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P&E REDISTRICTING PUBLIC HEARING:
REGIONAL CENTER FOR ADVANCED:
TRAINING AND TECHNOLOGY:
DANVILLE, VIRGINIA:

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October 18, 2010 7:00 p.m.

CENTRAL VI RGI NI A REPORTERS
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1	PANEL MEMBERS:	
2	DELEGATES	
3	Mark L. Cole, Chairman Spotsylvania	
4	Algie T. Howell, Jr.	
5	Norfolk	
6	Johnny S. Joannou Portsmouth	
7	Rosalyn R. Dance	
8	Petersburg	
9	Jackson H. Miller Manassas	
10	Robert B. Bell	
11	Albemarle	
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17	Daniel Marshall	10
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19	Hank Davis	13
20	Elizabeth Jones	1 4
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1 (7:12 p.m.)

The following public hearing took place at the Regional Center for Advanced Training and Technology in Danville, Virginia on October 18, 2010.

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THE CHAIRMAN, MARK L. COLE: All right.

I will call the meeting to order. I would

like to welcome everyone to the, this is the

fourth hearing of the House of Delegates

Redistricting Subcommittee. We are planning

to have at least a couple more subcommittee

meetings.

The purpose of these meetings is to gather input from experts, advocacy groups, and most importantly, the people of Virginia on the once-a-decade process of drawing new boundaries for the State Legislative and Congressional Districts.

I would just like to take a moment and let the members of the committee introduce themselves. And we will start with Rob.

MR. BELL: Delegate Rob Bell. I represent the 58th District, which is Charlottesville, so just up 29.

1 MR. MILLER: Jackson Miller. I represent the 50th House District, which is 2 the City of Manassas, the City of Manassas 3 part and parts of Prince William County. THE CHAIRMAN: I am Mark Cole. I am 5 6 chairman of the committee, and I also represent the 88th District, which includes parts of Stafford, Spotsylvania, and Fauquier 8 9 Counties. 10 MS. DANCE: I am Rosalyn Dance. And I have the 63rd District, and that is the City 11 12 of Petersburg, the County of Dinwiddie, and 13 parts of Chesterfield County. 14 MR. JOANNOU: My name is Johnny Joannou. 15 And I am in the 79th House District, which 16 encompasses a piece of Norfolk, most of 17 Portsmouth, a piece of Suffolk, and a piece of 18 Chesapeake. 19 MR. HOWELL: And I am Algie Howell. 20 represent the 90th District, which covers part 2.1 of Norfolk, part of Chesapeake, and part of 22 Virginia Beach. 23 THE CHAIRMAN: I would also like to 24 acknowledge that we have Delegate Danny

Marshall from the area here in attendance as well.

The General Assembly and Governor, as officials who submit to the voters at elections and are directly accountable to the public, are responsible for drawing legislative boundaries. That mandate is clearly spelled out in the Virginia Constitution.

This time-tested and inclusive process ensures that every Virginian has a voice in redistricting since every Virginian is represented in the General Assembly by a Delegate and a State Senator. After every census by the Federal Government, Virginia, like every other state, must draw lines for the U.S. House, the Senate of Virginia, and the House of Delegates.

Likewise, many localities must also draw lines for county boards, city council and town council seats, as well as school board districts.

The census data is used for the actual drawings of the line and it should be

available most likely in February or March of next year. That is the detailed data.

Speaker Howell and I decided to hold these public hearings to encourage greater civic awareness and facilitate more active participation by the public in Virginia's 2010 redistricting process.

At these public hearings, this subcommittee wants to gather input from the public on what principles the General Assembly and Governor should consider in using the detailed data once it becomes available to redraw the district lines.

Of course, redistricting is an endeavor presenting many challenges. It can also be a contentious process. In fact, litigation over districts drawn in 2001 after the last Federal census continued through most of the last decade in some states. But in Virginia, no Court challenge found fault with any of the districts drawn in 2001.

Nevertheless, the decisions produced by the previous litigation, whether in Virginia or across the nation, as well as the

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complicated body of law and the many players involved in redistricting, make it vital that my colleagues and I learn what is most important to Virginians before lines are redrawn and legislation is ultimately filed and passed.

The General Assembly, the Governor, the Attorney General, the U.S. Justice Department, and perhaps State and Federal judges will all have an opportunity to impact this process.

But again, before we get involved in the work of drawing lines or seeking legal opinions, the speaker and I, along with our House colleagues, want to hear from you about your priorities and your suggestions for redistricting.

As we get underway, I believe it is incumbent upon me to articulate, and I hope my House colleagues will agree with my touchstones on this very important public policy issue. The redistricting process must be fair. It must include opportunity for input from all, and serious deliberation about the outcome.

The redistricting process must create districts as nearly equal in population as is practical following the constitutional one vote one person, one vote principal. The final district maps must also comply with the law, with the U.S. Constitution, the Virginia Constitution, the Federal Voting Rights Acts and court decisions applying them.

Within those constraints, I look forward to learning from everyone giving testimony here tonight and at subsequent hearings.

Beyond those constraints, no decisions have been made. We are here to hear from you about what you believe is important in the redistricting process.

We have not prejudged the outcome. We have not made any decisions. We have no answers to questions about what districts will look like or how plans will be drafted. We want to hear from you about what we, as your elected representatives, should consider.

Now, here are several logistical requests I want to make to ensure that we have a smooth and efficient process for public

input. The staff from the Division of
Legislative Services, which are here in the
front row, has prepared a two-page handout
answering many questions about redistricting.

If you haven't picked it up it is on the table
out in the hallway by the door, and I would
encourage you to get it. That handout is
available and it includes the website where
additional information can be obtained, both
now and we plan on as the process goes forward
to update the web page as we go along.

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In order to respect time from everyone who has come tonight to provide input, we will rely on that handout to answer many questions. We want to maximize participation by citizens who are here. Our only objective tonight is to hear from you. We won't be answering a lot of questions or engaging in debates.

I would ask each of you who have come to speak to try to keep your remarks brief. As a courtesy to others, please try not to repeat what others have said so that we can try to accommodate as many speakers as possible. I have asked the staff to keep time if it looks

like we are going to run long.

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I also invite anyone who wishes to submit written comments for the subcommittee by giving a hard copy to the clerk here tonight or you can send an e-mail, regular mail, or fax when you have a chance.

The details on how to submit comments are included in one of the handouts at the sign-in table.

Finally, please be sure if you come up to speak, please be sure to identify yourself. We have a court reporter here, so please make sure you identify yourself when you testify to the subcommittee.

So first I will call on Delegate

Marshall. I understand you want to address
the committee.

MR. MARSHALL: Thank you so much,
Mr. Chairman, and other members for making the
trip to Southside. As you have noticed, we
don't have the traffic situation that some of
you have. I think we've already had a comment
from Mr. Miller, Delegate Miller here, how
nice it is here in Southside. We have many,

many things that are nice here. Less traffic is certainly one of them. But we want to thank all of you for being here. I would like to recognize a few people in the audience. We have Hank Davis here, who is Chairman of the Pittsylvania County Board of Supervisors.

Hank, if you could raise your hand.

We also have Brenda Bowman. Brenda is the LA for Charles Poindexter. And you have my person who does all the work, Mary Franklin back there. Mary, if you would raise your hand.

Again, I want to thank all of you all for being here. I am not going to necessarily comment so much on the redistricting. I want to talk to you about Southside, Virginia and what we are trying to do with this area.

If you, maybe if you got here a little bit early you saw the shining building up on the hill there. That is called the Institute for Advanced Learning and Research. That building was built with no tax dollars, state taxes. It was built with tobacco settlement funds. What they do there is they do

research. One of the things they do research in there is plants.

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And they right now are doing research on plants for over in Virginia Beach area there is a large commercial nursery there who is getting them to do research to see how they can get more yield with their plants.

Another thing that they are doing up on the hill is research as far as different plants for biofuels. They are doing Miscanthus, high-growth poplars and those type of things. They actually do the tissue labs there and go out in the ex-tobacco fields and grow this. The whole point of this, what we are trying to do is just reinvent an economy.

Here we have an unemployment rate of 14 percent. You go just 30 miles to our west where Martinsville is located and they hit a high of 22 percent this past summer. Although we don't have the traffic, we would like to have some traffic down here because that traffic is people who are going and coming from jobs.

And so again, I want to thank you all

for being here. If there is anything I can do
to help your being here, let me know. Thank
you so much. There is nobody on the list.

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THE CHAIRMAN: Now, I hope some of you all came here to talk to us. If anybody else would like to address the subcommittee please come forward and identify yourself.

Otherwise, this is going to be a real quick public hearing.

MR. DAVIS: I am Hank Davis, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors of Pittsylvania

County. I think I have one remark that some, bothers people in this area, and that is we have approximately a thousand prisoners in our medium security prison here that were transferred here from the State of Pennsylvania. If there is any way on this earth to mitigate that as a -- I don't know how we will handle it from a Board of Supervisors standpoint when we redistrict for our supervisor seats. But then you have got to move on up to the House seats and to the Senate seats and the Congressional seats.

You know, to me, they are not able to

1 vote, and you know, I hope there is some way, of course, you've got a little bit of leeway between districts, but that might be one thing 3 to take into consideration when you look at, particularly when you are looking at the House 6 seats and Senate seats, so bear that in mind. That is something that could greatly affect our area. 8

> THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. Would anybody else like to address the committee?

MS. JONES: Good evening. My name is Elizabeth Jones. I am branch secretary for the Pittsylvania County NAACP. I am also the youth advisor for the NAACP, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

I just want to refer attention to the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The preclearance requirements are now being bought out in some localities. Some localities do not have to, any longer go through the DOJ, the Department of Justice, for preclearance.

I know you will not be able to answer

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1 any questions regarding what procedures they will have for redistricting, but our county, 2 Pittsylvania County, still has the 3 preclearance requirement. And I just wanted to bring that to your attention that many of 5 6 the localities, as they redistrict, will be required to get preclearance from the Department of Justice, which our organization 9 supports. THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. Anybody else would like to address the

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.

Anybody else would like to address the committee? I will make it easy on you, you don't have to come down to the podium, just stand up and speak from where you are. Would anybody like to address the committee?

MR. BELL: We would like to hear from you. We came down here to hear you. We are serious about that.

THE CHAIRMAN: I see we have another one of the area delegates showed up. If you would just introduce yourself to everybody here.

MR. MERRICKS: Donald Merricks. I am representing most of Pittsylvania County, part of Henry County, most of the City of

Martinsville. Good to see you guys. THE CHAIRMAN: Good to see you. If there is no further comment, I am going to --well, if there is no further comment I am going to declare the Public Hearing closed. Thank you very much for coming out. (7:28 P.M.)THE PUBLIC HEARING WAS CONCLUDED. 

## 1 C E R T I F I C A T ECOMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA 2 COUNTY OF ROANOKE 3 I, Katherine P. Ford, Notary Public in and for the Commonwealth of Virginia, at Large, do hereby 5 6 certify that the Hearing on October 18, 2010 was by 7 me reduced to machine shorthand in the presence of the witness, afterwards transcribed by me by means of 9 computer, and that to the best of my ability the 10 foregoing is a true and correct transcript of the 11 Hearing. 12 I further certify that this Hearing was taken 13 at the time and place specified in the foregoing 14 caption. I further certify that I am not a relative, 15 16 counsel or attorney for either party, or otherwise 17 interested in the outcome of this action. IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand 18 at Roanoke, Virginia on 2010. 19 20 2.1 KATHERINE P. FORD, RPR NOTARY PUBLIC No. 166385 22 My Commission expires February 28, 2011. 23 24

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