand that. But from Springdale's perspective,
13 any map that keeps Springdale intact will be the one
14 that we have to support and ask for your -- ask for
15 the approval. Because Springdale is a -- it's a city
16 -- with a recent annexation we're over 70,000. We're
17 the fourth largest city in the state. We're the
18 second largest city in Washington -- in northwest
19 Arkansas and probably within 5 years, if the growth
20 rate continues as it has, we will be the largest city
21 in northwest Arkansas.

22 And I just think to split us up for the next ten
23 years is -- is not something the people of Springdale
24 want or will support. And so I just -- you know,
25 again, I understand how all these things have to work

1 together. I understand the political realities are
2 what they are. But anything we can do to keep
3 Springdale intact certainly would be good.

4 If Tontitown and Elm Springs and Johnson could be
5 a part of that, we do share a lot of common things
6 with those cities. We have common school districts,
7 as has been said before, water. You know, there are a
8 lot of reasons to keep that area intact and together
9 and as compact as possible. But I would just urge the
10 Board and ask them to strongly consider keeping
11 Springdale together within one Senate district.
12 Thank you very much.

13 MR. WOODSON: Thank you. This map, this
14 is -- If this existed in a vacuum and we didn't have
15 to worry about other districts, that would be a pretty
16 good-looking district. It's pretty compact; it hits
17 all the bullet points. And on the other side of that
18 is obviously a problem, in that every time we draw a
19 district, it has a ripple effect across the state.
20 And I remember one member of the general assembly,
21 when they were in their congressional districts,
22 described it like trying to squeeze a big balloon into
23 a square box. You get it just the way you want it,
24 and another side pops out over here. So there are a
25 lot of considerations, but your point's well-taken.

1 Yes, sir.

2 JIM REED: I'm Jim Reed, Councilman of the
3 City of Springdale. On the Board, I'm position one.
4 This area, this May 4th map includes me in the -- in
5 what would be the Senate 4, Springdale. The June 11th
6 map does not.

7 MR. WOODSON: Okay.

8 JIM REED: Okay. If your pointer -- the
9 stuff north of in the Benton County right there, in
10 that Benton County area, I'm in that area.

11 MR. WOODSON: Okay.

12 JIM REED: I would much -- rather prefer
13 to be there where I can have a vote and stay and
14 representing the area I live in.

15 MR. WOODSON: Thank you.

16 SUZANNE JESSUP: Hi. I'm Suzanne Jessup
17 from Bella Vista in Benton County.

18 MR. WOODSON: Come a little closer, if
19 you would.

20 SUZANNE JESSUP: Okay. Bella Vista,
21 Benton County, Suzanne Jessup. And while I love to
22 take visitors to Arkansas on 71 down through Winslow -
23 - it's a beautiful scenery -- Bella Vista is now the
24 fifth-largest incorporated city in Washington or
25 Benton County. Our school districts are Bentonville

1 and Gravette. We belong -- we are in cooperation,
2 Bella Vista/Bentonville Chamber of Commerce.

3 And I just think separating us -- and I don't
4 want to get into a Rogers/Bentonville dispute -- but I
5 know we do most of our business within the community
6 of Bentonville and Rogers, but there is that division
7 we all recognize of 540. And to place a potential
8 senator right in the beautiful southeast corridor of
9 Washington County might be a decided disadvantage.
10 As much as what was referred to as the "Fayetteville
11 Finger," bringing people down to do business
12 somewhere in the southeastern part of the state.

13 Thank you.

14 MR. WOODSON: Thank you. Any other
15 discussion about the Senate maps? Let's look at the
16 House maps. And again, this is plagiarism -- and I've
17 tried to admit it, so I don't know if it's plagiarism
18 if you identify your source. But let me -- I'm
19 showing it for the General Assembly members. And it
20 is my understanding that there was some support for
21 this map.

22 So that's the June 10th House map from DLR. And
23 what I did is once -- I tried to manually copy that
24 into our AutoBound software. And I'm sure it's not
25 identical, but that is pretty similar to what I

1 received from DLR. Any support of objections for that
2 House map or any other map, for that matter? I'm
3 sorry?

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Can you move it
5 down into southern Washington County?

6 MR. WOODSON: Yes. I'm sorry. This is
7 sort of a close-up. Is that better? I'll tell you
8 what. Let me do this. Yeah. I guess that's the
9 largest one. I keep knocking the court reporter's --
10 there it is. And again, with such population growth,
11 there's 11 current House districts in Benton and
12 Washington counties. There's probably going to be
13 around 14. You know, maybe part of another. Maybe
14 14-and-a-half as such in those geographic areas.

15 The House maps are actually -- although there's a
16 bunch more of them, the draw is sort of
17 counterintuitive. They're a little bit easier in the
18 sense that since you don't have to get such large
19 population numbers, you can stay geographically
20 smaller in most cases, and it makes it a little bit
21 easier to do something that makes sense. Well, it is
22 most of the time. And, if you don't have any comments
23 right now or tonight, you know, the website's up 24/7.
24 Email us, write us, and -- yes?

25 STEPHANIE VAUGHN: Can you identify where

1 540 is on that, and also on the May 19th map?

2 MR. WOODSON: This is the -- okay. That
3 was the copy. I'll have to pull up the AutoBound
4 software to get that road on there. Here's the May
5 19th. Again, this was drawn by me sitting in an
6 office in Little Rock. And to some extent, again,
7 trying to shrink districts. Red, the current
8 district lines. This is kind of House 88, and then
9 shrink from here. If you want to see the roads, I'll
10 have to open the software to pull that map up. We can
11 do it afterwards, if you want, or whenever you want.

12 JOSH MAHONEY: Joe, I've got a question
13 about that, too. I'm Josh Mahoney. On the May 19th
14 map, where the green goes straight down, Fayetteville
15 City Airport is down that direction. And I kind of
16 consider it vital to the economics of Fayetteville,
17 of course, and being included in 88. I can't really
18 tell, the way it stretches down there, if that airport
19 would be included. Of course, it actually falls in
20 Greenland city limits, even though it's Fayetteville.
21 If you get a chance, I'd love to see that.

22 MR. WOODSON: Okay. If that's the case,
23 if it's within Greenland proper then I think it would
24 be right here.

25 JOSH MAHONEY: Okay.

1 MR. WOODSON: But yeah. That level of
2 detail does exist.

3 JOSH MAHONEY: Right.

4 MR. WOODSON: The -- and we can make it
5 available. Hopefully, like the gentleman pointed
6 out, we can make it available sometime soon on the
7 website where you can go look at the street level.

8 JOSH MAHONEY: And put it in, and it
9 enters it for me?

10 MR. WOODSON: Yeah. Or just have the map
11 that was running on our website, where you could look
12 at it right there. The only reason we haven't so far
13 is these are rough drafts, and it would -- you would
14 have to have so many different -- you know, if you get
15 to street level, you'd easily have 100 maps.
16 Snapshots of Greenland, et cetera. That's the only
17 reason it's not on there.

18 JOSH MAHONEY: Thank you.

19 MR. WOODSON: Well, I appreciate you-all
20 coming. Yes? Senator, do you have a comment?
21 Senator Hendren?

22 SENATOR HENDREN: I've been kind of under
23 the weather the last couple of days. You can tell by
24 looking at me. And my wife made me come down here
25 tonight, so if I say something I'm out of my head

1 about, don't be surprised. Wouldn't be too unusual.
2 Just about the Senate maps and so forth, let me just
3 start by saying this. And I can remember when the
4 Arkansas Senate threw a wrench in this Fayetteville
5 Finger. And we slowed it down on a Thursday and so
6 people could put some input into that, which made it
7 better than it was. So you can have input.

8 I say as a member of the Senate -- and by the
9 way, let me give you just a little bit of history. I
10 began serving in the Arkansas Senate in 1979. In the
11 paper this morning, Larry put something in there that
12 I said Sam Walton campaigned for me, and Marylea, my
13 wife, looked at me. She says, "What if they're going
14 to say you lied about that as a politician?" Do
15 politicians ever lie about anything? Well, no. I
16 said, "I think I have it on the wall where Sam wrote a
17 letter to me personally. I keep it on the wall,
18 because I'm kind of proud of it."

19 And one of the questions that came up today was
20 about the Walton Arts District in Bentonville. Now,
21 folks, I said this -- and I mean it, I believe it,
22 because I managed a plant, a manufacturing plant for
23 Sam. Sam didn't ask for special favors then; he's not
24 asking for them when he's in Heaven right now. And I
25 -- as I've said, when I represented Bentonville as

1 part of the Arkansas Senate District off and on since
2 1979.

3 Back in 1979 -- '78, when I ran for that
4 election, Benton County had about 50,000 people in it
5 total. That Senate district at that time included all
6 of Benton County, half of Carroll County, which
7 included Eureka Springs down to the river over there,
8 and also Tontitown and Bethel Heights in Washington
9 County. And I might say, I can't run again, so I
10 don't have a dog in this fight for the Senate. I
11 could run for the House if I was a little bit younger.

12 But I don't have a dog in this fight, so let's
13 just say this: It offends -- I think of these 83,000
14 people that are going to be in these districts, I
15 don't know that you have to live in Bentonville to
16 serve any of these people. If you had, had to be in
17 Gravette, I would have been disqualified a long, long
18 time ago. So I think the 83,000 -- let's get into
19 some specifics about this. The district now that was
20 limited by my representation the last ten years, and
21 the Senate has 116,000 people, and that's the most
22 populous district in the State of Arkansas. It has to
23 lose 33,000 people to get down to what Joe's talking
24 about here.

25 Now, you saw what I said was some districts --

1 and I'll make this pretty brief, as I can, is that the
2 route here ought to be to shrink these districts and
3 serve the people. I said in Little Rock this ought to
4 be about the people, not the politicians or the
5 political parties. We don't need professional
6 politicians that make no jobs, and you don't make it
7 easy for citizens to serve them.

8 And whenever you gerrymander this stuff or
9 there's a Fayetteville Finger, or whether it's that
10 Crawford County finger or whatever you see up there,
11 or you've designed a district for a particular
12 politician or a party, I don't think you've followed
13 it right, ladies and gentlemen. So whichever of these
14 districts you wind up with, if you're going to be
15 83,000 people, you've got a chance to win if you get
16 out there and work your rear off.

17 MR. WOODSON: Thank you.

18 (Applause.)

19 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Hello. I am here
20 on behalf of a few immigrant rights organizations
21 that I work with here in northwest Arkansas and
22 throughout the state of Arkansas. I think there's
23 been a lot of talk today about communities of
24 interest, but I think it's fair to say there's one
25 community of interest that hasn't been raised, and

1 that being our Latino population here in northwest
2 Arkansas.

3 A huge part of the opportunity of us today being
4 able to talk about increasing Senate seats and
5 increasing House seats is actually because of the
6 growth of the Hispanic population right here in our
7 home in northwest Arkansas. And so for us, when we --
8 and I realize, and we're empathetic to the arguments
9 of redistricting being a color-blind process. You
10 had set forth and have mentioned criteria of
11 population being sufficiently large and cohesive, and
12 we vote as a group. And we are definitely arguing
13 that those three criteria do apply to our Hispanic
14 population right here.

15 I do want to bring attention that even though the
16 Hispanic population does represent 12 percent of our
17 population here in northwest Arkansas, we have
18 actually never had a Hispanic be elected to state
19 office in Arkansas, and that's in the entire history.
20 And so that's something that obviously is important
21 for many of us that do work in these communities.

22 So I think we're here today more than anything to
23 open a conversation or extension of a conversation,
24 because we realize that the Census data is able to
25 tell us by counties where a lot of this population is.

1 It's not always down a specific voice or communities,
2 and the ones of us who work in those can actually even
3 help to have that conversation. Because whether it's
4 intended or not, there is a possibility with district
5 redistricting conversations to fracture a community
6 that really would not be able to be represented if
7 it's fractured unnecessarily, so.

8 MR. WOODSON: Thank you. Thank you. I
9 want to say that the three on the Board and myself are
10 greatly aware of and in serious consideration of the
11 impact of the Hispanic population on northwest
12 Arkansas.

13 MR. WOODSON: Yes, sir?

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Joe, as you know,
15 there's a lot of opinions about these things. And so
16 I just wanted to thank you for coming out here to
17 northwest Arkansas.

18 MR. WOODSON: Thank you.

19 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And sharing with us
20 and sharing all these different designs, and
21 listening to all the folks whose comments were about
22 the maps. And when people talk about your maps,
23 saying, "That's my map." So I just appreciate you
24 doing that, and I learned a lot of what you know about
25 the law, things of that nature. So it sounds like

1 there's a good man here who's working on this. I
2 appreciate you coming here and sharing with us. Thank
3 you.

4 MR. WOODSON: Thanks a lot. I appreciate
5 that.
6 (Applause.)

7 MR. WOODSON: All right. Any other
8 comments before we dismiss? Thanks for coming. Have
9 a great evening.

10 (WHEREUPON, the proceedings were
11 concluded in the matter at 7:20 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE

STATE OF ARKANSAS)
)
COUNTY OF WASHINGTON)

I, Jennifer A. Johnstone, Certified Court Reporter #717, do hereby certify that the facts stated by me in the caption on the foregoing proceedings are true; and that the foregoing proceedings were reported verbatim through the use of the voice-writing method and thereafter transcribed by me or under my direct supervision to the best of my ability, taken at the time and place set out on the caption hereto.

I FURTHER CERTIFY, that I am not a relative or employee of any attorney or employed by the parties hereto, nor financially interested or otherwise, in the outcome of this action, and that I have no contract with the parties, attorneys, or persons with an interest in the action that affects or has a substantial tendency to affect impartiality, that requires me to relinquish control of an original deposition transcript or copies of the transcript before it is certified and delivered to the custodial attorney, or that requires me to provide any service not made available to all parties to the action.

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I FURTHER CERTIFY that in accordance with Rule 30(3) of the Rules of Civil Procedure, review of the transcript was not requested.

WITNESS MY HAND AND SEAL this 21st day of June, 2011.

Jennifer A. Johnstone

Arkansas State Supreme Court
Certified Court Reporter #717

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