SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF	F THE UNITED STATES
LINDA H. LAMONE, ET AL.,)
Appellants,)
v.) No. 18-726
O. JOHN BENISEK, ET AL.,)
Appellees.)

Pages: 1 through 70

Place: Washington, D.C.

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10	Washington, D.C.
11	Tuesday, March 26, 2019
12	
13	The above-entitled matter came on for
14	oral argument before the Supreme Court of the
15	United States at 11:25 a.m.
16	
17	APPEARANCES:
18	
19	STEVEN M. SULLIVAN, ESQ., Solicitor General,
20	Baltimore, Maryland;
21	on behalf of the Appellants.
22	MICHAEL B. KIMBERLY, ESQ., Washington, D.C.;
23	on behalf of the Appellees.
24	
25	

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1	PROCEEDINGS
2	(11:25 a.m.)
3	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: We'll hear
4	argument next in Case 18-726, Lamone versus
5	Benisek.
6	Mr. Sullivan.
7	ORAL ARGUMENT OF STEVEN M. SULLIVAN
8	ON BEHALF OF THE APPELLANTS
9	MR. SULLIVAN: Mr. Chief Justice, and
10	may it please the Court:
11	I'd like quickly to try to reorient
12	the Court to Maryland's case and then, if I
13	can, address some of the concerns that I heard
14	in the argument that you just had.
15	In this case, the Court should reverse
16	and vacate for three reasons. The First
17	Amendment retaliation test that was adopted
18	a single test was used here fails to provide
19	a manageable standard because it does not give
20	courts and legislators the means to distinguish
21	between excessive political considerations and
22	those that have been deemed constitutionally
23	acceptable.
24	JUSTICE KAGAN: Was was this an
25	excessive political consideration?

1	MR. SULLIVAN: I don't think it was,
2	Your Honor. Whether you the Court may like
3	it or not, this is the norm. For states where
4	one party receives more than 60 percent of the
5	vote in congressional elections, those states
6	have a line up and see
7	JUSTICE KAGAN: Well, if that's right,
8	then your defense is not really that we can't
9	tell the difference between excessive and
10	non-excessive because, under any measure, this
11	is excessive, isn't it? I mean, you'd only
12	need 10,000 votes to to do the the
13	population measure that that Baker requires,
14	and instead map makers moved 66,000 Republicans
15	out of the district, 24,000 Democrats into the
16	District, flips the composition of the district
17	from 47 percent Republicans and 36 percent
18	Democrats to, instead, 45 percent Democrats and
19	34 percent Republicans, effectively ensuring
20	that Republicans will never win this seat again
21	and that and that Maryland, which has about
22	35 percent Republicans, is going to have one
23	Republican House member for the foreseeable
24	future. How is that not excessive?
25	MR. SULLIVAN: There's a number of

- 1 things wrong with that, Your Honor,
- 2 respectfully. One is it starts from the
- 3 perspective that we take one district and we
- 4 assume that it's the whole universe. It's like
- 5 the famous New Yorker cartoon; all you see is
- 6 New York buildings and not the rest of the
- 7 country. Maps are formed piecing together
- 8 parts of the entire state.
- 9 This one, the Sixth District, was
- 10 heavily influenced by the decision that had
- 11 nothing to do with partisan politics, and that
- was to remove a crossing across the Chesapeake
- 13 Bay that was instituted --
- 14 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: That -- the stated
- 15 goal was seven/one.
- MR. SULLIVAN: For some, it was. But
- 17 it was a goal --
- 18 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: The governor and
- 19 others.
- JUSTICE KAGAN: Well, for some, the
- 21 governor, the speaker.
- JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: I mean, I don't
- 23 think you should run away from the obvious. I
- 24 mean, the crossing the bay thing is not very
- 25 persuasive, given all the evidence that this

- 1 was just seven/one. And, you -- you know,
- 2 you've got Easton grouped in with Carroll
- 3 County, Talbot County, Wicomico County grouped
- 4 in with west of Baltimore. That's just -- as
- 5 opposed to just crossing the bay, when
- 6 everyone's saying we want seven/one. I don't
- 7 -- I just don't know, in response to Justice
- 8 Kagan's question, you should run away from the
- 9 obvious.
- 10 MR. SULLIVAN: Well, I don't think
- it's running away to say that there were a lot
- of other factors that -- that had to do with
- 13 this. The change in the First District that
- 14 resulted from the bay crossing changed a
- 15 competitive district that Democrats had
- actually been able to win to a heavily leaning
- 17 Republican district that Democrats --
- JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: Well, sure, to
- make the others all the other way, and to get
- from six/two to seven/one or from five/three or
- 21 six/two to seven/one, you --
- 22 MR. SULLIVAN: Well --
- JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: -- you get the
- 24 sixth and eighth, both Democratic, the first is
- 25 going to be Republican for the foreseeable

- 1 future, as Justice Kagan says, but it's going
- 2 to be seven/one. That's the stated goal.
- 3 That's the goal that's effectuated.
- 4 MR. SULLIVAN: Well, to get to that,
- 5 you have to discount other statements in the
- 6 record, which you can't do on summary judgment,
- 7 such as Governor O'Malley's statement that,
- 8 given the population growth in the western part
- 9 of the central part of the state -- Montgomery
- 10 County, primarily, had the largest growth --
- 11 you're going to see the most changes out the
- 12 I-270 corridor. He also said that.
- So you'd have to say, well, we're
- 14 getting in the --
- 15 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: And the I-270
- 16 corridor is a community of interest?
- 17 MR. SULLIVAN: It is. That was
- 18 established in this record. It's from
- independent sources that have nothing to do
- 20 with --
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Well, they should
- 22 have put it in the Eighth District then.
- MR. SULLIVAN: What's that?
- 24 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: If the idea was to
- 25 unify the I-270 corridor, they could -- I look

- 1 at the map, and it's very simple, put it in the
- 2 Eighth District.
- 3 MR. SULLIVAN: Well, that would be an
- 4 injury according to Plaintiffs' own complaint,
- 5 because they say packing is an injury that's
- 6 remediable. And that would be packing the
- 7 Democrats in -- that's a heavily Democratic
- 8 area that had more growth than any of the
- 9 surrounding areas in the entire state, the most
- 10 growth right there.
- 11 And so it had to go somewhere, and
- north was a reasonable direction for it to go.
- JUSTICE BREYER: Yes, but --
- MR. SULLIVAN: Then the Eighth
- 15 District went north.
- 16 JUSTICE BREYER: -- suppose,
- 17 hypothetically, to get away from these facts,
- 18 that what we had used the three-part test that
- 19 you just heard. One, there are 42 bishops
- 20 before whom they swear that they did this just
- 21 to help the Democrats. Now we look at the map
- they used and the map, by the way, showed in
- 23 state-wide elections, governor, the Republicans
- won. But 42 bishops say, they swore; in other
- words, it's indisputable.

1 Second, that this will, in fact, make 2 a difference of who -- how many Republicans 3 there are. And, third, that it's absolutely 4 durable, and there we get the greatest 5 staticians -- statisticians in the universe in 6 there, okay? 7 Now imagine this is -- I've 8 exaggerated enormously, but if that were true, 9 then would you say this Court should intervene? 10 MR. SULLIVAN: I'm not sure I understand all of that, and we may have an --11 12 JUSTICE BREYER: In other words, if it's absolutely indisputed that there was a 13 14 clear and absolute intent to do this just so the Democrats could get the district. Number 15 16 two, it is indisputed this will have an effect 17 of giving this district to the Democrats, and 18 number three -- it's a big effect. And, number 19 three, it will happen for the next 20 years. 20 Okay? So we got all three parts, I think, if I 21 understand it correctly. 22 On that assumption, would you say this 23 Court should intervene? 24 MR. SULLIVAN: I don't know that I can 25 because, Justice Breyer, you expressed the need

- 1 to limit it to the extreme circumstance.
- 2 JUSTICE BREYER: Well, I just pictured
- 3 a --
- 4 MR. SULLIVAN: If you have that
- 5 circumstance, then you're going to have to
- 6 intervene in Arkansas, Kansas, Massachusetts,
- 7 Oklahoma, Alabama, Kentucky, Tennessee, and
- 8 Utah, all states where more than 60 percent of
- 9 the votes are cast for one party. That's in
- 10 the record at 871 and 1012. It was established
- and was unrebutted that in states that have a
- 12 similar political makeup to Maryland, you end
- 13 up with a congressional delegation that looks
- 14 very similar to Maryland.
- So, if you're concerned about limiting
- 16 the Court's intervention to the extreme
- 17 circumstance, at least under the current state
- of affairs in these United States, you would
- 19 not be limiting it to extreme. You would be
- 20 saying get ready, Arkansas, Kansas,
- 21 Massachusetts, Oklahoma, Alabama, Kentucky,
- 22 Tennessee.
- JUSTICE KAGAN: Well, why -- why
- should we assume, Mr. Sullivan, that everything
- 25 would stay the same? If the Court said that

- 1 something was unconstitutional, don't we
- 2 usually assume that people change their
- 3 behavior when the Court sets down a
- 4 constitutional rule?
- I mean, the reason why, in this case
- 6 and in the case just before you, all these
- 7 politicians are bragging about the amount of
- 8 partisanship they can put into the maps is
- 9 because they think it's perfectly legal to do
- 10 so.
- 11 If the Court said it's not legal to do
- so, presumably, some actors would change their
- 13 behavior. No?
- MR. SULLIVAN: Yes, Your Honor. And
- we certainly would in Maryland because every
- time there's a redistricting, before the
- 17 redistricting, the legislators and the governor
- are briefed on all the legal requirements, as
- 19 happened here. And that would happen in
- 20 Maryland and I'm sure in other states as well.
- 21 JUSTICE ALITO: What would be an
- 22 example of a situation where a -- the drawing
- of a district would be impermissible, would
- 24 constitute impermissible political
- 25 gerrymandering in your opinion?

- 1 MR. SULLIVAN: Well, we've said in our 2 brief, certainly, as indicated in the prior 3 argument where the minority vote getters 4 dictate the results for the majority, that 5 would be a situation where certainly the Court 6 ought to be able to remedy that. 7 JUSTICE GINSBURG: How does the 8 majority -- minority get to do that? I mean, 9 they have to -- this has to start with a 10 legislature, both houses being controlled by the same party. I don't understand how a 11 12 minority could force its will. 13 MR. SULLIVAN: Well, if -- in 14 Maryland, there's history for this. If the --15 if the people are upset with the way the 16 redistricting happens, they can take it to 17 referendum. 18 And in 1962, a Democratic governor, 19 legislature, both houses controlled by 20 Democrats, adopted a redistricting plan and it
- 24 JUSTICE GINSBURG: And then what

was taken to referendum and the people of

Maryland rejected it at referendum. And that's

25 happened?

in our record.

21

22

- 1 MR. SULLIVAN: Then a new map was
- drawn. Presumably, the people were happy with
- 3 that.
- 4 Here, in this case, this map was also
- 5 taken to referendum and the people
- 6 overwhelmingly approved it, 1.5 million voters,
- 7 including in counties where Republicans
- 8 outnumbered Democrats.
- 9 JUSTICE GINSBURG: It has been
- 10 suggested from reading what was on the ballot
- 11 that most citizens wouldn't understand at all
- 12 what they were voting for.
- MR. SULLIVAN: Three things, Your
- 14 Honor. First, that wasn't litigated in this
- 15 case. It was not even mentioned by -- by the
- 16 plaintiffs in their -- in their complaint or in
- their motion for summary judgment.
- 18 It was litigated in a court of
- 19 competent jurisdiction in Maryland state court,
- and our intermediate appellate court determined
- 21 that the language was sufficient, especially
- when read in light of the individual notices
- that each voter received before the election
- 24 explaining the referendum question.
- 25 And in the Washington State Grains

- 1 case, this Court said that such notices
- 2 eliminate any threat of voter confusion. So
- 3 that's really just not a reason for --
- 4 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: You -- you brought
- 5 it up. You think most -- you're going to
- 6 dispute Justice Ginsburg and say most voters
- 7 knew what they were voting for there?
- 8 MR. SULLIVAN: I'm going to agree with
- 9 our intermediate appellate court, which had a
- 10 more full record before it than Justice
- 11 Ginsburg does.
- 12 But, also, this Court has -- has not
- 13 presumed that voters don't understand. In the
- 14 Anderson case on which plaintiffs rely, the
- 15 court said that people -- the court's going to
- 16 presume that people are informed, that they
- 17 read the paper.
- 18 And, here, you'll find at page 70 of
- Joint Appendix unrebutted testimony that The
- 20 Washington Post ran three lead editorials
- 21 urging the people of Maryland to reject this
- 22 plan.
- 23 So it was not a secret ballot. It was
- 24 -- it was simply a big issue in the state and
- 25 the people overwhelmingly approved it, and

- 1 we've heard --
- JUSTICE BREYER: Well, what I read
- 3 there is the exact words of the thing they
- 4 voted for or against, that this referendum,
- 5 petition, "establishes the boundaries for the
- 6 state's eight United States congressional
- 7 districts based on recent Census figures, as
- 8 required by the United States Constitution."
- 9 MR. SULLIVAN: Right.
- 10 JUSTICE BREYER: All right? Now is
- 11 that sufficient?
- 12 MR. SULLIVAN: If that were the only
- thing the voters knew, but this Court presumes
- that they read the paper, they watch TV, they
- talk to each other, they have forums, as were
- 16 held here, they read through the notice.
- 17 JUSTICE BREYER: But if this were the
- 18 only thing, if I thought that at least a large
- 19 number of them, that this was the only thing
- 20 they knew, which is what you just mentioned,
- 21 then is it sufficient?
- 22 MR. SULLIVAN: No, it's not sufficient
- 23 for this Court to conclude that there was a
- 24 problem because its precedent says you have to
- 25 have proof that there was actual confusion.

- 1 And we have no proof in this case because it
- 2 was not litigated at all.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Am I understanding
- 4 you to be saying that partisan gerrymandering
- 5 is always non-justiciable?
- 6 MR. SULLIVAN: No. No, Your Honor,
- 7 not at all. And as I started to outline what
- 8 is at stake in this case, it's just the
- 9 specific test that our court applied at
- 10 plaintiffs' urging --
- 11 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: All right. So
- that you've heard the argument in the Rucho
- 13 case. Are you saying that those tests are
- 14 better, just this one's not? I'm not quite
- 15 sure what your -- your -- your position is.
- MR. SULLIVAN: They may be, but we --
- in our case, we've only had a chance to
- 18 litigate and have an experience with the one
- 19 test that our court used, so we don't really
- 20 have that benefit of being able to tell you
- 21 with the informed level of analysis that
- 22 counsel did in the prior argument.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Well, but, you
- 24 know, you've had time to --
- MR. SULLIVAN: Yes.

- 1 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: And I'm assuming
- 2 you would have. Are you okay with any of the
- 3 Rucho tests?
- 4 MR. SULLIVAN: I -- I'm not going to
- 5 take a position, Your Honor. It's -- it's not
- 6 in our case. And, typically, what the Court
- 7 has said in Vieth, it's the plaintiff's
- 8 obligation to come up with the standard.
- 9 Plaintiff came up with the standard that they
- 10 wanted to use in our case and it was used by
- 11 the district court.
- 12 And just we're here to argue that that
- was -- that standard is not manageable.
- 14 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: You start your
- brief by saying that you agree partisan
- 16 gerrymandering poses a threat to democracy.
- 17 MR. SULLIVAN: Yes. This Court has
- 18 said that.
- 19 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: So what -- what
- 20 should we -- what should the test be then?
- MR. SULLIVAN: Well, I -- again, I
- 22 can't speak beyond what's in our record. I
- 23 believe there are tests that can be -- can be
- 24 adopted and this Court can come up with them.
- 25 JUSTICE KAGAN: What is the thread

- 1 that --
- 2 JUSTICE ALITO: Well, is it your -- is
- 3 it your position that this -- what -- what was
- 4 done in Maryland would be okay under any test,
- 5 but you're not going to tell us which of the
- 6 possible tests is the right test, or are you
- 7 just saying the wrong test was done, was used
- 8 here, so we should send it back to -- for the
- 9 Court to find some other test which you're not
- 10 going to identify and then apply that to the
- 11 facts of your case?
- MR. SULLIVAN: Well, it would be for
- 13 --
- 14 JUSTICE ALITO: I -- I just don't
- understand what you're saying.
- 16 MR. SULLIVAN: -- it would be for
- 17 plaintiff to identify it if you keep with the
- 18 analysis in Vieth. But this Court in Davis v.
- 19 Bandemer held that a -- an equal protection
- 20 standard is justiciable.
- 21 And that was reaffirmed by a majority
- of the Justices who spoke in Vieth, and
- 23 reiterated in the Arizona state legislature
- 24 case.
- 25 And in this very case, we wouldn't

- 1 still be here if the Court hadn't found in the
- 2 first go-around that some form of First
- 3 Amendment standard is not foreclosed by this
- 4 Court's precedent; otherwise, the Court would
- 5 have had to have affirmed dismissal.
- JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: Well, I'll ask you
- 7 the question that I asked Mr. Clement, which
- 8 is, why can't the Constitution be interpreted
- 9 to require something close to a proportional
- 10 representation in your view?
- MR. SULLIVAN: Well, in my personal
- view, it could be, but I don't think you need
- 13 to get that far to -- to say that you could use
- 14 proportionality.
- 15 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: It could be? You
- 16 -- you -- you're saying the Constitution could
- 17 be interpreted to require something close to
- 18 proportional representation?
- 19 MR. SULLIVAN: Justice --
- JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: Then you would
- lose, wouldn't you?
- MR. SULLIVAN: No, if proportionality
- is interpreted in light of the reality that, as
- 24 both experts testified in this case or have
- 25 written at least, when one party gets a super

2.0

- 1 majority of votes, they tend to get a higher
- 2 percentage of seats than they would get from
- 3 the straight vote count.
- 4 And as Dr. McDonald, plaintiff's
- 5 expert, has written, if there is any
- 6 correspondence between those two, it's merely
- 7 accidental because, typically, it's going to be
- 8 a higher seat count.
- 9 So the Court has acknowledged that
- 10 this can be justiciable, and I think the Court
- 11 can come up with a standard.
- 12 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: It's -- it --
- 13 I'd like to have you discuss the First
- 14 Amendment argument a little bit. I mean, it
- 15 does seem that this is a situation where the
- 16 state is taking retaliatory action against
- 17 Republicans who were in that district and had a
- 18 more effective vote, and penalizing them for
- 19 exercising their right to vote by moving them
- 20 out to a different district.
- 21 What -- what's wrong with that
- 22 argument?
- MR. SULLIVAN: Well, as we've
- 24 explained in our brief, retaliation, that whole
- analysis, has never been used in the

- 1 legislative realm.
- 2 And to say that legislation results
- 3 because the party that had the more votes was
- 4 retaliating against the other parties' views
- 5 has -- is a position that's been repeatedly
- 6 rejected in the cases we cited since the
- 7 O'Brien case from this Court.
- 8 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well, you say
- 9 we haven't done it in the past, but we're being
- 10 asked to do a lot of things we haven't done in
- 11 the past, and -- and it's because there's been
- 12 a change in how redistricting has been done.
- 13 And I guess I don't understand. I
- mean, if you have, I don't know, any other kind
- of state employee and you don't like her
- 16 exercise of First Amendment rights, and you
- 17 fire her, there -- there's pretty well
- 18 established analysis for approaching that case.
- 19 And I don't know why the same wouldn't reply --
- apply here.
- MR. SULLIVAN: Well, in the employment
- 22 context, you can't really -- unless it's a
- 23 policy-making employee, you can't take into
- 24 account the employee's political views pretty
- 25 much at all.

2.2

1 But, in legislating, political views 2 have to be taken into account. People have to 3 speak and have to express their political views 4 in -- whenever there's a legislature enacting 5 it or when the people of the state enacted it, 6 as happened here. 7 So you're in two different contexts, 8 one where -- where speech is prohibited to be a 9 basis for action in the employment context, and legislation where speech is inherent and 10 necessary in order to reach the result. 11 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well -- well, 12 but speech against other legislators or against 13 14 voters? I mean, are -- are -- you think it's all right to retaliate against the Republicans 15 from the District that were moved out because 16 17 of how they voted? 18 MR. SULLIVAN: I -- I don't think 19 that's a fair characterization of what 20 legislators do. And, here, it's a question of 21 about who are you retaliating against. 22 Washington County before the 23 redistricting voted for the Republican, Mr. Bartlett, overwhelmingly. 24 25 The first election held after

- 1 redistricting, the same county, totally intact,
- 2 presumably, the same voters that had voted in
- 3 2010, voted for the Democratic candidate.
- 4 So drawing those kind of distinctions
- 5 in Maryland is very difficult. The evidence in
- 6 the record of across -- across-the-aisle voting
- 7 was very strong.
- 8 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Are you
- 9 suggesting that the redistricting here was --
- 10 was not successful?
- 11 MR. SULLIVAN: Well, if -- if you say
- 12 the intent was -- was a partisan intent, yes,
- it was successful, except you still have a
- 14 district that's capable of voting Republican.
- 15 The sixth District voted
- 16 overwhelmingly for our Republican governor,
- 17 Larry Hogan. So it's not a district that's
- 18 locked in for Democrats.
- JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: Well, that then --
- 20 JUSTICE BREYER: Why don't you improve
- 21 that?
- 22 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: You can't use the
- 23 government.
- JUSTICE BREYER: Why not say that
- 25 would be a good defense? But -- but what you

2.4

- 1 can't do is, if a party uses a map for its
- district, which is a statewide map, you used a
- 3 statewide map, the Republicans won two
- 4 statewide elections for governor, and so even a
- 5 party with 60 percent of the votes cannot
- 6 intentionally -- they have to prove it, you
- 7 know -- intentionally draw these maps just so
- 8 they increase their majority beyond two-thirds
- 9 of the seats.
- I mean, I picked those numbers out.
- 11 You can use other numbers if you want. But you
- 12 get the idea.
- MR. SULLIVAN: Right.
- 14 JUSTICE BREYER: The idea is looking
- into the minds of the legislators, which is
- 16 difficult --
- 17 MR. SULLIVAN: Uh-huh.
- JUSTICE BREYER: -- not impossible,
- 19 and then applying it to extreme situations, and
- 20 I just used numbers like two-thirds and so
- 21 forth and majorities in order to show it's not
- impossible to generate analogous numbers from a
- 23 constitution.
- 24 MR. SULLIVAN: Your Honor, the problem
- with using the intent as your guide, as here,

- 1 intent was the dominant factor that the Court
- 2 relied on, is because, in -- in Davis versus
- 3 Bandemer, the Court pointed out how easy it is
- 4 to show partisan intent because that's the air
- 5 that politicians breathe. It's how they get
- 6 where they are.
- 7 And in Vieth, a majority of the
- 8 justices agreed that some partisan effort to
- 9 affect the vote through the redistricting is
- 10 going to be present in every redistricting.
- 11 JUSTICE GINSBURG: But, when the
- 12 legislature and the government, the legislative
- leaders and the governor, say we want 7 to 1,
- we want to shrink Republican representation by
- one, map makers, achieve that for us, I mean,
- is there any genuine doubt that that was the
- aim from the beginning, to shrink Republican
- 18 districts by one?
- 19 MR. SULLIVAN: I think there is doubt.
- 20 I think, if you read the entire record,
- including what Governor O'Malley said elsewhere
- in places not quoted by Plaintiffs or the
- 23 district court, where he said that what he
- 24 wanted was for the constitution, the statutes,
- 25 and all case law to be complied with, and after

- 1 all of that, he would hope that a Democrat
- 2 would be elected in that district.
- 3 JUSTICE BREYER: So you may be able to
- 4 prove it. I'm just saying what you'd have to
- 5 prove. But it's not the case, in my mind, that
- 6 every politician considers politics and so
- 7 forth up in the air.
- 8 Of course, you're right, they do, but
- 9 there's a classical reason that they should.
- 10 And the classical reason is to produce
- 11 stability in a legislature so that small shifts
- of voting behavior don't make big shifts in
- 13 legislatures. But there's no -- if that's the
- reason, that doesn't apply in the case where
- one party already controls 60 percent of the
- 16 seats.
- 17 MR. SULLIVAN: Well, we do have a fair
- 18 amount of stability in Maryland or --
- 19 JUSTICE BREYER: Yes, I know. That's
- 20 a problem because -- I'm not saying it's a
- 21 solution. You have the stability. So your
- 22 response was: Well, politicians will consider
- 23 politics. Yeah. Of course.
- 24 But our problem is to say when that's
- too much and why isn't it too much?

1 MR. SULLIVAN: Well, I think in other 2 areas of your First Amendment law that 3 Plaintiffs have cited for you, for example, 4 Crawford versus Marion County Board of 5 Elections, didn't really care very much, the 6 Court didn't, about the intent. It's let's look at -- let's look at the burdens that are 7 8 alleged, identify them, measure them, how much 9 of a burden is on how many people, and then 10 make the call whether the state's justification 11 overcomes that. 12 We didn't have that analysis here. There was no measuring. It's any practical 13 14 difference, is what the Court said, is 15 sufficient to trigger invalidating a map. 16 any practical difference is going to happen to voters in every single redistricting. Somebody 17 is going to have a difference because of the 18 19 line change. 20 JUSTICE ALITO: Now you say that 21 partisan gerrymandering is justiciable. Under 22 which provision of the Constitution? First 23 Amendment, the Equal Protection Clause, the

MR. SULLIVAN: Well, I will say under

Elections Clause, or something else?

24

2.8

- 1 the Equal Protection Clause because that's this
- 2 Court's precedent.
- JUSTICE ALITO: That's the only one?
- 4 MR. SULLIVAN: And First Amendment is
- 5 also present in this very case.
- 6 JUSTICE ALITO: So both of them?
- 7 MR. SULLIVAN: At least law of the
- 8 case in this particular case.
- 9 JUSTICE ALITO: Both of them?
- MR. SULLIVAN: What's that?
- 11 JUSTICE ALITO: Both of them? Your
- 12 answer is both of them?
- MR. SULLIVAN: Both -- both of them
- 14 are potentially sources for a standard.
- 15 JUSTICE ALITO: And what is the test
- 16 under -- let's go to the First Amendment.
- What's your test under the First Amendment?
- 18 MR. SULLIVAN: I don't have a specific
- 19 test to propose, but, as I indicated in my
- 20 answer to Justice Breyer, I think anything the
- 21 Court can do to get away from an intent-based
- 22 standard where you have a realm, politics,
- 23 where political aims are just endemic.
- 24 JUSTICE ALITO: Do you think the First
- 25 Amendment and equal protection dictate the same

- 1 standard or different standards?
- 2 MR. SULLIVAN: I -- I would imagine
- 3 they would have to be different in some --
- 4 because you have completely different bodies of
- 5 -- of case law that the Court has developed in
- 6 those two, so I would imagine there would have
- 7 to be some difference between the two.
- JUSTICE ALITO: Okay.
- 9 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: You don't --
- 10 JUSTICE ALITO: And what -- what's the
- 11 test under the -- you can't tell me what the
- 12 test is under the First Amendment. What is the
- 13 test under the Equal Protection Clause?
- MR. SULLIVAN: It's intent, effects,
- 15 and injure -- intent and effects.
- JUSTICE ALITO: What -- what degree of
- 17 intent?
- 18 MR. SULLIVAN: Well, I tried listening
- 19 to the prior argument, but I -- I -- I lost
- 20 count of the tally of what -- where it came
- 21 out. But, in racial gerrymandering, it's a --
- it has to be a preponderance.
- JUSTICE ALITO: But, if you're back
- 24 before the district court, what are you going
- 25 to tell the district court? We should win, but

- 1 are you going to try to explain to the district
- 2 court why you should win?
- 3 MR. SULLIVAN: Well, first of all, the
- 4 other arguments -- one of the other arguments
- 5 we make is how -- given the Plaintiffs' delay,
- 6 which this Court found last time, puts us in a
- 7 category of cases that we've cited where courts
- 8 have determined that where there is delay and
- 9 you're this close to the census, it's not
- 10 equitable and it's no longer in the public
- interest to redraw the map because the same
- 12 kind of disruption that Plaintiffs compare --
- 13 complain about, you redraw the lines, you
- 14 change all our associational interests, you
- 15 affect our representation. That's going to
- happen with redrawing the map, and then you're
- 17 going to have redraw the map again in -- within
- 18 a two-year span. So we would --
- 19 JUSTICE ALITO: You think there's
- 20 going to be a different map drawn after the
- 21 2020 census?
- MR. SULLIVAN: There will be a
- 23 different map. Our laws require it.
- 24 I would like to reserve whatever time
- 25 I have left. Thank you, Your Honor.

1 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you, 2 counsel. 3 Mr. Kimberly. 4 ORAL ARGUMENT OF MICHAEL B. KIMBERLY 5 ON BEHALF OF THE APPELLEES MR. KIMBERLY: Thank you, Mr. Chief 6 7 Justice, and may it please the Court: 8 I'd like to begin with just a very 9 succinct statement of what our claim is and 10 what our theory is. When state officials use redistricting to burden a particular group of 11 12 voters because of their political views, with the express goal of making it harder for those 13 14 -- for that group of voters to win elections, and when that goal is achieved so that group of 15 16 voters is ordinarily doomed to usual electoral defeat under the map, and when the state cannot 17 come forward with a legitimate governmental 18 19 interest to justify the burdens imposed, the 20 map has to be neutrally redrawn. That, in a nutshell, is our claim. 21 22 And all of the evidence in our case proves that the 2011 redistricting in Maryland violated 23 that theory. 24 25 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: It's -- it's a

- 1 -- it's a test that would be met in every
- 2 particular, except for the one about durability
- 3 that you mentioned. In every redistricting,
- 4 partisanship is going to play a significant
- 5 role, and because you can always do it to one
- 6 degree or another, it is always going to have
- 7 an effect.
- 8 It seems to me that your focus is
- 9 entirely on durability.
- 10 MR. KIMBERLY: Well, I -- I do think
- 11 all that the Court needs to say in this case is
- that dooming the targeted voters to electoral
- 13 failure is enough to state a claim.
- I -- I think what's helpful, Your
- 15 Honor, is that coupling that burden with intent
- 16 makes sense because that is the intent that all
- 17 map drawers who set out to gerrymander harbor.
- 18 They -- gerrymanderers don't set out to fiddle
- 19 at the margins; they set out to fix electoral
- 20 outcomes.
- 21 And that is exactly what the evidence
- in this case shows. They don't set out to make
- 23 it slightly easier for their candidates to win
- 24 or slightly more difficult for their opponents
- 25 to win. They set out to change the electoral

- 1 outcomes.
- 2 And using metrics like the Democratic
- 3 performance index in this case and the partisan
- 4 voter index under the Cook Political Report,
- 5 all of the evidence is that, as of the time
- 6 that the map was enacted, the map drawers
- 7 understood that this previously safe Republican
- 8 district would become a safe Democratic
- 9 district.
- 10 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: How do you see
- 11 your test? I mean, you introduced the Gingle
- 12 factors, which the district court didn't rely
- on here. You say implicitly it did, but it
- 14 really doesn't anywhere mention Gingle --
- 15 Gingles.
- 16 How does your test differ from the
- 17 Rucho test? From either the Women League or
- 18 the Common Cause?
- 19 MR. KIMBERLY: Well, I actually don't
- see a whole lot of daylight between our test
- 21 and the tests that are presented in those
- 22 cases. I'll take --
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Except that your
- test doesn't look at durability at all.
- MR. KIMBERLY: Well, it doesn't look

- 1 at durability as such, but the -- the focus
- 2 last term was on the difference between vote
- 3 dilution that would make a practical difference
- 4 versus vote dilution that would result in a de
- 5 minimis impact.
- 6 And I think what would be more helpful
- 7 to focus on, rather than what counts as de
- 8 minimis, is to what -- is to focus on what
- 9 counts as a practical burden. And we think the
- 10 great range of cases in which practical burdens
- 11 that would be actionable arise, it's going to
- 12 be the situation that I was just explaining to
- 13 the Chief Justice, that it's where the map
- drawers set out to doom the targeted voters
- 15 because of their politics to usual electoral
- 16 failure under the map as drawn.
- 17 That is, I think, in -- in essence,
- 18 the -- the range of cases in which a practical
- 19 difference will be made. And I think it
- 20 overlaps substantively with the League of Women
- 21 Voters' approach towards durability. And --
- 22 JUSTICE ALITO: If your -- if your
- 23 claim is based on the First Amendment, doesn't
- that necessarily mean that partisanship cannot
- 25 be taken into account at all, not one iota?

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               MR. KIMBERLY: No, I don't think so,
 2
      Your Honor.
 3
               JUSTICE ALITO: Why is that -- why is
 4
      that -- that not so? Have we ever said that
 5
      there's such a thing as benign viewpoint
 6
      discrimination under the First Amendment?
 7
               MR. KIMBERLY: I -- I --
 8
               JUSTICE ALITO: Or, you know, you can
 9
     discriminate on the basis of viewpoint, but it
10
      just has to be small?
11
               MR. KIMBERLY: I -- I think most of
12
      this work is done at the -- at the
13
      justification stage. And this might mirror
14
      something like Anderson/Burdick balancing. It
15
     doesn't have to.
               But our view is, as long as
16
      consideration of -- of the way that people have
17
     voted in the past and intent to make it more
18
19
     difficult for those voters to achieve electoral
20
      success is in service of a legitimate
21
      government interest, then it would be
22
     permissible.
23
               JUSTICE ALITO: What would be a
24
     potentially legitimate government interest?
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MR. KIMBERLY: I think it would be

- 1 pursuit of balanced maps, as the Court said in
- 2 Gaffney against Cummings. I think it would be
- 3 pursuit of competitive districts. I think
- 4 there are a range of circumstances where --
- 5 JUSTICE ALITO: Okay. What does a --
- 6 what is a balanced map? What does that mean?
- 7 MR. KIMBERLY: Well, I think balanced
- 8 map in the Gaffney sense, which is the sense
- 9 that I mean it, is -- is a proportional map.
- 10 So, in this case, it might be a six/two
- 11 delegation or a five/three delegation.
- 12 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: But, if you -- if
- 13 you set out to draw a five/three here, say we
- want to be proportional, we want to be fair, so
- we're going to have five Democratic districts
- and three Republican districts, the Democrats,
- individual Democrats that you sort into the
- 18 Republican districts are going to be able to
- 19 say we're being deprived of our ability to be
- 20 treated without reference to our partisan
- 21 affiliation, our political affiliation, right?
- MR. KIMBERLY: Well, I -- yes. And I
- 23 think that's how the --
- 24 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: So doesn't that
- 25 show that your test -- but you said doing a

- 1 five/three would be okay.
- MR. KIMBERLY: No, no, that's right.
- 3 So they would --
- 4 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: Despite the fact
- 5 it would still treat individual voters, it
- 6 would penalize them because of their political
- 7 affiliation.
- 8 MR. KIMBERLY: But, Your Honor, that
- 9 is exactly the approach this Court takes in --
- in its ballot access cases. As long as -- so
- in the -- in the hypothetical that you've
- described, I think Democratic voters may well
- have stated a prima facie case under the first
- 14 two prongs, but, under the justification prong,
- 15 the state comes back and says, although true,
- maybe they admit it, maybe they don't, but,
- 17 although true, we were --
- 18 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: That --
- 19 MR. KIMBERLY: -- considering voting
- 20 --
- JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: -- that shows --
- 22 I'm sorry to interrupt -- that shows what the
- 23 driver, I think, of your test, though, the
- 24 overwhelming driver is proportional
- 25 representation. And I guess I'll ask you the

- 1 question I've asked others.
- 2 Do you think the Constitution requires
- 3 proportional representation or something close
- 4 to proportional representation?
- 5 MR. KIMBERLY: I don't think it does
- 6 require it, Your Honor, and I do not think it
- 7 drives our request at all.
- 8 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: Why don't you
- 9 think it requires it?
- 10 MR. KIMBERLY: Well, I -- I don't
- 11 see a textual indication in -- in the
- 12 Constitution itself that suggests it.
- JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: Equal Protection
- 14 Clause does not suggest to you something where
- political groups are treated roughly equally?
- 16 MR. KIMBERLY: I -- Your Honor, if
- that's the way that you're inclined to think
- 18 about it, I'm certainly --
- 19 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: No, I'm just
- 20 asking --
- MR. KIMBERLY: -- happy to have you --
- 22 have you rule that way.
- JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: -- I'm asking why
- 24 --
- 25 (Laughter.)

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1
               JUSTICE KAVANAUGH:
                                   I'm asking --
 2
      everyone seems to be running away from --
 3
               MR. KIMBERLY: Well, I --
 4
               JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: -- challenging the
 5
      maps but running away from proportional
 6
      representation, even though, as you can tell
      from the questions, there's a suggestion that
 7
 8
      really it all comes back to proportional
 9
      representation in some respects.
10
               MR. KIMBERLY: Your Honor, I quess
11
      I'll -- I'll -- I'll answer the question this
12
      way. One, I think -- I think the First
      Amendment is probably the better approach for
13
14
      explaining why it might favor proportional
15
      representation. But, of course, there are a
16
      range of factors having nothing to do with
      discrimination against groups of voters on the
17
18
     basis of their political views that might yield
      a non-proportional map. And so I --
19
20
               JUSTICE ALITO: You think the First
21
      Amendment might require or even tolerate the
22
      regulation of speech, and in this instance, the
23
      speech is the votes, for the purpose of
24
     providing a proportional representation of
25
      viewpoints?
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1
               MR. KIMBERLY: So, as I was about to
 2
      say, I think not. I don't think it requires
 3
      it.
           I think --
 4
               JUSTICE ALITO: Does it tolerate it?
 5
               MR. KIMBERLY: I -- I think -- yes, I
 6
      think that's the inevitable conclusion of
 7
      Gaffney against Cummings.
 8
               JUSTICE ALITO: So if -- if there is a
 9
      -- a place in a public park, to get back to the
10
      classic example where -- that is open to
      speakers, the -- the -- the city that controls
11
12
      that could say we want to make sure we have
      equal speakers on both sides of this question,
13
14
      so we're going to -- you know, we're going to
15
      -- we're going to balance the speakers? They
16
      can do that?
               MR. KIMBERLY: Your Honor, I don't
17
18
      think ruling in our favor requires the Court to
19
      say that in the least. What we're saying is --
20
               JUSTICE ALITO: Well, you're saying
21
      this is -- this is a free speech case, right?
22
      And you're saying it's okay to regulate speech
23
      for the purpose of providing proportionality in
24
      some sense?
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MR. KIMBERLY: No, Your Honor, what

- 1 I'm suggesting is, after this Court's decision
- 2 in Gaffney against Cummings, we accept as given
- 3 that it is a legitimate state interest to
- 4 pursue proportional representation in
- 5 redistricting.
- If you take that as a given, then the
- 7 sort of claim that Justice Kavanaugh was
- 8 describing would, in fact, be justified under
- 9 the third prong. But let me emphasize our
- 10 claim is not an ends-oriented claim. It is a
- 11 process-oriented claim.
- 12 Our view is, under -- under the facts
- as we've proven them, we are entitled to a
- 14 neutrally-redrawn map in which the map -- in
- which the legislature does not use this kind of
- data with an intent to burden particular groups
- of voters because of their political views.
- 18 JUSTICE GORSUCH: Counsel --
- 19 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: You would
- 20 think it would be -- you'd agree that if you
- 21 had a partisan-free map, you said is required,
- that would be the first time in history, right?
- 23 MR. KIMBERLY: A neutrally-drawn map,
- 24 you mean?
- 25 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Yes, neutrally

- 1 drawn, without -- without regard to partisan --
- 2 partisanship at all.
- 3 MR. KIMBERLY: I can't say for certain
- 4 whether as a matter of fact it would be the
- 5 first time in history. I would accept that
- 6 today the accepted approach does not require
- 7 neutrality, but I think that's precisely the
- 8 problem.
- 9 So just -- I think just to finish the
- 10 point, we don't -- our position is not, having
- 11 proved our claim, we're entitled to a redrawing
- of the Sixth Congressional District so that it
- 13 favors Republicans.
- Our point is that we are entitled to a
- 15 redrawing of the Sixth Congressional District
- in a manner that does not select a map that
- disfavors them because of their political
- 18 views. It may --
- JUSTICE BREYER: Well, that's -- look,
- 20 there is a classical political science view.
- 21 It's very easy, draw state districts and
- imagine populations such as the state's 42
- 23 percent -- 48 percent Republican, 52 percent
- 24 Democrat. All right?
- Now, suddenly, 3 percent change,

- 1 2.1 percent change. Now, if there's no
- 2 politics involved whatsoever, I think you can
- 3 show that that means 100 percent change in the
- 4 legislature, depending. Now that cannot be a
- 5 recipe for American government.
- I mean, if you believe it can, fine,
- 7 but you'd have to show that to me. And,
- 8 therefore, people resist to a degree your
- 9 statement that, well, no consideration, call it
- 10 a stability consideration, but it's still the
- 11 same consideration. So I think many people's
- 12 problems and what we're searching -- what I'm
- searching for anyway, is for you to say, okay,
- I see a stability interest there, but how much
- is too much?
- 16 And now we've heard from one side that
- 17 said: Here is how you find out. You find out
- 18 by looking at the intent of the legislature
- 19 about what the effect is and about whether it's
- 20 durable.
- MR. KIMBERLY: Right.
- 22 JUSTICE BREYER: Do you -- do you want
- 23 to just say that's it and it's the same
- 24 argument? That might work.
- MR. KIMBERLY: I think it is

- 1 effectively the same argument, Your Honor. And
- 2 -- and just to draw a -- a counterdistinction,
- 3 the vote dilution in degree that took place in
- 4 the Eighth Congressional District was roughly
- 5 the same as the vote dilution in degree that
- 6 took place in the Sixth Congressional District.
- 7 The vote dilution in the Sixth
- 8 Congressional District resulted in a map drawn
- 9 such that Republicans were -- in the Sixth
- 10 Congressional District, were doomed to usual
- 11 electoral failure. Not so in the -- it's the
- 12 inverse. It's Democrats in the Eighth
- 13 Congressional District. Not so in the Eighth
- 14 Congressional District.
- JUSTICE GORSUCH: What -- what do we
- 16 --
- 17 MR. KIMBERLY: So, yes, I think -- I
- 18 think, as a practical matter, this -- the
- 19 distinction that the district court below drew
- 20 between vote -- deliberate vote dilution that
- 21 makes a practical difference and doesn't is in
- 22 effect the same.
- 23 And we would be perfectly comfortable
- 24 with the Court saying that the way that we know
- it's too much is if it results in a durable

- 1 partisan gerrymander that will resist changes
- 2 in politics over the coming decade. That is,
- 3 of course, exactly what is borne out in the
- 4 evidence in this case.
- JUSTICE GORSUCH: What do we do about
- 6 the referendum? The whole of the people had a
- 7 chance to speak. Now I -- I understand that
- 8 there are questions about how good a referendum
- 9 that was.
- 10 But would your test require this Court
- 11 to declare unconstitutional gerrymanders that
- 12 have been approved by the people through
- 13 referendum themselves? And could this
- 14 referendum process be used otherwise too?
- MR. KIMBERLY: I don't think so, Your
- 16 Honor. In -- in my view, the referendum is a
- 17 red-herring. This could not -- if this had
- been a racial gerrymander and it had been put
- 19 to popular vote and that popular vote had
- 20 approved this map as drawn, it would still be a
- 21 racial gerrymander.
- 22 JUSTICE GORSUCH: I -- I completely
- 23 accept that answer, right? So -- so, in
- 24 effect, you are asking the Court, no matter how
- 25 good the referendum might be, no matter how

- 1 much the people themselves might approve these
- 2 lines, this Court has to tell them it -- it's
- 3 unconstitutional?
- 4 MR. KIMBERLY: On the facts of this
- 5 case, yes. I think that's correct.
- I want to come back to the question --
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: I'm sorry.
- 8 MR. KIMBERLY: -- of justiciability --
- 9 I'm sorry.
- 10 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: What do you see as
- 11 -- on the facts of this case? What makes it so
- 12 here?
- MR. KIMBERLY: Well, I -- for one, it
- 14 was -- the intent that led to the adoption of
- 15 this map in particular is undisputed. This is
- 16 not a circumstance where you have a -- you
- 17 know, a menu of maps put to the public vote and
- 18 the public are being asked to exercise their
- 19 independent discretion on which map to choose.
- It isn't the public and the place of
- 21 the legislature. The legislature has acted.
- 22 It has done so in an unconstitutional way.
- 23 That --
- 24 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Well --
- 25 MR. KIMBERLY: -- that Democrats and --

1 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: I -- I -- because 2 of the uniqueness of this. This is --3 MR. KIMBERLY: Yes. No, that's right. 4 I'm just saying on the facts of this case. 5 That's right. 6 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: On the facts of 7 this case, whatever the public maps might have 8 been in an open situation were different than 9 what happened here? 10 MR. KIMBERLY: That's right. 11 would be a --12 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: That's what you're 13 saying? 14 MR. KIMBERLY: That would a very different case, Your Honor. 15 JUSTICE GORSUCH: Well, but -- but 16 just to clarify, I -- and I just want to make 17 18 sure I understand your position, I'm supposing 19 that the people fully understood the -- the 20 gerrymander that took place and fully 21 understood that there was an alternative of 22 pure proportional representation, and it would 23 be great, all right. And they rejected it in

favor of gerrymander. Now, you may say that

that's outlandish and that isn't what happened

24

- in Maryland, but let's just suppose it is.
- 2 You -- it would still be incumbent, on
- 3 your view, on a court to declare that -- the
- 4 gerrymander unconstitutional?
- 5 MR. KIMBERLY: I want to be clear that
- 6 I understand the hypothetical. The electorate
- 7 are being presented with an option, you -- you
- 8 get proportional representation or you get this
- 9 map; which do you choose?
- 10 JUSTICE GORSUCH: Yeah.
- 11 MR. KIMBERLY: And a majority of
- 12 Democrats who do better under this map choose
- 13 this map?
- 14 JUSTICE GORSUCH: Right.
- MR. KIMBERLY: I think that's --
- 16 JUSTICE GORSUCH: Unconstitutional --
- 17 MR. KIMBERLY: -- unconstitutional.
- 18 JUSTICE GORSUCH: -- and we must say
- 19 so, yeah.
- MR. KIMBERLY: And I don't think the
- 21 Court should -- should feel especially troubled
- about that, for exactly the reason that the map
- 23 itself here --
- 24 JUSTICE GORSUCH: Sure.
- MR. KIMBERLY: -- I think, is

- 1 unconstitutional.
- I want to come back to the question of
- 3 justiciability. I think the question here is
- 4 not just whether there is a potential political
- 5 solution. That doesn't answer the question
- 6 whether this Court bears an obligation to
- 7 enforce the First Amendment in these
- 8 circumstances.
- 9 The question here is whether the
- 10 theory that we have put forward before the
- 11 Court as applied in these circumstances
- 12 entirely defies judicial judgment so that it
- 13 cannot be called a legal question at all.
- 14 And with respect to my friends on the
- other side, I just don't think there's any
- 16 basis for saying that. We have this Court's
- 17 opinions in its racial gerrymandering cases, in
- its racial vote dilution cases, in its ballot
- 19 access cases, its First Amendment retaliation
- 20 cases, and its political patronage cases. In
- 21 all of those contexts, this Court finds
- 22 consistently reliable, justiciable standards
- 23 for deciding exactly the kinds of burdens that
- 24 are being imposed here.
- 25 And if they are manageable in that

1 context, they are manageable in this context. 2 JUSTICE ALITO: Does your test --JUSTICE KAGAN: Am I not --3 4 JUSTICE ALITO: -- apply only to 5 districts that are drawn for a partisan to --6 to favor one political party over another, or 7 could it apply to retaliation for some other 8 reason? 9 For example, suppose the objection of 10 the mapmakers -- mapmakers is not that a particular -- that this district had voted 11 12 Republican, but it was that the particular person in a district, the representative in 13 14 that district, was a pain in the rear and so 15 they wanted to get rid of that person. 16 Would -- would that be prohibited by the First Amendment? 17 18 MR. KIMBERLY: Not under the theory 19 that -- that we've put forward. I --20 JUSTICE ALITO: Well, how could you 21 square that with your retaliation theory? MR. KIMBERLY: Well, I want to be 22 23 clear --24 JUSTICE ALITO: So I vote for this 25 person because this guy is -- this is the

- 1 person that I want. And the mapmakers say we
- 2 want this person out of the House, so we're
- 3 going to draw the map so that person is
- 4 excluded. The -- they're --
- 5 MR. KIMBERLY: So that --
- 6 JUSTICE ALITO: -- diluting my -- my
- 7 -- I want to vote for this -- for my
- 8 representative and they're diluting my vote.
- 9 They're taking away my opportunity to elect the
- 10 person that I want.
- 11 MR. KIMBERLY: I -- so to begin with,
- 12 the First Amendment retaliation framework that
- we've referenced in our briefing is just that;
- it's a framework. We don't think there's any
- 15 particular magic in the word "retaliation"
- 16 itself.
- 17 The question presented in this context
- 18 by the First Amendment is whether the state
- 19 officials are deliberately burdening particular
- 20 groups of voters because of the way those
- voters have expressed themselves. That does
- 22 not to me sound -- sound like the scenario that
- 23 you're describing where the -- the concern in
- the cases, the behavior of a particular
- 25 individual -- and -- and I might add, in

- 1 addition, that drawing an individual out of a
- 2 district does not prevent that individual from
- 3 continuing to run as a candidate in that
- 4 district.
- 5 So I'm -- I'm just not sure that
- 6 the --
- 7 JUSTICE KAGAN: Mr. Kimberly --
- 8 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: How much does --
- 9 go ahead.
- 10 JUSTICE KAGAN: -- Kimberly, I'm
- 11 wondering how easy it would be for plaintiffs
- to prevail under your standard in the future?
- 13 Suppose we accepted your test and we made clear
- 14 that this kind of behavior was unconstitutional
- so you didn't have all these people bragging
- about how much partisan gerrymandering they
- 17 were doing, right?
- 18 What makes your case so easy is that
- 19 everybody was completely upfront about what
- 20 they were doing, as they were in the North
- 21 Carolina case as well, because they think it's
- legal, so let's say what we're doing.
- 23 But if we say it's not legal and that
- 24 kind of intent evidence just disappears because
- you don't find silver bullets like that very

- often, then what kind of effects evidence would
- 2 you need to prove your claim?
- 3 MR. KIMBERLY: Well, the --
- 4 JUSTICE KAGAN: Now, you have all that
- 5 intent evidence; don't worry. This is not
- 6 affecting your case.
- 7 MR. KIMBERLY: Yeah.
- 8 (Laughter.)
- 9 JUSTICE KAGAN: But suppose people act
- 10 like normal people and they just stop saying
- 11 all these things, and the next case comes
- 12 along. What would you need to show intent and
- 13 effects and causation?
- MR. KIMBERLY: Well, I think to show
- intent, it would be the same sort of evidence
- that you would need in racial gerrymandering
- 17 cases. This Court deals with that question all
- 18 the time. I think that -- that part of the
- 19 test would --
- 20 JUSTICE KAGAN: I mean, it would
- 21 really raise the bar, wouldn't it?
- 22 MR. KIMBERLY: It -- it would, Your
- 23 Honor. It would --
- 24 JUSTICE KAGAN: I mean, you would have
- 25 to show really dramatic effects to be able to

- infer intent, wouldn't you?
- 2 MR. KIMBERLY: Yes, I think that's
- 3 right.
- 4 JUSTICE KAGAN: So, in fact, this
- 5 would be the outlier cases.
- 6 MR. KIMBERLY: I -- I think --
- 7 JUSTICE KAGAN: This is not --
- 8 MR. KIMBERLY: -- as a practical
- 9 matter --
- 10 JUSTICE KAGAN: -- in every case in
- 11 the universe, every district in the universe.
- MR. KIMBERLY: Not -- not at all, Your
- 13 Honor, and --
- 14 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well, why just
- 15 -- why would you have to show dramatic evidence
- of effects before you can infer intent?
- 17 MR. KIMBERLY: Well, I -- I think as a
- 18 general matter, showing intent when you're
- 19 talking about specific intent rather than
- 20 general intent, which is the standard that the
- 21 district court below applied and we think is
- the correct standard, I think raises the bar
- very high when you don't have direct evidence
- of -- such as the admissions that we have on
- 25 our record here. You've got to show --

Τ	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: So you think
2	if you have the redistricting controlled by one
3	political party and it comes out that the
4	districts reflect a significant benefit for
5	that particular party, that's not enough to
6	infer an intent to draw the districts with an
7	eye to the partisan effect?
8	MR. KIMBERLY: Well, I think here,
9	Your Honor, that that may or may not be so.
10	I think here, though, the question of intent
11	dovetails with the question of justification.
12	If in any of those if in a
13	circumstance where you have a single-party
14	control of the government and you have a badly
15	imbalanced map that might suggest improper
16	intent, as long as the state can come forward
17	with some legitimate justification for the
18	imbalance as it's drawn, and as the Court has
19	said in its racial gerrymandering cases, the
20	sorts of political considerations in in map
21	drawing are myriad and malleable and they
22	involve a delicate balancing of all of these
23	factors, all the state has to come forward with
24	is some explanation for the map as it's drawn
25	and the hurdeng imposed identified by the

- 1 plaintiffs --
- JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: So, if you have
- 3 the same -- if you have the record here with no
- 4 intent evidence, to pick up on Justice Kagan's
- 5 question, and it was five/three, any chance of
- 6 prevailing on that?
- 7 MR. KIMBERLY: We don't have evidence
- 8 of intent and it's a five/three map, I think
- 9 that's a very difficult case.
- 10 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: How about six/two?
- 11 MR. KIMBERLY: I think that's also
- 12 very difficult.
- 13 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: How about
- 14 seven/one?
- MR. KIMBERLY: I think, seven/one, it
- 16 becomes easier to prove intent. There's no
- 17 question that the -- that the results of --
- 18 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: And that's because
- 19 it deviates from proportional?
- 20 MR. KIMBERLY: It deviates for -- from
- 21 -- from proportional, but I -- I think the
- 22 question also, as I was saying about the third
- 23 prong, is whether there are neutral
- justifications, and they might be things like
- 25 geography. Here, obviously, Maryland's

- 1 geography has a very --
- JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: That's to justify
- it, but it would be a problem? The seven/one
- 4 is a problem. The five/three almost certainly
- 5 not a problem. Which I think has got to be
- 6 right.
- 7 MR. KIMBERLY: Well, I think that's
- 8 right, but, to be clear, that isn't to say that
- 9 our test tends towards proportionality. It's
- 10 just to say what --
- 11 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: Well, I -- I think
- if Justice -- to play out Justice Kagan's
- 13 hypothetical, which I think is a good one,
- 14 there would be no intent to have evidence in
- 15 the future, or at least to be hidden. It would
- 16 be harder to discover.
- 17 So then it would be a lot on effects,
- and five/three, it would be hard to prove.
- 19 Seven/one is easy to prove. Well, that sounds
- 20 like something where something that's balanced,
- 21 to use your words, which is the word you used,
- five/three would be okay, because it's close to
- 23 the proportion of Democrats and Republicans in
- 24 the state.
- MR. KIMBERLY: Yeah.

1 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: Something that's 2 really extreme, to use Justice Kagan's words, 3 would not be okay, seven/one, because it 4 deviates so far from the proportion of --5 MR. KIMBERLY: Right, it's just --6 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: -- Democrats and 7 Republicans. 8 MR. KIMBERLY: -- to say that where 9 there is smoke, you are probably going to find 10 fire. And if you don't see smoke, you're probably not going --11 12 JUSTICE GORSUCH: Is another way --13 MR. KIMBERLY: -- to find fire. 14 JUSTICE GORSUCH: -- of putting the 15 test: I know it when I see it? 16 (Laughter.) MR. KIMBERLY: Certainly not, Your 17 18 Honor. 19 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: So it sounds 20 like you might be comfortable with Justice 21 Breyer's two-thirds limit? Five/three is 22 probably okay. Seven/one is not. I mean, that 23 suggests some sort of, you know, rough 24 mathematical threshold. 25 MR. KIMBERLY: Your Honor, I don't

- 1 think a mathematical threshold is -- is
- 2 probably the way to go about it in large part
- 3 because every state is different and, you know,
- 4 how the geography plays out in every state is
- 5 different.
- 6 And what other sorts of justifications
- 7 there may be, I'm sure will vary. As I said,
- 8 the Court has recognized --
- 9 JUSTICE KAGAN: It just seems, Mr.
- 10 Kimberly, that what you are saying is that once
- 11 people stop putting these statements on the
- 12 record, which they will, that what your test
- will deliver is a way of going after the worst
- of the worst. And this happens to be one of
- 15 them.
- 16 MR. KIMBERLY: I -- I think that's
- 17 right, Your Honor. And if I may also come back
- 18 to -- to a -- to a point that you raised
- 19 earlier. I think we have to give legislators
- 20 due credit.
- 21 If this Court says that this kind of
- 22 discrimination against groups of voters is
- 23 unlawful, I have faith certainly that most
- 24 legislators will listen and abide this Court's
- 25 teachings.

1 And so the -- there is not enough time 2 in between now and the 2020 Census to litigate 3 any new cases. And so the next round of 4 litigation that this Court sees after adopting 5 a standard in this case or in North Carolina 6 will be after the 2020 redistricting. 7 And presuming that state legislators 8 abide this Court's teachings, there is every 9 reason to think that the incidents of extreme 10 partisan gerrymandering will be significantly 11 reduced. 12 The only reason we see it as often as we do today in what is extreme, seems less 13 14 extreme, is only because this Court has not 15 identified a -- a standard to rein in the 16 practice. JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: Can I isolate the 17 18 role of geography with this question? 19 MR. KIMBERLY: Certainly. 20 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: Suppose you have 21 crazy line drawing, something similar to what 22 -- what is in Maryland, but it ends up in 23 five/three districts. Any problem there? partisan intent on the record but it's -- the 24 25 lines are really misshaped but it's five/three.

```
1
               MR. KIMBERLY: Well, it wouldn't be a
 2
      First Amendment problem. It wouldn't be a
 3
      problem under our test. And, indeed, what the
      evidence shows is there are a lot of reasons to
 4
 5
      think you might still see that.
 6
               JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: Okay. And if it
 7
      ends up seven/one, I think the way -- I'm just
 8
      trying to understand your test -- if it ends up
      seven/one, the state is in trouble, unless the
 9
10
      state could show actually this fits with county
      boundaries and town boundaries and city
11
     boundaries and actually the geography makes
12
      sense and we don't want to divide the Bay and
13
14
      all kinds of things like that, right?
15
               MR. KIMBERLY: Yeah. I mean, I -- to
16
      be clear, I don't think there are actually any
      such justifications in this case.
17
18
               JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: Right. I --
19
               MR. KIMBERLY: Yeah.
20
               JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: I take your point
21
      on that. They also made a -- so that's helpful
22
      on the geography. They made a point -- I just
23
      wanted to give you a chance to respond -- on
24
      the Sixth District not being durable because
25
      Governor Hogan won. Can you respond to that?
```

1 MR. KIMBERLY: Yes. It's the 2 difference between what the experts call 3 endemic elections and exogenous elections. 4 What map drawers look at is the way 5 that voters vote in congressional elections 6 when they're looking to rig congressional 7 elections. 8 There -- on a number of occasions 9 there have been suggestions that legislatures 10 are going to act as legislatures. And the framers of the constitution, having committed 11 12 the Elections Clause to legislatures, we have 13 to expect they will act that way. 14 That would be a reason to overturn 15 this Court's ballot access cases. In -- in devising access to ballots and how ballots are 16 comprised, there is no reason to think that --17 18 that those in power wouldn't be expected to use 19 that authority to regulate elections to their 20 own partisan ends. And yet we do not accept 21 that they may. That is the upshot of this 22 Court's valid access cases. 23 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well, I mean, 24 history has a little bit of, perhaps,

significance there. Gerrymandering has been

- 1 part of American history from the beginning, as
- 2 was pointed out in the previous case.
- 3
 I'm not sure, maybe it has been, I
- 4 don't know that interference with ballot access
- 5 is on the same level of the air they breathe,
- 6 as -- as your friend on the other side put it.
- 7 MR. KIMBERLY: Your Honor, that may be
- 8 true, but since the beginning of the Republic,
- 9 gerrymandering has been recognized also as a
- 10 constitutional offense.
- 11 Indeed, the 1812 editorial coining the
- 12 term "gerrymander" called it a constitutional
- 13 offense.
- I think everybody has understood that
- 15 it is a constitutional violation --
- 16 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well --
- MR. KIMBERLY: -- from the beginning.
- 18 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: -- your best
- 19 authority is a newspaper editorial?
- 20 (Laughter.)
- 21 MR. KIMBERLY: Well, certainly --
- 22 certainly not, Your Honor. The -- the legal
- 23 tools for this Court to -- this Court and
- 24 Article III courts generally to address this
- 25 problem haven't emerged until modern times.

- 1 The incorporation of the First 2 Amendment of the states happened in the 1940s. 3 This Court's ballot access and political 4 patronage cases were decided in the '60s and 5 '70s. 6 I don't think it's any answer to those 7 JUSTICE ALITO: What does 8 9 incorporation have --10 MR. KIMBERLY: -- cases to say that 11 they're ahistorical. 12 JUSTICE ALITO: -- to do with 13 congressional districts? 14 MR. KIMBERLY: I'm sorry? 15 JUSTICE ALITO: What does 16 incorporation have to do with congressional
- MR. KIMBERLY: Well, congressional
- 19 districting is an act by state legislatures.
- 20 If state legislatures are cabined by the First
- 21 Amendment in how they exercise that authority,
- 22 the First Amendment has to be a limit on their
- authority.

districts?

- JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: You -- you --
- MR. KIMBERLY: And that wasn't

1 recognized by this Court until the 1940s. 2 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: You said 3 gerrymandering has been recognized as 4 unconstitutional. 5 But are you defining -- if -- if 6 gerrymandering is defined as deviation from 7 what you would otherwise get with proportional, 8 Justice O'Connor and Justice Kennedy have made 9 very clear in various opinions that the 10 constitution contains no such quarantee. 11 MR. KIMBERLY: Your Honor, what we 12 take to be partisan gerrymandering is the singling out of groups of voters for disfavored 13 14 treatment in redistricting and using 15 redistricting in turn to make it -- to doom those voters to usual electoral defeat. 16 That is the original understanding of 17 18 what a gerrymandering was in 1812 and in the 19 18th Century before that. And we think that is a clear violation of the First Amendment. 20 21 I --I'll just say very briefly, the 22 other explanations that General Sullivan has 23 put before the Court explaining the -- the 24 shape of the Sixth District are all flatly

disproved by our alternative map, which is

- 1 reproduced at JA 787.
- 2 That map respects all of the political
- 3 considerations elsewhere throughout the state
- 4 and does not result in flipping the district to
- 5 democratic control.
- 6 Thank you.
- 7 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,
- 8 counsel.
- 9 Five minutes, Mr. Sullivan.
- 10 REBUTTAL ARGUMENT OF STEVEN M.
- 11 SULLIVAN ON BEHALF OF THE APPELLANTS
- MR. SULLIVAN: Your Honor, I hope not
- 13 to take all of that time.
- I think what we've heard, if nothing
- else, confirms that the plaintiff's test and
- 16 the district court's test does not provide the
- answer the Court is looking for, a test that
- 18 can tell us when the redistricting has gone too
- 19 far, and -- and --
- 20 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Why not? You have
- 21 intent, which on this case they -- all the
- leaders said yeah, that's what we want to do,
- reduce the Republican representation by one.
- 24 And then they tell the map makers to
- 25 achieve that result. The result is achieved.

- 1 And, as a result of the map, this will continue
- 2 into the future.
- Why isn't that --
- 4 MR. SULLIVAN: Well, there is a number
- of things wrong with that. The -- into the
- future is not proven at all. The map that was
- 7 developed, the expert testimony agreed that it
- 8 was a competitive map. Independent sources
- 9 said it was a plus two Democratic.
- 10 And in 2010, the last election before
- 11 the redistricting, Democrats across the country
- won 52 congressional seats in districts that
- were more Democratic than the sixth District in
- 14 Maryland.
- So what these legislators were looking
- 16 at was not a map that was a lock for a future
- domination by Democrats in the Sixth District.
- 18 It was a very vulnerable map, if you look at
- 19 the results of the 2010 elections, where
- 20 Republicans swept to victory in district after
- 21 district with more Democratic components than
- 22 the Sixth District.
- 23 But the reason that this test doesn't
- work, as counsel revealed, is that it abandons
- 25 what this Court or members of this Court,

- 1 including Justice Kagan in her Gill
- 2 concurrence, have identified as essential evil
- 3 of gerrymandering, which is the politicians
- 4 getting one over on the people and not letting
- 5 the people's will control what the map is going
- 6 to be.
- 7 In this case the people's will was --
- 8 was expressed in a referendum overwhelmingly
- 9 favoring the map. And counsel says this Court
- 10 needs to invalidate that result, which would be
- 11 directly contrary to what this Court has said
- it's trying to get at in gerrymandering, which
- is the polls deciding where their district
- lines are going to be and not the people
- deciding who they get to vote for.
- 16 JUSTICE ALITO: Do you mean if there's
- 17 a referendum on a map that is -- that heavily
- 18 favors one party, and the campaign -- and --
- 19 and this is a state in which that party is the
- 20 majority party -- and the campaign in favor of
- 21 the referendum has approved this map because
- 22 this will really favor the party that you like,
- and the majority votes for that, that would not
- 24 be -- that would be different from the
- 25 legislature doing it?

1 MR. SULLIVAN: Well, in the rhetoric, 2 the discord as used in the gerrymandering area, 3 yes, it would, because it's the people's will 4 being expressed, which is the harm that 5 politicians who gerrymander are subordinating 6 the people's will. That didn't happen here. 7 JUSTICE ALITO: So when the 8 legislature does it, and the -- the members of 9 which are elected by the people, that's one 10 thing, but when people do it directly, it's a different thing? 11 12 MR. SULLIVAN: It is a different thing. Now, I'm not saying that the result can 13 14 always be constitutional. This Court has held 15 that, for example, the people could not approve 16 a map with unequal population. That -- that's 17 one of this Court's precedents. But where the -- where the debate is 18 19 whose First Amendment rights are going to 20 prevail, these seven plaintiffs -- it's not a 21 class action -- or the 1.5 million Marylanders 22 who voted to approve this plan, I think that's 23 a much more difficult question that was even -that even attempted to a -- for an answer to be 24

provided in this case.

1	There was no attempt by the Court			
2	below to consider the referendum or its impact			
3	whatsoever. And so this test cannot be the			
4	answer to how do we protect the people and			
5	their ability to ensure that politicians do not			
6	draw the districts to serve the politicians			
7	instead of the people.			
8	Unless there are any further			
9	questions, thank you.			
10	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,			
11	counsel. The case is submitted.			
12	(Whereupon, at 12:24 p.m., the case			
13	was submitted.)			
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