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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

STATE GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE
PUBLIC HEARING

J. HOWARD PEW FINE ARTS CENTER
GROVE CITY COLLEGE
GROVE CITY, PA

TUESDAY, AUGUST 24, 2021
9:09 A.M.

PRESENTATION ON
CONGRESSIONAL REDISTRICTING
NORTHWEST REGION

BEFORE:

HONORABLE SETH M. GROVE, MAJORITY CHAIRMAN
HONORABLE MATTHEW D. DOWLING
HONORABLE ANDREW LEWIS
HONORABLE RYAN E. MACKENZIE
HONORABLE BRETT R. MILLER
HONORABLE ERIC R. NELSON
HONORABLE CLINT OWLETT
HONORABLE FRANCIS X. RYAN
HONORABLE PAUL SCHEMEL
HONORABLE JEFF C. WHEELAND
HONORABLE SCOTT CONKLIN, DEMOCRATIC CHAIRMAN
HONORABLE ISABELLA V. FITZGERALD
HONORABLE MAUREEN E. MADDEN
HONORABLE BENJAMIN V. SANCHEZ
HONORABLE JARED G. SOLOMON

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

HONORABLE TIMOTHY R. BONNER

* * * * *

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SUBMITTED WRITTEN TESTIMONY

* * *

See submitted written testimony and handouts online under "Show:" at:

https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/Legis/TR/Public/tr_finder_public_action.cfm?tr_doc_typ=T&billBody=&billTyp=&billNbr=&hearing_month=&hearing_day=&hearing_year=&NewCommittee=State+Government&subcommittee=&subject=&bill=&new_title=&new_salutation=&new_first_name=&new_middle_name=&new_last_name=&new_suffix=&hearing_loc=

P R O C E E D I N G S

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MAJORITY CHAIRMAN GROVE: Good morning.

Today, the House State Government Committee will convene the first of eight regional hearings across Pennsylvania on congressional redistricting. Today we'll be hearing testimony about the northwest region of our Commonwealth.

I want to start off by thanking Grove City College and Representative Tim Bonner for hosting us. Tim, any opening welcomes?

REPRESENTATIVE BONNER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

It's a pleasure to be with the State Government Committee this morning and to participate in the redistricting hearing process.

On behalf of Grove City College, I would like to welcome the Members of the State Government Committee to Grove City, Pennsylvania, and also welcome those who are with us in person and virtually here this morning.

This is a great opportunity for you to give your involvement in how our congressional district lines should be drawn. So we're very thankful to have such an open process as we go through the drawing of the new congressional lines, and we're very pleased to have Chairman Seth Grove and the Members of the State Government

1 Committee here today.

2 So welcome, and I'm sure it will be very
3 informative and hopefully entertaining to some degree.

4 Thank you.

5 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN GROVE: Thank you.

6 As a matter of housekeeping before we get
7 started, a reminder that each testifier will be given
8 10 minutes to present their testimony before the Members of
9 the Committee. We'll be keeping firmly to these time
10 limits. We're here to listen. No questions will be asked
11 of testifiers.

12 Also, testifiers, please keep your comments
13 relevant to the topic at hand. We're here to learn about
14 this region of the State -- its industries; its values; its
15 unique communities of interest.

16 We're here to learn from you and take your input
17 on congressional districts that will be in effect for the
18 next decade. This is an important task, so if the
19 testifier begins to stray from relevant testimony, I'll ask
20 that you refocus to the topic before us. We cannot,
21 however, move you to the next listed speaker.

22 We also ask that any attendees here in the room
23 with us today remain quiet and respectful. Today's
24 public input hearing is being livestreamed at
25 www.paredistricting.com, and it is also being recorded.

1 Please help us to ensure those who are watching at home can
2 easily hear all testimony.

3 And I would be remiss if I did not also mention
4 that in addition to those testifiers who are present today,
5 the Committee has also received testimony from people all
6 across the Commonwealth who have submitted their written
7 comments online.

8 From the northwest regional hearing, we have
9 received written testimony from Gregory A. of Beaver Falls,
10 PA, that was submitted as of 8/23, 10 a.m. All the
11 testimony written today that was received prior to Monday,
12 August 23rd, at 10 a.m. is before each Member of the House
13 State Government Committee. There is also packets outside
14 the room, and it is also available online, again, at
15 www.paredistricting.com.

16 I also want to remind people that written
17 testimony for the northwest region will continue to be
18 accepted online at www.paredistricting.com until
19 October 12th. So there is still time to participate.

20 Before I hand it over to Chairman Conklin, I want
21 to thank you for taking an interest in redistricting and
22 for participating in this once-in-a-decade process. I hope
23 it is evident that the House of Representatives is
24 committed to undertaking the most open, transparent, and
25 accountable redistricting process in Pennsylvania history.

1 We believe that transparency and accountability form the
2 bedrock of good governance, and public input through these
3 hearings plays a central role with that.

4 Chairman, welcome aboard, too.

5 MINORITY CHAIRMAN CONKLIN: Thank you, Chairman.

6 I, too, want to thank Grove City College for
7 allowing us to be here. It's a beautiful facility. I had
8 the opportunity to park in a couple different parking lots
9 and meet some of the students to get guidance on how to be
10 here. So it was truly, it was truly enlightening; a great
11 bunch of young people.

12 Myself, who represents a small little university
13 called Penn State up at State College, it's nice to be -- I
14 almost feel as though I'm at home.

15 I was fortunate enough to go through the last
16 redistricting. I have seen the lines; I have seen the
17 court cases over the years, and I'm hoping that this time
18 will be different and I'm hoping that we'll be able to sit
19 down and come up with a clear solution for the people of
20 Pennsylvania and not the politicians of Pennsylvania.

21 In light that we're losing one congressional
22 seat, it's even going to make it even harder. So the
23 testimony is going to be very important, but most of all,
24 I'm anxious to hear that this process this time will be
25 transparent and open to the public.

1 So with that, I thank you, Chairman Grove, and
2 we're ready to go.

3 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN GROVE: Thank you.

4 Under the Sunshine Law, if streaming video stops,
5 we will recess the hearing until the issue is fixed. For
6 Members attending virtually, please ensure your microphones
7 are off, and recognize that if your video screens are on,
8 we can see you, and everything you do will be housed in
9 perpetuity under congressional redistricting.

10 We'll begin with the introduction of Members,
11 starting with Members present and then Members attending
12 virtually, and we'll start all the way to the right.

13 REPRESENTATIVE MADDEN: Good morning, everyone.

14 I'm State Representative Maureen Madden. I
15 represent Monroe County, which is the Poconos. It's a
16 pleasure to be here. This is a beautiful campus. As a
17 former educator, I can certainly appreciate a beautiful
18 campus, and I look forward to all of the testimony today.

19 Thank you.

20 REPRESENTATIVE SCHEMEL: Good morning.

21 I'm Paul Schemel, State Representative,
22 representing portions of Franklin County in the
23 south-central portion of the State.

24 REPRESENTATIVE WHEELAND: Good morning.

25 Representative Jeff Wheeland, Lycoming County,

1 the 83rd District, the city of Williamsport, home of
2 Little League Baseball. Don't forget to watch it tonight.
3 Thanks.

4 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN GROVE: I don't think I
5 actually introduced myself. I'm Seth Grove, Chairman of
6 the House State Government Committee, York County, the
7 196th District.

8 REPRESENTATIVE NELSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
9 I'm Representative Eric Nelson, Westmoreland
10 County, the 57th District.

11 REPRESENTATIVE DOWLING: Thank you, and good
12 morning.

13 I'm Representative Matthew Dowling of the
14 51st Legislative District in parts of Fayette and Somerset
15 Counties.

16 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN GROVE: Thank you.

17 We'll go to Members attending online. First up,
18 Representative Lewis.

19 REPRESENTATIVE LEWIS: Thank you, Chairman.

20 Representative Lewis, the 105th District in lovely
21 Dauphin County. I'm excited to participate in the most
22 transparent redistricting process in the history of the
23 Commonwealth. I commend the Chair and leadership on both
24 sides of the aisle. I'm looking forward to the hearings.

25 Thank you.

1 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN GROVE: Representative Miller.

2 REPRESENTATIVE MILLER: Good morning,

3 Mr. Chairman.

4 Brett Miller, the 41st District, Lancaster County,
5 Pennsylvania.

6 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN GROVE: Representative
7 Fitzgerald.

8 REPRESENTATIVE FITZGERALD: Good morning.

9 Representative Isabella Fitzgerald. I represent
10 the 203rd Legislative District -- West Oak Lane, East Oak
11 Lane, and the Lower Northeast in Philadelphia.

12 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN GROVE: Representative Ryan.

13 REPRESENTATIVE RYAN: I'm State Representative
14 Frank Ryan, representing the 101st District in the western
15 part of Lebanon County, Pennsylvania.

16 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN GROVE: Representative
17 Mackenzie.

18 REPRESENTATIVE MACKENZIE: Good morning.

19 Representative Ryan Mackenzie from the
20 134th District in portions of Berks and Lehigh Counties.

21 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN GROVE: Representative Sanchez.

22 REPRESENTATIVE SANCHEZ: Good morning, everybody.

23 Ben Sanchez, representing part of Montgomery
24 County in southeastern Pennsylvania.

25 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN GROVE: And I thought I saw

1 Representative Solomon. Do you see him on there? Okay.
2 Well, if he gets on, we'll allow him to introduce himself.

3 All right. With that, thank you, Members. And
4 again, I just remind the virtual Members to mute your
5 microphones and turn off your video if you don't want your
6 videos part of the official record.

7 With that, we'll call up our first testifier, the
8 Honorable Phil English, former U.S. Congressman, from Erie,
9 Pennsylvania.

10 Congressman, please feel free to make your way
11 up, and you can start when you're ready, sir.

12 CONGRESSMAN ENGLISH: I apologize, Mr. Chairman,
13 for the pause. I am, as always, a victim of technology.

14 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN GROVE: It's all good. We all
15 are at some time. It's great when it works, and when it
16 doesn't, ugh.

17 Go ahead. Go ahead, Congressman.

18 CONGRESSMAN ENGLISH: Chairman Grove,
19 distinguished ladies and gentlemen, thank you for the
20 opportunity to testify before the Committee. It is not
21 only a privilege, but I have to salute you for the
22 transparency of this process and your outreach into
23 northwestern Pennsylvania to learn how we operate, how we
24 think, and to appropriately inform your decisions about how
25 to draw congressional boundary lines.

1 I know how difficult a challenge that is. I
2 served in Congress during one reapportionment representing
3 this area and this specific site, but I also previously
4 served as a State Senate aide working with State Senators
5 during two previous reapportionments. So I have had an
6 opportunity to see how it works, how it doesn't work, and
7 to see the long-term consequences.

8 I am here today on my own behalf, but also
9 particularly representing the Erie Regional Chamber and
10 Growth Partnership, of which I am Chair of the Government
11 Affairs Committee. They are, as an organization, as is our
12 community, united in their request that Erie County be
13 included, unified in one congressional district because of
14 geography and community of interest. But beyond that, the
15 comments I'm going to offer you are my own.

16 Northwestern Pennsylvania has distinct interests
17 in national policy reflecting its unique communities and
18 common experiences. It has always aspired to have a
19 distinctive voice, sometimes very different from the
20 dominant voices of the two national parties with their
21 urban, suburban, and regional coalitions.

22 Our economy has undergone significant changes in
23 the last few decades, which, coinciding with a major
24 national political realignment, or perhaps de-alignment,
25 has significantly changed the profile of our congressional

1 representation.

2 The most recent census data also highlights
3 dramatic changes in the relative influence of leading
4 counties, demographic groups, and interests that are
5 important to understand in equitably drafting congressional
6 maps.

7 Our perspective also differs from that of
8 neighboring areas, as well as those of the opposite ends of
9 the State, and I appreciate the opportunity to try to
10 quantify some of those.

11 I am going to read portions of my testimony and
12 submit the rest for the record. Again, I appreciate the
13 opportunity.

14 From my limited experience, recent maps have
15 tended to split communities of interest and disadvantage
16 local grassroots candidates and challengers to the benefit
17 of large-budget candidates and entrenched networks. This,
18 in turn, has reduced political competition and debate,
19 frequently disenfranchising local constituencies and swing
20 voters. Ironically, the strategies of "gerrymandering,"
21 which I have seen practiced or attempted to be practiced by
22 both parties, have frequently backfired on mapmakers
23 seeking short-term advantages.

24 My experience, as I have reflected on it, leads
25 me to suggest the following issues for you to consider:

1 One, congressional districts should be, wherever
2 possible, reflective of common communities of interest that
3 locals recognize and identify with.

4 Second, districts need to be compact, because
5 as they have grown in population, it has become more
6 difficult to traverse the district, especially for
7 constituents engaging their Members of Congress. I can
8 tell you, having represented this area in Congress, the
9 dimensions of the district represent a challenge to
10 properly getting around and listening to all of the
11 communities and all of the voices. Maps should try to
12 maintain the compactness of districts to facilitate the
13 best possible representation.

14 Point three, and this is something fundamental
15 and I used in my recommendations when I was in Congress.
16 Counties, wherever possible, should be used as the building
17 blocks for congressional districts. Where population
18 differences make this impossible, county lines should be
19 weighed against other community factors.

20 I urge you to consider media markets.
21 Northwestern Pennsylvania has several media, which is to
22 say television markets, which themselves contribute to the
23 formation of communities of interest. They include Erie,
24 Youngstown, and Pittsburgh. Local media markets strongly
25 contribute to a sense of community.

1 Also, I want to say that considerable energy has
2 been expended locally in weighing which counties should
3 benefit with the configuration of congressional districts.
4 And with the latest census data, it is fairly clear that no
5 single county or community in northwestern Pennsylvania can
6 dominate a House seat or claim preeminence, and I think you
7 can proceed accordingly.

8 In terms of demographics, you will find in your
9 review of the census data that this region has experienced
10 significant population loss, coupled with economic change
11 and slow growth, which has produced different results in
12 neighboring communities. You will find that the
13 neighboring county of Butler has grown by 2 percent and all
14 of the surrounding counties have lost. I think that should
15 be taken also very much into account.

16 In northwestern Pennsylvania, we have a rich
17 immigrant tradition, but I don't know that ethnicity or
18 communities of color will play a decisive role at the
19 congressional level.

20 Also, although party perspectives should be
21 expected to play a role in mapmaking, local interests
22 should not be set aside to dictate statewide partisan
23 outcomes, especially because partisan advantages tend to be
24 fleeting and superficial. Well-drawn maps should
25 accommodate interparty competition, which in turn will

1 benefit both parties and the communities represented.

2 And also, collaboration. I encourage both
3 parties in both chambers of the General Assembly to work
4 together throughout this process, and particularly include
5 the Governor as a stakeholder. Having all parties at the
6 table will remove any rationale for the last-minute
7 gubernatorial veto that could invite appellate court
8 intervention, which in my view is not a necessary
9 conclusion to this process.

10 I have included in my testimony a survey of some
11 of the recent census data. It's just 10,000 feet. And I
12 simply want to include, in my observations, that I have
13 seen this process change dramatically over time. As time
14 has passed with court decisions requiring increasingly
15 rigid population conformity and other considerations,
16 coupled with the advance of computer technology, that has
17 effectively weaponized partisan interventions into
18 congressional mapmaking and has encouraged gerrymandering.
19 By using counties as building blocks and engaging in
20 collaboration, I believe that you can overcome these
21 challenges.

22 I urge the Committee and I urge the General
23 Assembly to pursue a process that is fair, collaborative,
24 and gives northwestern Pennsylvania a distinctive voice in
25 Washington, while empowering our congressional delegation

1 to offer a united front to defend our interests and
2 represent our values.

3 Finally, I would like to thank Mr. Bonner for
4 encouraging this event, and it's an honor to be here in his
5 home area. And also, you will be hearing from a number of
6 people I'm very well familiar with who represent this area
7 at the county level, and also one of our most, I think,
8 distinguished local political scientists as well as several
9 members of the public. I think that you're going to get
10 from them a very good feel for how northwestern
11 Pennsylvania fits together.

12 As you go forward, if any of you individually or
13 as a group have any other feedback that I can provide, I
14 would consider it a privilege to encourage your effort.
15 You are making a great start, and I salute you for it.

16 Mr. Chairman, that concludes my testimony.

17 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN GROVE: Thank you, Congressman.
18 We greatly appreciate your testimony today.

19 The next testifier is Dr. Michael Coulter -- did
20 I get that right? Yes, one for one -- a Professor of
21 Political Science and Humanities, Grove City, Pennsylvania.
22 Thank you so much.

23 And, testifiers, feel free to stand or you can
24 sit, whatever makes you comfortable. So with that,
25 Professor, please begin.

1 DR. COULTER: Chairman Grove and Members of the
2 Committee, first, as an employee of Grove City College and
3 a formal council member in the borough, let me welcome you
4 to Grove City and Grove City College, commend you for
5 having hearings about the redistricting process, and thank
6 you for the opportunity to present a few comments.

7 First, I would like to make some brief remarks
8 about general rules for redistricting -- that's a very
9 professor kind of thing to do -- and then add some specific
10 comments about representation in northwestern and
11 north-central Pennsylvania.

12 Now, State Legislatures are subject to many
13 constraints when drawing congressional districts, including
14 population size in particular, and they are subject to, the
15 2018 Pennsylvania Supreme Court decision added some
16 additional constraints upon State Legislatures.

17 And I would like to propose to you some
18 additional self-imposed constraints. These choices, these
19 self-imposed rules, would be prima facie neutral, and
20 that's because the rules would serve the good of better
21 representation and increase trust in the political process.

22 One rule would be to keep as many municipalities
23 and counties from being split between two congressional
24 districts. A second rule would seek to keep as many
25 residents in their existing districts as possible by

1 adjustments with existing boundaries rather than wholesale
2 changes.

3 I want to base my argument for the first rule in
4 some theoretical discussion of representation. In our
5 system, with single-member, geographically based,
6 plurality-winner districts, it assumes that areas are
7 deserving of representation. In an electoral system that
8 utilizes proportional representation, where voters vote for
9 parties such as the Israeli Knesset, there, those elected
10 from party lists represent ideas and political platforms of
11 the party. They make no pretense to represent an area. In
12 that system, by design, party representation in the
13 Legislature will closely match the distribution in the
14 larger population.

15 With our system of representing geographic areas,
16 we should also consider what we expect from
17 representatives. Hannah Pitkin's *The Concept of*
18 *Representation* is considered by political theorists to be
19 an extensive and important exploration of representation.
20 Therein, she explores multiple meanings of representation.
21 There is obviously just the act of electing someone and
22 holding that person accountable through future elections.
23 That's simply formalistic representation. There is also
24 what Pitkin calls substantive representation; that is,
25 taking the substance of concerns and needs and being

1 present with those concerns and needs in a legislative
2 body. Intuitively, it would seem that representative
3 democracies would want institutional arrangements and
4 practices that encourage substantive representation.

5 Having entire municipalities kept within
6 legislative districts as much as possible would support the
7 aim of enabling substantive representation. Municipalities
8 often have concerns, and focusing responsibility on a
9 single representative to take those substantive concerns to
10 a legislative body gives the best chance of those concerns
11 being represented.

12 One could assert that municipalities divided into
13 more than one congressional district would have more
14 representation, but a representative could assume or tell
15 others that those concerns would be represented by that
16 other representative or representatives.

17 When a municipality has one Federal
18 representative, that representative would likely have a
19 sense of responsibility to that municipality, and the
20 citizens of that municipality could reward or punish that
21 representative for representation or the lack thereof.

22 Beyond those substantial concerns of municipal
23 officials, citizens in a municipality with a single
24 representative would have an easier time knowing who their
25 representative is. To cite a local example, after the

1 2000 census, the city of Hermitage here in Mercer County
2 was divided between two congressional districts. It would
3 be a reasonable assumption that residents of Hermitage had
4 more confusion about who their representative was compared
5 to residents of municipalities where the entire
6 municipality was in a single district.

7 As for keeping entire counties in a single
8 congressional district, that cannot be achieved because of
9 the requirement that districts have limited population
10 variation. But districts could be established with an aim
11 to keep counties, as much as possible, and when divided, to
12 have as few districts as possible or be parts of as few
13 districts as possible.

14 To cite a local example, parts of three
15 congressional districts are in Butler County. Having an
16 entire county within a congressional district focuses the
17 relationship between the area and the representative.
18 Having a county divided between multiple districts diffuses
19 the relationship between that area and those congressional
20 representatives.

21 The argument against the aim or the rule of
22 splitting municipalities when establishing congressional
23 districts is that in the present circumstances, it would
24 likely give an advantage to Republicans, assuming the
25 present partisan distribution holds. John Nagel, a retired

1 CMU professor and collaborator with FairVote PA, has
2 produced computer simulations of a variety of congressional
3 districts that seek to minimize divided municipalities. In
4 all of those possible congressional districts that seek to
5 minimize divided municipalities, there seems to be a slight
6 advantage for Republicans.

7 But in response to Nagel, our system is not one
8 of proportional representation. There are good arguments
9 for proportional representation, but that's not the system
10 we have. To expect a geographically based system of
11 representation to behave like a proportional representation
12 system is not possible.

13 Furthermore, while recognizing that partisan
14 identity is remarkably important when it comes to vote
15 choice, districts drawn with the aims of partisan
16 gerrymandering do not always perform as expected.

17 When the 2001 congressional districts were
18 established, I remember then Representative DeWeese
19 claiming that the proposed districts would put Democrats
20 into the political equivalent of the wilderness. While the
21 2001 maps were a short benefit to Republicans, the
22 elections of 2006 and 2008 wiped away that electoral
23 advantage. Five seats switched from Republican to Democrat
24 in those elections, including two in western Pennsylvania.

25 Now, my second rule would be to conservatively,

1 with a small "c," change existing districts. Why take this
2 approach? Such an approach would encourage greater trust,
3 or at least not further diminish trust, in political
4 institutions.

5 Political actors face the temptation of
6 short-term political gains in part because there is a short
7 time horizon before being held accountable before the next
8 election, but political actors in both parties should have
9 a longer term interest in supporting trust in institutions.

10 If there's one concept that political scientists
11 from across the political spectrum and around the world
12 support and respect it's the idea that higher rather than
13 lower levels of trust are important for political
14 societies. Political orders with higher levels of trust
15 tend to have greater participation and compliance.

16 According to the Pew Research Center, trust in
17 government in the United States has been at historic lows
18 for the past decade. Only about a quarter of Americans
19 trust the government to do the right thing, whereas during
20 the Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, and even most of the
21 Nixon Administration, the number was well above 50 percent
22 of Americans.

23 Now, a map that makes as few changes as possible
24 or necessary will not restore Pennsylvanians' trust in
25 government, but a map that dramatically changes could be

1 easily characterized as a pure power grab and could further
2 erode trust.

3 Now, to apply this approach to the 15th and
4 16th Districts, the 15th and 16th would have to expand to
5 meet the larger population needed, but their basic
6 locations and shapes would remain the same. The boundaries
7 would go further east and/or south. That's a good
8 transition to a few comments about the districts -- very
9 brief -- in northwestern and north-central.

10 I think representation is well served by having
11 as few split municipalities and counties as possible. In
12 the current 16th, only one county is currently split,
13 Butler County, and increasing the population of the
14 district by adding more of Butler County would be the least
15 change needed to meet the new population requirements. It
16 would also keep Butler County as a community of interest
17 more together.

18 As for the current 15th District, it faces the
19 challenge of having lost, relative to other districts in
20 the United States, significant population since the 2010
21 census. A district in that region would have to expand
22 towards the south or east or both.

23 Now, the concept of "communities of interest" is
24 not perfectly clear, and there is no entire congressional
25 district that could be a single community of interest, but

1 regions within congressional districts can have similar
2 economic concerns.

3 For example, expanding the 16th to more of Butler
4 County would seem to keep the community of interest in
5 Butler County together. The present 16th District includes
6 both industry and significant agriculture, but the 16th has
7 more industrial and postindustrial concerns than does the
8 15th, and the 15th is more dominated by agricultural concerns
9 than is the 16th. Adding more agricultural areas to the 15th
10 would keep communities of interest together. Furthermore,
11 expanding the district to include more of the I-79 corridor
12 in Butler County would seem to connect or hold together a
13 community of interest.

14 If the districts in the northwestern and
15 north-central were to change in the ways described, these
16 changes would support increased substantive representation
17 and support longer term trust, or at least not erode trust,
18 in the political process and political institutions. It's
19 a longer discussion, but such changes would likely also
20 withstand legal challenges, and having stable district
21 boundaries would be useful for the Commonwealth of
22 Pennsylvania and its citizens.

23 Thank you.

24 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN GROVE: Thank you, Professor,
25 so much for your time this morning.

1 Next, we have Scott Boyd, a Mercer County
2 Commissioner from Mercer County, Pennsylvania.

3 Commissioner, please come up, and again, you can
4 use the podium or take a seat, whichever is more
5 comfortable to you.

6 MR. BOYD: Good morning, Chairman Grove,
7 Representative Conklin, and distinguished Committee
8 Members.

9 Welcome to beautiful Mercer County. It has been
10 my home for all of my life, and our friends and families
11 value this region, as I'm sure you will learn to value it
12 as we go through this process and learn more about each
13 county that is being represented.

14 I am Mercer County Commissioner Scott Boyd,
15 Vice-Chairman of our County Board of Commissioners, and
16 for the last 6 years I have been honored to serve the
17 110,652 citizens presently living in Mercer County,
18 according to the 2020 census.

19 I was raised on a farm and worked in my father's
20 auto business through college, and from there, I rose in my
21 accounting experience in businesses to chief financial
22 officer of a large medical group practice and then on to a
23 nonprofit organization, and during this time, I served as a
24 local tax collector and also a school board member. And
25 finally in 2016, I offered myself in service to the people

1 of Mercer County as a full-time commissioner. So I do have
2 some background and feel I represent this county very well
3 and would like to share our thoughts on how the focus on
4 the value of county boundaries would be so important to the
5 16th Congressional District.

6 Like other counties of the current 16th District,
7 we are largely rural with concentrations of urban and
8 suburban population centers that emerged as a result of the
9 steel industry, established over 130 years ago. With the
10 decline of steel as a major employer, we have, over the
11 last 40 years, fought the loss of population. We sense the
12 tide is finally turning as our industries and service
13 providers are expanding and looking for workers to fill the
14 shortage that began with the economic expansion in 2019 and
15 then was interrupted by the pandemic and now is rising
16 again.

17 We are strategically positioned midway between
18 Pittsburgh and Erie, as well as midway between Chicago and
19 New York City, at the junction of Interstates 79, 80, and
20 376. And our low cost of living and immense outdoor
21 recreational opportunities within an hour's drive of
22 Pittsburgh and Cleveland present access to the best of both
23 worlds.

24 We enjoy the service of four hospitals, four
25 colleges and universities, and a strong faith community

1 that all instill health, knowledge, and purpose into our
2 daily lives.

3 We represent and share the values of the rest of
4 the existing 16th Congressional District and would urge the
5 continuation of the present lines that define it. However,
6 as a result of the loss of one congressional district for
7 the Commonwealth, the geographic lines must be redrawn, and
8 I will make the following recommendation:

9 Keeping with the goal of reducing the division of
10 existing county and municipal boundaries, I would recommend
11 that all of Butler County be included in the new district
12 rather than the existing split, and all of Warren County be
13 included in the new district boundaries.

14 We thank you for your time today and this
15 opportunity to give input to the redistricting process. We
16 wish you well in making a wise decision. I know the
17 temptation will be to form the outcome to political
18 advantage, but I urge lines following county and municipal
19 boundaries as the most appropriate to serve the people of
20 this district.

21 Thank you for your time, and I wish you well.

22 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN GROVE: Thank you so much,
23 Commissioner. We appreciate your testimony today.

24 Next is Kevin Boozel, Butler County Commissioner,
25 Butler County, Pennsylvania.

1 Did I get your name right?

2 MR. BOOZEL: Yeah. You did very well.

3 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN GROVE: And again, you can take
4 the podium or sit, whatever is your convenience.

5 Actually, change of plan. Do you mind sitting,
6 because the audio is not working well at the podium. So
7 thank you.

8 MR. BOOZEL: No worries.

9 Thank you, Members and Chairmen. I appreciate
10 the opportunity to present here today.

11 I am a Butler County Commissioner. I also serve
12 multiple roles in my community, obviously a constituent of
13 District 16. I'm also a local committeeman, a State
14 committeeman. I am also President of the County
15 Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania; however, I will
16 not be reporting for them. This is only my own. And as a
17 Butler County Commissioner, I truly enjoy this interaction.
18 I think this is critical.

19 I will tell you that what I submitted earlier was
20 draft form, and I will apologize for that. I thought I
21 would have the opportunity to submit again, and I would
22 like to take that opportunity to.

23 So at this time, I have approached this in many
24 roles that I currently serve, except for the County
25 Commissioners Association. They may have their own

1 membership-driven platforms on issues that I am not
2 representing today.

3 I have also consulted with my fellow
4 commissioners. In addition to my testimony, you will hear
5 from my fellow commissioner, Commissioner Geyer.

6 There are concerns regarding the redistricting of
7 Pennsylvania congressional districts to include splitting
8 of counties, but even more so, the splitting of precincts.
9 This behavior causes a lot of stress on voters, causes a
10 lot of stress on elections staff, and is extremely
11 inefficient. It is critical that we remove the barriers to
12 voting, and that would include confusion as part of that
13 barrier.

14 I am aware of several split precincts in Butler
15 County, as the only county I'm aware of to have three
16 individual congressional districts. Butler County has
17 experienced a growth spurt in the last 10 years, and most
18 recently 5.4 percent, that will require additional
19 infrastructure, housing, and many supports. Our area is
20 experiencing growth and economic success due to the hard,
21 diligent work being done at all levels of government. We
22 continue to represent and deserve to be fairly represented.

23 To be honest, working with three separate
24 districts is both positive and negative. As a county
25 commissioner, we are able to have three independent voices

1 listening to the concerns of our residents, provide
2 specifics to their areas covered that concern their
3 residents, and work on funding in three different districts
4 simultaneously. Collectively, they are each aware of our
5 county projects, while the commissioners continue to be
6 assertive to ensure Butler County remains one of the
7 fastest growing counties in Pennsylvania. We are
8 experiencing that growth rate of 5.4 percent while nearly
9 every county west of Harrisburg experiences loss. It is
10 also our intent to ensure our neighboring counties continue
11 to thrive and grow together.

12 Many of our projects span multiple counties, and
13 Butler County is proudly driven. It's our county intent to
14 support all the counties surrounding. Sometimes we're
15 chosen, whether we're north, northwest, southwest, west, we
16 get put in different groups for workforce investment
17 boards, our MPO for transportation. It gets very
18 confusing. It depends on who loves us that day, so we have
19 to go where we're needed sometimes, and that's okay.

20 That is the space where we serve as county
21 commissioners. The Federal representation is critical as
22 we work through the ARP, American Rescue Plan, that has and
23 will continue to be instrumental to improve our
24 infrastructure, our broadband, our health initiatives and
25 quality of life for our representatives. While this was a

1 partisan effort by Democrats, Republican congressional
2 areas will benefit greatly, and so will the residents.

3 I appreciate the fact that we enjoy great working
4 relationships, but I am concerned, moving forward, that
5 bipartisan support of Federal funding will struggle as a
6 result of what is being done today and make sure that the
7 Federal- and State-level political field doesn't take an
8 advantage. The challenge is keeping everyone informed,
9 educated, and ensuring that residents are engaged in their
10 own districts.

11 My final point.

12 While population counts per district are very
13 important, we want to ensure that county and precinct
14 boundaries are not unnecessarily impacted to a group's
15 political affiliation. This should always be about fair,
16 equal, and transparent elections where the majority voice
17 is represented as well as the minority. As these are not
18 statewide votes but rather votes that represent a
19 geographical population, it would be expected that both
20 parties should hold the ability to vote their
21 representative into office that will do the most good.

22 I have also included some specific demographics
23 of Butler County in regards to population demographics and
24 party, so I would like to submit this, if you don't mind,
25 and that concludes.

1 Thank you.

2 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN GROVE: Absolutely. Thank you,
3 Commissioner.

4 Next, we have Kim Geyer, Butler County
5 Commissioner, from Valencia, Pennsylvania.

6 Commissioner, come on up. Thank you so much for
7 your time this morning.

8 MS. GEYER: Good morning.

9 My name is Kimberly D. Geyer, and I am
10 Vice Chairman of the Butler County Board of Commissioners,
11 and I appreciate the opportunity to be here to testify
12 before the distinguished Committee.

13 Butler County continues to be the fastest growing
14 county in western Pennsylvania, if not the whole
15 Commonwealth. We're the only county that has had continual
16 growth since its inception back in, starting back in the
17 1800s.

18 As you are aware, there are 40 out of 67 counties
19 throughout the Commonwealth that have experienced loss of
20 population. So contrary to the principles back in 2018 by
21 the Supreme Court to keep counties and areas contiguous and
22 compact, Butler County is divided into three congressional
23 districts. That has already been noted. We are divided
24 into the 15th, the 16th, and the 17th District. So the 15th
25 is my Congressman, Glenn Thompson, and the 16th is

1 Congressman Kelly, and the 17th is Congressman Lamb.

2 So today, I would like to provide you some
3 examples of how this split, these three splits, compact and
4 impact our county.

5 Butler County has 89 precincts, election
6 precincts, and out of the 89, 6 of them are divided, are
7 split precincts. A part of Cranberry Township is carved
8 out of the southwest, making up the 17th District, and it's
9 attached to both Beaver and Allegheny Counties.

10 There are four precincts in here that are split
11 by both Congressman Conor Lamb and Congressman Mike Kelly.
12 Then in another section of our county, Jefferson Township,
13 we have two split precincts as well, and they are
14 represented by Congressman Kelly and Congressman Thompson.
15 So you can see the confusion that voters have within one
16 county having three different congressional
17 representatives.

18 The Cranberry West 2 split has only 17 voters,
19 and the Jefferson 1 split has only 18 voters. The Butler
20 County Election Bureau has had to design and print two
21 different regular ballots for each split precinct -- we do
22 that for every election -- and we have to design and print
23 two sets of provisional ballots for each split. In
24 addition, each split precinct must maintain two sets of
25 pollbooks and design two reporting categories for each

1 split for election night results.

2 Each split also requires different audit
3 materials, as well as poll worker education, training, and
4 voter education. Our voters get confused. As county
5 officials, we have had to explain why one person could vote
6 for one candidate while their neighbor located three houses
7 down from them, located on the other side of the street,
8 had a different candidate on their ballot.

9 Cranberry Township, Adams Township, Forward and
10 Jackson Townships, are situated in Butler County and are
11 among the fastest growing townships in Butler County. And
12 one of the criteria for drawing congressional maps is that
13 the districts should be about equal size, and we hope not
14 to dilute the voter's voice based on race.

15 Cranberry Township, in the case of Butler County,
16 is probably one of the most diverse populations due to the
17 business and the global business aspects and nature of
18 people. It's a very transient area. We have a lot of
19 people that come and go due to their global work in
20 business and technology and health care and manufacturing.
21 So Cranberry Township continues to grow exponentially due
22 to the quality education institutions, low taxes,
23 affordable housing, and access to Pittsburgh and
24 southwestern Pennsylvania.

25 As pertaining to the 15th and 16th Congressional

1 Districts, as Commissioner Boozel had alluded to before me,
2 he said that, you know, there have been positives and
3 negatives, and one of the positives has been the two
4 Congressmen, Congressman Kelly and GT Thompson, have both
5 been very -- they are to be commended, because they have
6 worked together; they have collaborated; they communicate.
7 They have brought the two districts together. They get
8 along. They are both from the same party. But there's no
9 guarantee that that would necessarily happen if they were
10 of opposite parties or they didn't get along. So Butler
11 County has benefited from that collaborative relationship,
12 working relationship, with those two Congressmen.

13 So I want to conclude by saying that in 2012, I
14 did testify at the senatorial district Legislative
15 Reapportionment mapping process, and that was during a
16 process when Butler County lost Senatorial District 40.
17 It went to Monroe County, where you're from, and then
18 District 45 went to Jim Brewster, who had been newly
19 elected down in the McKeesport area in Allegheny County.
20 So we had lost some representation, and that was during the
21 time of Jane Orié having hearings and being kind of in
22 limbo. As a result, our district lost that representation,
23 those districts.

24 And at that hearing 9 years ago, I implored the
25 committee to keep Cranberry Township with Butler County,

1 not to carve it out in the senatorial maps, and they did.
2 They ended up, it was the only request that was granted.
3 Today, Butler County is here again requesting Cranberry
4 Township to be contained in the Congressional District 16
5 where it would be intact with surrounding municipalities.
6 The old 12th Congressional District became the new 17th
7 Congressional District in 2018, and this is where Cranberry
8 Township has landed.

9 In closing, I really appreciate the
10 demonstration, the transparency that your committee is
11 demonstrating by holding these hearings. I conclude my
12 testimony today with several challenges and an opportunity
13 for you as Committee Members and all our elected State
14 officials that I know would be appreciated by most of your
15 constituents. I just ask that you please allow
16 Pennsylvanians an opportunity, if they so choose, to submit
17 any draft maps or any ideas, to share those and for them to
18 be considered and have some back-and-forth dialogue on why
19 they could work or why necessarily they wouldn't work.

20 The other challenge I have for you is that once
21 you do draft a map, I just ask that Pennsylvanians have an
22 opportunity again to look at the map, to review it, and to
23 be able to offer some feedback and let you know how it may
24 or may not impact our county or our contiguous
25 municipalities. I think it would be very helpful for the

1 Committee.

2 So after all, this is an opportunity, as you are
3 aware, that only comes once every 10 years, and it's
4 crucial to ensure that every Pennsylvanian, that their
5 voice can be heard as well as truly represented, especially
6 during a time in life when many of us feel divided. So
7 thank you.

8 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN GROVE: Thank you,
9 Commissioner.

10 And if people do want to submit maps, it will
11 take a little while for it to be eligible or up and
12 running, but on www.paredistricting.com, they will be able
13 to submit full maps.

14 Our next testifier, Mary Kay Mattocks, the
15 Borough of Grove City, President of the borough from Grove
16 City, Pennsylvania. I just like saying "Grove" so many
17 times. It's great.

18 MINORITY CHAIRMAN CONKLIN: I noticed that.

19 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN GROVE: Yeah.

20 Come on up, and I did want to acknowledge that
21 Representative Owlett was on earlier. I missed him. His
22 name wasn't up on the screen, but Representative Owlett is
23 present virtually.

24 And with that, Madam President, the floor is
25 yours.

1 MS. MATTOCKS: Thank you.

2 I might be a little bit different than the rest
3 of them, because I am the President of the Borough of
4 Grove City, but I am speaking for myself and for the
5 residents.

6 I applaud you for the process of the redrawing of
7 the congressional district lines. I have been born and
8 raised in Grove City and I'm a proud alumni of Grove City
9 College, so I look at this today and in the future
10 representing the residents of Grove City. And this is
11 going to be very short, because I feel that you need to be
12 very careful that you do listen to the people and that you
13 are fair in your decision, that you need to listen to the
14 people, and that's what I'm speaking about.

15 We have lost population in Mercer County. In
16 Grove City, we keep pretty even, but in Mercer County, the
17 census shows that we have lost population. That is a
18 concern. But I feel that we need to take as much as we can
19 into consideration of the entire area, and I'm asking you
20 that you leave the municipalities and you leave the
21 counties alone in this area. However, I do agree with
22 Commissioner Boyd that Butler County needs to seriously be
23 looked at, and I wouldn't want to be divided into three
24 areas, as they are, so Mercer County is very fortunate that
25 way.

1 I am just asking that you consider making sure
2 that the residents have the opportunity to express their
3 opinion, and I feel that that's why I am here today, to say
4 that we need to make sure that you look at that seriously
5 and make a fair judgment at the end.

6 Thank you very much for being here, and enjoy
7 your visit on the Grove City College campus.

8 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN GROVE: Thank you so much. We
9 really appreciate your time this morning.

10 Our next testifier is John Hauser from
11 Greenville, Pennsylvania.

12 Mr. Hauser, come on up, and when you're
13 comfortable, please feel free to begin.

14 MR. HAUSER: Mr. Chairman, Members of the
15 Committee, and Representative Bonner, good morning.

16 My name is John Hauser. I have been a resident
17 of Greenville for 42 years of the past 50 years and have
18 served as judge of elections at my precinct. I am retired
19 from Thiel College and currently serve as the college
20 archivist, a volunteer position.

21 I want to thank the Committee for its efforts to
22 make the redistricting process a more transparent one. The
23 task you have before you is not an easy one. You have to
24 create 17 "cogs" in the 435-cog wheel that is the United
25 States Congress. As you realign what was 18 districts into

1 17, each district will not only be larger in population
2 but, in most cases, geographically, making it more
3 difficult for the majority of us to be in touch with our
4 member of Congress.

5 As you go about this unenviable task, I would
6 urge you to keep the following in mind:

7 Congressional districts should be as
8 geographically compact as possible so that we have access
9 to our representative. Please remember that many rural
10 counties like Mercer, Crawford, and Venango do not have
11 comprehensive public transportation systems; thus, many
12 individuals do not have reliable transportation that can
13 take them to their representative's office.

14 Mercer County has lost 5 percent of its
15 population over the past decade. We don't want to further
16 dilute our county by being divided up among two or more
17 congressional districts. We need to have a leader who will
18 put Mercer County first and help to champion our county and
19 our priorities -- economic development to bring companies
20 to our county, improved educational opportunities for our
21 children and our workforce, and putting a stop to the
22 brain-drain taking members of the younger generation away.

23 Mercer County should be part of a district that
24 reflects the shared values of our county so that our member
25 of Congress can represent those values in her or his work

1 in Washington. This goes for our entire region. It's
2 important that we have a member who has roots in our area
3 -- a shared history and experiences.

4 We want to be on an equal footing with the other
5 counties in our congressional district and not be dominated
6 by one or more much larger counties that may not share our
7 values. Due to our shrinking population, we cannot afford
8 to be the county that is left behind.

9 What the Committee determines will affect the
10 residents of Mercer County for the next 10 years. While
11 the voters of our new district will ultimately decide who
12 their member of Congress will be, as citizens of Mercer
13 County, we want to have a voice in the process that leads
14 up to determining who that representative will be.

15 I'm sure that Mercer County is reflective of many
16 counties across the Commonwealth, many diverse communities
17 who share a common countywide identity. Although our
18 communities may not all share the same socioeconomic
19 characteristics, I can assure you that we do identify as
20 one Mercer County and would prefer to stay that way with
21 our congressional representation.

22 We trust that you will do your best to make sure
23 the districts are compact and contiguous while keeping
24 existing political boundaries with shared values together.

25 Thank you for your time. I hope that what you

1 have heard this morning will be of help to you in your
2 deliberations. We appreciate the opportunity to share our
3 opinions with the Committee, and I would be happy to answer
4 any questions you may have in the future.

5 Thank you.

6 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN GROVE: Thank you so much. We
7 greatly appreciate your time this morning.

8 Our next testifier is Susan Murawski. Did I get
9 that right?

10 MS. MURAWSKI: Yes, you did.

11 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN GROVE: This morning is a good
12 morning. From northeast Pennsylvania.

13 Susan, come on up, and feel free to begin when
14 you are comfortable.

15 MS. MURAWSKI: Good morning, and thank you for
16 this opportunity to speak today about congressional
17 redistricting in Pennsylvania.

18 My name is Susan Murawski, and I live in
19 Greenfield Township outside of the city of Erie in Erie
20 County. I was born and raised in Erie, the city, and have
21 lived in Erie County the majority of my life.

22 I am here today to request a new type of
23 redistricting process for Pennsylvania, one that is
24 transparent, open to the public, and starts with a blank
25 map, and more importantly, one that results in a map that

1 is fair to all sides.

2 The current process is driven by politics,
3 mapping technology, and big data. We have manipulation of
4 voting districts to benefit parties and not people. Look
5 at Pennsylvania's 2011 congressional map, as it had been
6 labeled one of the top three starkest partisan gerrymanders
7 in the country and the worst in Pennsylvania's history. I
8 would agree.

9 Here is what happened back then to Erie County:

10 The city of Erie, the fourth largest in the
11 State, was divided into two separate districts. What
12 happened to the constitutional prohibition against dividing
13 counties and municipalities? What about the principle of
14 keeping communities of interest together? This was just
15 one of dozens of egregious examples of Pennsylvania
16 gerrymandering.

17 In 2016, all 18 of Pennsylvania's congressional
18 districts were up for grabs. Democrats won almost
19 46 percent of the statewide two-party vote, but they won
20 only 5 out of 18 seats, less than 28 percent. In 2018,
21 after the State Supreme Court tossed out the congressional
22 map as a partisan gerrymander that favored Republicans and
23 then created its own map, Democrats made big gains, winning
24 55 percent of the two-party vote. They won 9 out of 18
25 seats, or 50 percent, quite a jump from the 28 percent just

1 2 years earlier. Yet, still after the 2020 Presidential
2 race, election experts rated Pennsylvania No. 30 out of 50
3 in a feature called *District Boundaries Index*, which
4 measures how districts are drawn in a way that unfairly
5 benefits incumbents and discriminates against minority
6 communities.

7 I want my vote to count and I want everyone's
8 vote to count, and I am not alone in that sentiment.
9 Pennsylvania's own Franklin & Marshall College in Lancaster
10 conducted a poll of voters in 2019 which showed that 7 in
11 10, or 67 percent of Pennsylvania voters, supported an
12 independent commission to draw legislative district lines.
13 This included majorities of Democrats, Independents, and
14 Republicans. Majorities of people in every part of the
15 State were in favor of an independent commission; yet,
16 their wishes were denied, and we still have politicians in
17 charge of the process.

18 I happen to very much enjoy living in a
19 democracy, but I and many others reasonably fear that our
20 democracy is in danger of disappearing due in part to
21 gerrymandering. Legislators need to change the usual
22 process of drawing congressional boundaries. Start with a
23 clean slate, drawing fresh districts to account for
24 population shifts and the growing number of Hispanic and
25 Asian Americans in Pennsylvania. Work with the Senate to

1 engage the public in redistricting. Not only ask the
2 public for their opinions, but use their opinions. Be
3 transparent throughout this process. Introduce preliminary
4 maps with enough time for the public to review them and
5 then offer feedback. Explain your rationale for
6 preliminary maps and for the final map and tell us what
7 values were used to draw the maps. You need to involve
8 both political parties so that the final proposed map comes
9 to our Democratic Governor for his signature and not his
10 veto.

11 Thank you very much for your time.

12 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN GROVE: Thank you so much.

13 And our last in-person testifier is
14 Scott Jaillet. Jaillet?

15 MR. JAILLET: Jaillet.

16 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN GROVE: Jaillet. I was so
17 close to perfect names.

18 Thank you for your service, and feel free to have
19 a seat and begin when you're comfortable, sir.

20 MR. JAILLET: First, I want to say it is an honor
21 to be here, Chairman Grove, Mr. Bonner, and the rest of the
22 Committee.

23 As a retired U.S. Navy veteran, I have lived in
24 several countries during that period of time. I have seen
25 a lot of governments that work, a lot of governments that

1 don't work, and this is a step in the right direction.
2 There has been a lot of things in the past that have not
3 been done well in Pennsylvania.

4 I'm going to step off script here a little bit
5 and do a little ad-lib.

6 Based on the minimal growth that Pennsylvania has
7 seen this year, we are a little bit behind the rest of the
8 nation. It cost us a congressional seat. We need to work
9 on that, I think, as a State, improve industry in the
10 State. It's a problem that is causing our young people to
11 leave. I can say that with a two-thirds single piece of
12 data with my own family. Two of my children left the State
13 because of jobs, and out of three of them, only one of them
14 stayed, and that person had to start their own business.
15 So we need to work on that.

16 Now to get back on script here.

17 I am a retired U.S. Navy veteran, currently
18 employed with Grove City College here as an electrical
19 engineer. I'm also the Director of the BEST Robotics
20 program here at the college. I am a borough councilman
21 here in Grove City, and I am the Vice Chair of the local
22 Council of Governments.

23 This is an occasion here that everyone should
24 consider a vital part of the nation's democracy. We need
25 to tune out all the background noise. We need to tune out

1 the political, the media, the social media, and do us right
2 for the people of this State and the nation.

3 Unfortunately, like I said before, Pennsylvania
4 lost one congressional district based on the current census
5 information we have. And the process of redistricting has
6 been thrust in your laps, even with a well-balanced growth
7 -- and I say "well-balanced," but not enough -- of 277,000
8 new citizens in this State over the last 10 years. While
9 other States have increased their population much faster
10 than Pennsylvania, we have been left with a deficit in our
11 congressional districts.

12 Currently, there are five counties in this
13 congressional district, four that are intact, one that is
14 divided amongst three different congressional districts.
15 It would be my hope and my belief that by consolidating
16 that one county, we should be able to make up the
17 difference in population requirements for this district
18 without having to divide by county lines, townships,
19 municipalities, and keeping everything contiguous. I
20 believe that is a requirement of the Pennsylvania State
21 Code, and I think it's a good requirement. We tend to keep
22 groups in a more "contiguous" area, I guess, for lack of a
23 better word.

24 We want to make sure that the populations grow.
25 We want to make sure that -- wouldn't we love to bring

1 Butler County into this particular congressional district.
2 There are other counties around that would feel that way
3 also, and I think that would be a good thing. But like I
4 said, splitting districts is not good.

5 Knowing these things, it is my hope that the
6 district will not be carved up. We don't need to divide up
7 a bunch of different areas. You know, we can go back and
8 look and remove all of the lines and start all over again
9 -- a long, tedious process. I don't think it's necessary.

10 Right now, the balance of power in Pennsylvania
11 is pretty equal, as far as I can tell. And we want to make
12 sure that all the people are represented equally, not
13 particularly based on their political standing but based on
14 their needs; and not based on their creed or color, but
15 again, on their needs, and that's a big responsibility that
16 all of you have taken on.

17 So in closing here, there will always be special
18 interest groups. They'll always disagree with any
19 decisions you guys make, and ladies, and the challenge here
20 is to block out all the white noise and make the right
21 decision for the people and make an unbiased and moral
22 decision for this district.

23 Thank you.

24 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN GROVE: Thank you, sir.

25 And that was our last testifier. If anybody from

1 the northwest region does want to submit testimony and you
2 have it with us, feel free to bring it up. Or if you want
3 to submit it online, you have until October 12th. Again,
4 October 12th to continue submitting testimony for the
5 northwest region.

6 With that, I'll turn it over to Chairman Conklin
7 for any closing remarks.

8 MINORITY CHAIRMAN CONKLIN: Thank you, Chairman
9 Grove.

10 Again, I want to thank you for bringing all of us
11 to your alma mater, Grove College and the city of Grove.
12 It is very nice of you. Thank you.

13 I want to thank those individuals that came out
14 today, both Legislators and the public, because your input
15 is so important in this process. And with that, I'm
16 anxious to continue our run around the State and listening
17 to what the people have to say.

18 Thank you.

19 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN GROVE: Thank you.

20 I also want to thank our host, Grove City, which
21 actually isn't my alma mater. Jokingly, I probably had two
22 choices as a Grove. There's Shippensburg, which has the
23 Seth Grove football stadium, and then Grove City College,
24 but I'm actually an alumni of a different small
25 Pennsylvania school.

1 I want to thank Grove City for hosting and
2 Representative Tim Bonner for hosting, and we look forward
3 to continuing this public process in Allegheny County and
4 the southwest region this week and in other regions in the
5 Commonwealth in the coming months. And I invite those in
6 attendance or viewing at home today to follow those
7 hearings as well. Again, www.paredistricting.com.

8 Thank you, and we are adjourned.

9
10 (At 10:17 a.m., the public hearing adjourned.)

11

1 I hereby certify that the foregoing proceedings
2 are a true and accurate transcription produced from video
3 on the said proceedings and that this is a correct
4 transcript of the same.

5
6
7 *Debra B. Miller*

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