

VIRGINIA HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
REDISTRICTING PUBLIC HEARING

APRIL 2, 2011

7:00 P.M. - 7:32 P.M.

CHAired BY:

DELEGATE CHRIS JONES

Other Members in Attendance:

 ORIGINAL

Delegate John O'Bannon  
Delegate Johnny Joannou  
Delegate Rosalind Dance  
Delegate D.W. Marshall  
Delegate Don Merricks  
Senator Mary Margaret Whipple  
Senator Harry Blevins  
Senator Roscoe Reynolds

CENTRAL VIRGINIA REPORTERS

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1 (7:00 p.m.)

2 PROCEEDINGS

3  
4 DELEGATE JONES: I call the Joint Public  
5 Hearing to order. My name is Chris Jones, and I  
6 represent the 76th District in Suffolk and  
7 Chesapeake.

8 Before I make my opening remarks, I have the  
9 Members of the General Assembly that traveled here  
10 by plane. This is our third public hearing today.  
11 We've been in Harrisonburg, Shenandoah, and then we  
12 went to Abingdon by way of Tennessee -- we couldn't  
13 land in Virginia -- and we're finishing up here  
14 this evening in Danville, and we thank you for  
15 coming out. Mr. Blevins?

16 SENATOR BLEVINS: I'm Harry Blevins. I  
17 represent the 14th Senate District. Can you hear  
18 me?

19 AUDIENCE: No.

20 SENATOR BLEVINS: I'm Harry Blevins. I  
21 represent the 14th Senate District, which is  
22 primarily Chesapeake, with a small part of Virginia  
23 Beach.

24 DELEGATE JOANNOU: My name is Johnny Joannou.

1 I represent the 79th District. It includes  
2 portions of the Cities of Norfolk, Chesapeake,  
3 Portsmouth, and Suffolk.

4 SENATOR WHIPPLE: I'm Mary Margaret Whipple  
5 from Arlington. I'm in Senate District 31, which  
6 represents most of Arlington, the City of Falls  
7 Church, and the eastern part of Fairfax County.

8 DELEGATE DANCE: My name is Rosalind Dance. I  
9 serve in the 63rd House District, which encompasses  
10 the City of Petersburg, Dinwiddie County, and parts  
11 of Chesterfield, Ettrick and Matoaca.

12 DELEGATE O'BANNON: Good evening. Thank you  
13 all for coming out tonight. My name is John  
14 O'Bannon. I'm on the Privileges and Elections  
15 Committee. I represent Henrico County and two  
16 precincts in the City of Richmond, and about 50  
17 years ago I was up the road at Hargrove Military  
18 Academy.

19 CHAIRMAN JONES: We also have in the audience  
20 D.W. Marshall and Don Merricks. Thank you for  
21 being such great hosts to us this afternoon, and  
22 thank you for dinner as well.

23 Ladies and Gentlemen, Colleagues, and Engaged  
24 Citizens, good evening. It is my pleasure tonight

1 to welcome you to the seventh of our eight public  
2 hearings on redistricting plans and maps that have  
3 been introduced in the Virginia House of Delegates  
4 and the Senate of Virginia.

5 Tonight's public hearing is sponsored by the  
6 Privileges and Election Committee of the House and  
7 Senate meeting jointly. It underscores our belief  
8 and our commitment in following an open and fair  
9 process.

10 Let me be absolutely clear about our primary  
11 purpose of these hearings: We went to listen to  
12 what you have to say. We are here to listen to  
13 your feedback and reaction to the maps that have  
14 been posted on the website and the maps you have  
15 before you this evening.

16 We're here to seek input from local elected  
17 officials, from experts, from advocates and the  
18 people of Virginia about the new boundaries in the  
19 state legislative districts. We want to know  
20 what's important to you in redistricting.

21 The General Assembly and the Governor are the  
22 officials who submit to the voters at elections,  
23 and therefore are directly accountable to the  
24 public, and are responsible for drawing legislative

1 boundaries.

2 That mandate is clearly spelled out in the  
3 Virginia Constitution, which each of us takes an  
4 oath of office to uphold. It is one of the most  
5 important duties we have as elected government  
6 officials.

7 The time tested process of updating  
8 legislative boundaries every ten years ensures that  
9 every Virginian has a voice in redistricting.  
10 Every Virginian is represented in the General  
11 Assembly by a delegate and a senator.

12 Last fall the House and Senate P&E Committees  
13 proactively sought to foster greater citizen  
14 engagement and involvement through six public  
15 hearings across Virginia.

16 This unprecedented action then underscores our  
17 desire to encourage greater civic awareness and  
18 facilitate more active participation by the public  
19 in Virginia's 2011 redistricting process. That  
20 commitment continues this evening.

21 For more information about redistricting, you  
22 can go to our website under the Division of  
23 Legislative Services and google that. In Virginia  
24 you'll have a web page, and on the left banner you

1 will see a link called Redistricting. You'll see  
2 the maps that have been proposed, and you can  
3 actually go to your area of the state and see  
4 exactly what's happening in your neighborhood.

5 The primary difference between last year's six  
6 public hearings and this year's eight is that now  
7 there are actually bills and maps before you.

8 There are three that have introduced so far;  
9 one by myself, House Bill 5001, and two others  
10 patroned in the Senate by Senator Janet Howell of  
11 Northern Virginia and John Watkins of Richmond.  
12 All were made available to the public on the  
13 General Assembly's website this past Tuesday.

14 Redistricting plans and maps are actually  
15 pieces of legislation. Like so many in the General  
16 Assembly -- like so many the General Assembly  
17 considers year in and year out. That means  
18 amendments in committee or on the floor are likely,  
19 as is normal in the give and take of the  
20 legislative process.

21 Both the House and the Senate introduced  
22 redistricting plans to draw districts of equal  
23 population as nearly as practicable, in accordance  
24 with the Constitution and the principle of one

1 person and one vote.

2 The House plan deviates from the ideal of  
3 district size of about 80,000, plus or minus 1  
4 percent. The House -- Senate plan deviates from  
5 its ideal district size of about 200,000, by only  
6 plus or minus 2 percent. The plan by Senator  
7 Watkins is plus/minus .5 percent.

8 Either of these House and Senate plans also  
9 maintain other traditional redistricting  
10 principles, such as compactness, contiguity,  
11 communities of interest, and political subdivision  
12 boundaries, in full compliance with the Voting  
13 Rights Act and all other applicable federal and  
14 state laws, as well as the court decisions applying  
15 them.

16 There are several logistical requests to  
17 ensure a smooth and as efficient process as may be  
18 possible. In order to respect the time of everyone  
19 who is here tonight to provide input, I'd ask each  
20 of you who speak to keep your comments to four,  
21 five minutes tops, as a courtesy to others.

22 Also, please do not -- try not to repeat what  
23 others have already said, so we may accommodate as  
24 many speakers as possible. I've asked staff to

1 keep a timer, which I don't think we'll need,  
2 previously have not been keeping it.

3 Also because we want to maximize participation  
4 by the citizens who are here, we're here to listen  
5 to you and to not answer your questions directly.

6 Again, this will be a process and you stand  
7 where you are. If you would like, you might want  
8 to talk louder. Some of us who don't hear quite as  
9 well as we used to, me included, that would be very  
10 helpful.

11 I have a signup sheet. And Senator Reynolds,  
12 I believe -- Well, he's trying to hide. He's  
13 sitting kind of low there in the back. (Laughter)  
14 Thanks for joining us. Was it the traffic that got  
15 you?

16 SENATOR REYNOLDS: I went to Bill's place.

17 CHAIRMAN JONES: We did too. (Laughter)

18 Our first speaker this evening is Mr. James  
19 Snead. Mr. Snead?

20 MR. SNEAD: Yeah. I represent the  
21 Pittsylvania County Board of Supervisors. I  
22 represent the Dan River District. If you just  
23 leave here and go 15 east, you'll be in my district  
24 in just a few minutes.

1 I've been looking at this for a number of  
2 weeks on the log, and I have nothing against  
3 Senator Roscoe Reynolds, first of all; but the fact  
4 is this redistricting we're doing is splitting my  
5 district that I represent. I have one polling  
6 place in another district and two polling places in  
7 another district.

8 A little bit of confusion. People in my  
9 district have been contacting me quite a bit about  
10 how are we going to go about voting for this? Even  
11 though we'll still, according to the bill here,  
12 we'll still be voting on the 14th and the 16th,  
13 which is Mr. Merricks and which we are very  
14 familiar about and want to keep our delegates in  
15 Pittsylvania County as much as possible.

16 The Senate bill, it's very confusing. It  
17 splits the City of Danville, which in turn splits  
18 my district. That's the one that's confusing to my  
19 constituents in my district on the voting.

20 Like I said, it's very confusing for them.  
21 They don't know or understand. Roscoe Reynolds  
22 will be in the 20th, from what I understand, and  
23 Senator Ruff is the other part, which I would live  
24 in Senator Ruff's district, but my two precincts,

1 voting precincts would be in another. Do you see  
2 what I'm saying?

3 So it's a little bit confusing. I don't know  
4 who's drawn the lines, but I know you're trying to  
5 work it out as best you possibly can, but it's  
6 drawn a lot of confusion by not having Pittsylvania  
7 County wholly in one particular Senate race, the  
8 whole county. It would help, I think, the whole  
9 county.

10 I think we have another one here from the  
11 Pittsylvania County Board of Supervisors, and he  
12 may elaborate on that also; but it will be a little  
13 less confusing.

14 That's the only draw back that I see that I've  
15 been looking at, is particularly for my district.  
16 Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN JONES: Next we have Kurt Feiyel? I  
18 apologize.

19 MR. FEIGEL: Did you say Feigel?

20 CHAIRMAN JONES: Is that a G or a Y?

21 MR. FEIGEL: Sorry. I went to public school.

22 (Laughter)

23 CHAIRMAN JONES: My writing is terrible. I  
24 thought it was a Y too.

1 MR. FEIGEL: 24502, is that the area?

2 CHAIRMAN JONES: That's what I have. Do you  
3 want to see?

4 MR. FEIGEL: Thank you. My name is Kurt  
5 Feigel. I'm a member of the Tea Party, and I came  
6 down here with one of our other members. Just  
7 wanted to see kind of an example of what was going  
8 on.

9 I looked over it a little bit. The concerns I  
10 have when I looked at it from a split of, split  
11 precincts is really the big one that I see. You  
12 know, you look at some of these other things,  
13 they're shifted around.

14 Well, the 19th Senate District is pretty much,  
15 I think the numbers are 67 percent Republican. And  
16 so it's really shifted the balance of power  
17 towards, towards conservatives in that area. Hey,  
18 I'm a conservative, that's great; but what about  
19 the other people who basically have no  
20 representation in their eyes now?

21 There's a huge chunk of people there, some  
22 30-some percent that are not going to have the  
23 representation I think that they really feel they  
24 would deserve.

1                   And some of the other areas I've heard  
2                   complaints on from people I know within the Tea  
3                   Party are the Virginia Beach area where the  
4                   senators, I know in my case I'm actually going to  
5                   lose a senator. And I mean I currently have Steve  
6                   Newman. I understand that's going to change.

7                   And so I just think that when we look at this  
8                   and look at the idea of gerrymandering, I see, I  
9                   see a lot of interesting direction here.

10                  We've got tiny little slivers that go so that  
11                  we can then reach up into other areas, and that's  
12                  not something I think that is when we talk about  
13                  common interest, I don't think some of these areas  
14                  really have common interests. They don't. Some of  
15                  them are rural and farming, and then you've got  
16                  huge chunks of city next to them.

17                  So that was, that's all I have to say.

18                  CHAIRMAN JONES: Next we have Charlie  
19                  Ferguson.

20                  MR. FERGUSON: No, I'm passing.

21                  CHAIRMAN JONES: You'll pass, okay. We have  
22                  Fred Shanks. Good evening.

23                  MR. SHANKS: Good evening. Thank you all for  
24                  coming to Danville. Welcome to Danville. I'm a

1 member of the Danville City Council. I'm a member  
2 of the Danville Pittsylvania County Regional  
3 Industrial Facilities Authority, the Danville  
4 Pittsylvania County Metropolitan Planning  
5 Organization, and the Danville Utilities  
6 Commission, which serves a large portion of  
7 Pittsylvania County.

8 I'm here because I have concerns about the  
9 Senate map as it's drawn, in particular the 19th  
10 District, which is the district we are currently  
11 in. And we're concerned or I'm concerned about the  
12 lines that have been created to create the 20th and  
13 the 15th districts.

14 The lines, the purpose of the lines as they're  
15 created are obvious and their intent is obvious,  
16 and that is not in the best interest of communities  
17 of interest and compactness.

18 I don't see how anyone can look at that map as  
19 it's drawn -- and I'm not referring to the Watkins  
20 map -- the map as it's drawn and see anything but  
21 lines drawn to pick up different areas for a  
22 particular reason, with not the interest of the  
23 community in mind.

24 My only comments after that are that it is

1           important to us in Southside Virginia and this  
2           district that Danville remain whole and that  
3           Pittsylvania County remain whole.

4           In my opinion, they both should remain  
5           together, because we are an example of how  
6           communities work together to develop a plan for the  
7           region. And to split this region would be, would  
8           be a terrible thing to do.

9           So I ask you to look at our Pittsylvania  
10          County and Danville Regional cooperation, not try  
11          to split that up. Look at the lines, make sure  
12          they make sense, and they don't have the political  
13          purpose that's obvious right now. Thank you.

14          CHAIRMAN JONES: Thank you. Mr. Darriel  
15          Burkett?

16          MR. BURNETT: Burnett. I'm Darryl Burnett. I  
17          went to public schools, and I can't read the  
18          pharmacist's writing. (Laughter)

19          First, I'm with the Danville Tea Party. Take  
20          the banner away, we're a bunch of conservative  
21          people; but let me state this: I am apparently  
22          amazed at the amount of work involved to produce  
23          this plan, we'll call it.

24          I commend the effort of those that worked on

1           it. It's apparently infeasible -- infeasible  
2           (sic) work ethic. However, it's unfortunate; it  
3           strikes me as being self serving.

4           I am amazed also that this was published as a  
5           viable answer for redistricting, when the real  
6           reason is so blatantly obvious, right down to the  
7           finite cutting of precincts, 12 right here in  
8           Pittsylvania County. That still leaves the State  
9           of Virginia.

10          It strikes me as an effort of intent for 22  
11          Virginia senators to control the destiny of nearly  
12          eight million Virginia citizens. The elected  
13          officials have been put on notice for some time  
14          now, and the electorate is not as dumb as John  
15          Curry thinks.

16          Whether they're in Danville, Pittsylvania  
17          County, Richmond, Washington, DC, this product is  
18          exemplary of the driving force behind people, their  
19          involvement to get involved, the desire to be  
20          educated -- and the people are. They're getting  
21          educated.

22          This endeavor, you stretch the limits of  
23          contiguous. By definition you're there. As for  
24          logic, common sense, any thought of cost

1                   consciousness; there's a complete void. This is an  
2                   expensive proposal.

3                   This is a tool the people in the Commonwealth  
4                   of Virginia established so as to get fair and  
5                   equitable representation throughout this region.  
6                   It is not to be a shackle for the Virginia Senate  
7                   at the cost and the behest of those in the northern  
8                   part of the state.

9                   If this is, and I think it is, a power play, I  
10                  urge you to go back to Richmond. You can redeem  
11                  yourself. You can go back to Richmond, go back to  
12                  work, get it fair, get it equitable, present it to  
13                  the people when it's right. Thank you.

14                 CHAIRMAN JONES: Thank you. All right, did  
15                  anyone else? I believe, Mr. Lancet, you have time  
16                  to speak. I do have a George Stanhope. Yes, sir?  
17                  Good evening.

18                 MR. STANHOPE: Yes. I just wanted to  
19                  reiterate some of what all of these other people  
20                  have said, and that is I think this is an  
21                  abomination.

22                 There is no reason why Pittsylvania County and  
23                  Danville aren't large enough, with maybe a little  
24                  addition, if necessary. And these lines look

1 almost like somebody took and tried to adjust or  
2 gerrymander things to come up to exactly what they  
3 were looking for.

4 I spent some time in Massachusetts, where the  
5 word "gerrymander" came up from, and this looks a  
6 lot like what they did up there with Cohasset and  
7 areas like that to make a particular voting  
8 district. Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN JONES: Thank you. Anyone else  
10 wishing to speak in the audience? Yes, sir,  
11 please.

12 MR. FRANKEN: All right. My name is Fred  
13 Franken. Can you hear me?

14 CHAIRMAN JONES: Yes, sir, I can.

15 MR. FRANKEN: I'm incensed with the work out  
16 of Richmond, purely incensed. Anyone can look at  
17 lines and with the numbers you're working with  
18 shift them out or in, or a little bit over and  
19 back; but when you start cutting communities, it  
20 just doesn't make sense. It makes for stupidity.

21 You're cutting Danville. You're cutting the  
22 little community of Ringgold. You're cutting the  
23 little community of Kentuck. They're nice  
24 communities out there, and you've squiggled the

1 lines to cut those little communities. I don't  
2 think the state guide says to do that.

3 So remove stupidity from the operation.  
4 Remove criminal politics from the operation and get  
5 on with the work of the people, for pity's sakes.  
6 That's the reason we're out there on the battle  
7 field, so you folks can play around with crap like  
8 that. Get it right, or we'll sue and litigate and  
9 get some folks to do some technical study to  
10 balance the lines.

11 I agree directly with the sentiment we've  
12 heard from some of the gentlemen here, and I'm very  
13 upset with that. Very upset. It is giving me  
14 anger to get on the street and do a hell of a lot  
15 of volunteering, I'll tell you that.

16 And I appreciate you taking my comments.

17 CHAIRMAN JONES: Yes, sir, thank you very much  
18 for coming out. Anyone else wishing to speak?

19 MR. BELLINGER: Yes, sir, please. My name's  
20 Nate Bellinger. I'm with the local chapter of  
21 Virginia Organizing. I just wanted to voice my  
22 support for the Bipartisan Advisory Commission  
23 findings. There are other options out there.

24 MR. FRANKEN: He's an ACORN worker.

1                   MR. BELLINGER: No. That is absolutely not  
2 true.

3                   CHAIRMAN JONES: There's no debate.

4                   MR. BELLINGER: But there is a Bipartisan  
5 Advisory Commission appointed by the Governor that  
6 has studied this subject without gerrymandering.  
7 It's appointed by the Republican governor. It  
8 doesn't take into account the Republican/Democrat  
9 gain, but instead they're actually looking at ways  
10 that we can keep communities together and find a  
11 way that isn't as politicized.

12                   So I'd just like to say that I wish the  
13 commission had some teeth to it. Instead of just  
14 advising, I wish they could actually have some,  
15 have a little bit of a mandate behind it, instead  
16 of going through the legislative process and being  
17 tilted around like that. Thank you.

18                   CHAIRMAN JONES: Anyone else wishing to speak?  
19 Yes, sir, please.

20                   MR. DANIEL: Good evening. My name is Chris  
21 Daniel. I'm a citizen of the City of Danville.

22                   I'm personally very pleased at the prospect of  
23 being represented in the state senate by Senator  
24 Roscoe Reynolds. I personally would be very

1           pleased to have state Senator Roscoe Reynolds as my  
2           member of the state senate.

3           It's interesting that there's only one plan  
4           offered from the House of Delegates, and all the  
5           charges about gerrymandering, which may or may not  
6           be true, of the two competing Senate plans, one  
7           perhaps more so than the other one, but the same  
8           can certainly be said, and I apologize, but I  
9           believe it's your plan, Delegate Jones.

10          It's harder to see the gerrymandering, when  
11          you're looking at a hundred sets of lines on a map  
12          of the Commonwealth of Virginia on an 8 1/2 x 11  
13          sheet of paper, but I know from previous experience  
14          ten years ago and again in 2011 that the  
15          gerrymandering occurs.

16          In 2001, the gerrymandering enabled the House  
17          of Delegates, the Republican Party membership in  
18          the House of Delegates to place three outstanding  
19          members of the Democratic Party in the 10th House  
20          District together. This time the same folks in  
21          charge have managed to place that esteemed member  
22          of the House of Delegates in with one of his  
23          Republican colleagues.

24          So while we're looking at gerrymandering, if

1           it's true in the Senate plan, it's also true of the  
2           House plan as well. I would champion, maybe a day  
3           late and a dollar short, but I will join Mr.  
4           Bellinger and suggest that perhaps moving in the  
5           direction of looking at some sort of mandated  
6           bipartisan effort would certainly avoid the  
7           splitting of communities of interest. It would  
8           certainly avoid many of the problems we see.

9           I was reminded recently that in 1981 we were  
10          unable to reach a redistricting plan quickly  
11          enough. I don't remember all the details, but  
12          apparently there were state, Senate and House of  
13          Delegate elections in 1981 and again in 1982. Oh  
14          my gosh; there would be two sets of elections in  
15          two years; but if we drew fair lines that were  
16          equitable and represented all of the citizens, that  
17          would be a worthwhile game. Thank you.

18          CHAIRMAN JONES: Thank you. Anyone else  
19          wishing to speak? Yes, sir, please.

20          MR. WARREN: I don't even know Senator  
21          Reynolds --

22          CHAIRMAN JONES: Your name, please?

23          MR. WARREN: Tom Warren.

24          CHAIRMAN JONES: Thank you.

1           MR. WARREN: I find that I can't even conceive  
2           how you would split up a city of 48,000. I can  
3           understand you people in Northern Virginia, where  
4           you have such a population that you have to do it;  
5           but not in Danville and Pittsylvania County.

6           The 19th District, senatorial district is not  
7           even anywhere close by, as I read this map. That  
8           does not make a great deal of sense to me.

9           You know, if, if this gentleman back here is,  
10          is willing to have Roscoe Reynolds represent him in  
11          Danville, he needs to figure out a lot of things.

12          We've got 17 polling districts in Danville.  
13          How do you split that up? I can't believe that our  
14          registrar is not here like screaming. You know,  
15          how do you do that? That means in any given year  
16          we're going to have two senate races, a delegate  
17          race, and then the federal years God only knows  
18          what we're going to wind up with, as far as  
19          representation is concerned.

20          This does not in my opinion make any sense at  
21          all. It has got to be done better.

22          CHAIRMAN JONES: Thank you. Yes, sir?

23          MR. TUCKER: My name is Bobby Tucker. And  
24          forgive me; I'm kind of new at this, learning

1 process.

2 CHAIRMAN JONES: Okay.

3 MR. TUCKER: Although I do commend you for  
4 your work, because from the way I see it, you  
5 almost in a no win situation. So thank you for  
6 listening first.

7 I do want to say being in a part of  
8 Pittsylvania County that in the House of Delegates  
9 being represented by the Honorable Charles  
10 Poindexter, I would like to say with Pittsylvania  
11 County being square miles probably the largest, one  
12 of the largest counties in the state, we have  
13 multiple districts no matter which plan comes up,  
14 it seems.

15 While I do like the, the Watkins plan in the  
16 Senate there, with our Board of Supervisors, House  
17 of Delegates and Senate, we have an older  
18 population, which I'm now moving into. It is very  
19 confusing to some of the older people to get out  
20 and vote, when they don't know really what district  
21 they in, who they're voting for, until they get to  
22 the polling places, quite honestly. I've heard  
23 those comments.

24 I would ask that you do take into

1 consideration of trying to keep the counties and  
2 districts, as best you can even in the Senate  
3 districts and the House districts, any way we can  
4 keep those lines as close as we can to each other  
5 to, to help alleviate some of this confusion with  
6 people voting, and hopefully that would create  
7 voter turnout. And that's what we really want. We  
8 want everybody to have a voice. Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN JONES: Thank you. Anyone else  
10 wishing to speak?

11 MR. HEDRICK: I want to speak, but not as a  
12 member of the media. I'll speak as a citizen.

13 My name is Bruce Hedrick. I represent WMDV-TV  
14 in Danville, and I'm speaking as a private citizen  
15 on this.

16 If 1990 was bad and 2000 was an anomaly, I  
17 hope that this understands that the Legislature and  
18 the citizens realize this redistricting needs to  
19 done by a bipartisan process. The victor goes the  
20 spoils is good when your party's in power, and I  
21 hope that everybody knows Governor McDonnell set a  
22 bipartisan redistricting. I think it's time for  
23 that.

24 Now also, I also have dismay that tonight

1 while you're doing a great job, and I understand  
2 you have to schedule as many meetings as possible  
3 in all the different places; tonight's a Saturday  
4 night at 7 p.m. in this area which has got so many  
5 other activities going on, not to mention  
6 Martinsville race weekend. We've got a lot of  
7 people that would love to be here and tell you  
8 what's going on, but unfortunately due to the  
9 scheduling, this is the crowd that you get.

10 The Southside cannot be ignored. The  
11 Southside cannot be ignored from Richmond, not from  
12 Northern Virginia. We are here, we vote. We want  
13 to hear from you. (Applause)

14 CHAIRMAN JONES: Anyone else wishing to speak?  
15 Okay.

16 DELEGATE DANCE: Mr. Chairman, even though I  
17 am a member of the Redistricting Committee, this is  
18 the third public hearing we've had today; and I  
19 feel compelled to speak as an African American,  
20 because I represent quite a few.

21 In your opening statement, you mentioned the  
22 fact that Virginia is under the Voting Rights Act  
23 that went into place in 1965, which says minorities  
24 must have an opportunity to select who they would

1           like to serve.

2                     There are 12 current minority districts, and  
3           what has happened in the last 10 years is that  
4           there has been a major shift. Trending, we can't  
5           tell people where they want to live. They move  
6           according to their life-style, economics, or  
7           whatever.

8                     But right now we're required to have 12  
9           minority districts, and our districts have  
10          switched. They changed from like seven to more  
11          than 12,000 people that have moved.

12                    And so in order for this, whatever  
13          redistricting plan we have to meet the test must be  
14          reviewed by the Department of Justice, and  
15          therefore there should show that we as minorities  
16          have an opportunity to compete.

17                    In the last month I've spent time with my  
18          colleagues, and we've looked at the lines and we've  
19          drafted a fair and equitable is what we're looking  
20          at, and looking at how our areas have trended.

21                    I can tell you that if we don't -- whatever  
22          redistricting plan comes out, if we don't have at  
23          least a 55 percent variance as far as minorities,  
24          then we don't really stand much of a chance to be

1           able to live up to what the Department of Justice  
2           says we have a right to have. And that also  
3           impacts the whole State of Virginia, as far as how  
4           things have to be shifted.

5           The numbers grew in Northern Virginia. So on  
6           the borders facing North Carolina, you felt that in  
7           the Southwest. We felt it in the Tidewater area.  
8           Minorities had to move forward, and we're all  
9           moving towards the North, okay, because that's  
10          where the numbers are.

11          So in order to make this happen, it requires  
12          some shifting, if you will. It's not a perfect  
13          thing, but there is a mandate that those 12  
14          minorities from the Senate and -- it's five  
15          minority positions that have to be here.

16          So all that is in the mix, when we're trying  
17          to develop the right fit for us. I respect the  
18          bipartisan committee, and I'm also concerned about,  
19          though, the community of interest, and the  
20          community of interest says that we are African  
21          Americans.

22          There is a population of hispanics that have  
23          come. In 1965, it was African Americans they're  
24          referring to. I am an African American, and I

1 represent quite a few African Americans, and we are  
2 expected to be able to obtain this.

3 So we're listening to all you say, and I tell  
4 you, everything you say is important, and there  
5 will be some amendments made as a result of what  
6 you said today. I assure that's going to happen.  
7 Don't have to beat us up; but it's important that  
8 you understand and review it, if you need to, the  
9 Voting Rights Act of 1965 and what it requires  
10 Virginia to do.

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I've got a question.  
12 Do these three plans that are being offered, do  
13 they all meet that guideline? So they all do meet  
14 that guideline. Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN JONES: And you were speaking about  
16 55 percent voting population?

17 DELEGATE DANCE: Yes, voting age, because you  
18 know you can have a minority, but they can't vote.  
19 That doesn't help you much, as far as being  
20 competitive and being able to ensure that you're  
21 representing. Good point, I appreciate it.

22 CHAIRMAN JONES: Another comment?

23 MR. FEIGEL: I have a question. What is the,  
24 how does the equation work for -- I don't know;

1 providing equitable voting, or whatever you just  
2 said? You have to have so many black people,  
3 hispanics, whites?

4 DELEGATE DANCE: If you had enough -- If you  
5 had an opportunity to go to the General Assembly's  
6 website and look at legislative link, you can  
7 actually look at the demographics and you can break  
8 it down by each precinct, each block. It will tell  
9 you how many African Americans live there, how many  
10 new Americans, asians, hispanics, and the whole  
11 population from that area.

12 So as you cobble together to make sure that  
13 there are 12 minority House districts and five  
14 minority Senate districts, that's got to be in the  
15 mix, and that has to impact what they have to do to  
16 make sure everybody is called to be as responsible  
17 as possible but still address that mandate. Any  
18 plan that we have must go to the Department of  
19 Justice first.

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: This block, is this  
21 like a majority/minority --

22 CHAIRMAN JONES: We're not going to, we're not  
23 going to do question and answer. She was making a  
24 statement, so if you'd like to make a statement,

1                   that will be fine.

2                   UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I don't know how to  
3                   make that, make it a statement, if I'm looking for  
4                   an answer.

5                   CHAIRMAN JONES: Anyone else wishing to speak  
6                   this evening? (No response)

7                   If not, I want to thank you for coming out  
8                   today. This is a very large crowd. We had about,  
9                   we had a couple of hundred at Hampton Roads on  
10                  Thursday. We had a small crowd this morning at the  
11                  first one. We had a larger crowd this afternoon.  
12                  This is the largest crowd.

13                  DELEGATE O'BANNON: You all are the best of  
14                  the day. (Laughter)

15                  CHAIRMAN JONES: Thank you for coming out.

16

17                  (7:32 p.m.)

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## C E R T I F I C A T E

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

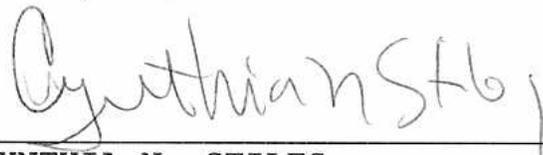
COUNTY OF FRANKLIN

I, Cynthia N. Stiles, Notary Public in and for the Commonwealth of Virginia, at Large, do hereby certify that the foregoing proceedings were by me reduced to machine shorthand in the presence of the named participants, afterwards transcribed by me by means of computer, and that to the best of my ability the foregoing is a true and correct transcript of the proceedings as aforesaid.

I further certify that these proceedings was taken at the time and place specified in the foregoing caption.

I further certify that I am not a relative, counsel or attorney for either party, or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand at Rocky Mount, Virginia on the 15th day of April, 2011.



CYNTHIA N. STILES  
NOTARY PUBLIC

My Commission expires December 31, 2014

Notary Registration Number: 266666