

NEW YORK STATE
LEGISLATIVE TASK FORCE ON DEMOGRAPHIC RESEARCH AND
REAPPORTIONMENT

PUBLIC HEARING
CONGRESSIONAL AND STATE LEGISLATIVE REDISTRICTING

Tuesday, February 14, 2012
Syracuse City School District
Henninger High School - Auditorium
600 Robinson Street, Syracuse, NY
3:00 p.m.

Demographic Research and Reapportionment, 2-14-2012

TASK FORCE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SENATOR MICHAEL F. NOZZOLIO, Co-Chair

ASSEMBLY MEMBER JOHN J. MCENENY, Co-Chair

SENATOR MARTIN M. DILAN

ASSEMBLY MEMBER ROBERT OAKS

DEBRA LEVINE

ROMAN HEDGES

WELQUIS LOPEZ

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2 (The public hearing commenced at 3:00
3 p.m.)

4 ASSEMBLY MEMBER JOHN J. MCENENY, CO-
5 CHAIR, NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATIVE TASK FORCE ON
6 DEMOGRAPHIC RESEARCH AND REAPPORTIONMENT: Could
7 I ask you to take your seats now? We'd like to
8 get on with the hearing. Thank you for your
9 patience.

10 [background noise]

11 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: It's your
12 turf. Do you want to start this one?

13 SENATOR MICHAEL F. NOZZOLIO, CO-CHAIR,
14 NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATIVE TASK FOR ON
15 DEMOGRAPHIC RESEARCH AND REAPPORTIONMENT: Yeah,
16 I'd rather start tomorrow.

17 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Good
18 afternoon. Thank you for attending this public
19 hearing of LATFOR, the New York State legislative
20 taskforce on redistricting. My name is Jack
21 McEneny. I represent parts of Albany County and
22 City in the New York State Assembly, and I am the
23 co-chair from the New York State Assembly. I am
24 joined with my co-chair from Central New York,

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2 Michael Nozzolio, and I'll pass this over to
3 Senator Nozzolio in a moment. On the panel, to
4 my immediate right I expect to be joined shortly
5 by someone who is just wrapping up the last
6 public hearing on the budget, and that's Robert
7 Oaks from Yates County, I believe, and to my far
8 right, the citizen member of the panel from the
9 assembly is Dr. Roman Hedges, and to continue,
10 I'll pass this on to my co-chair, Senator
11 Nozzolio.

12 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you Assemblyman
13 McEneny. Thank you Assemblyman McEneny. It's a
14 pleasure to be with you again. This is our
15 twenty-first hearing, the second time we have
16 been in Syracuse as a taskforce taking testimony
17 from those citizens who are interested in the
18 redistricting process.

19 We've covered a lot of miles since our
20 last visit to Syracuse, and that the plan that
21 puts forward is a plan that we welcome your input
22 on. There is no such thing as a perfect plan and
23 that we have been conducting these hearings,
24 there are nine that have been scheduled after the

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2 plan was introduced.

3 I'd like to point out that the testimony
4 today is video-recorded, and that recording is
5 the official record of our hearing, and the
6 hearing testimony is placed on the LATFOR website
7 for all to view, as well as this hearing, the
8 other 20 hearings are available for viewings as
9 well.

10 Without further ado, I want to introduce
11 the members of the panel from the Senate
12 perspective. First and foremost is the ranking
13 member, Senator Martin Dilan. To his left is the
14 citizen representative on the taskforce from the
15 senate, representing the senate is Welquis Ray
16 Lopez. To his left is the co-executive director
17 of the commission--it's Debra Levine. Without
18 further ado, we have a long list of those who are
19 asked to testify. Anyone wishing to testify and
20 has not signed up, please do so.

21 And that, without further ado,
22 Assemblyman, let's open it up to any other
23 members of the panel who wish to make a
24 statement. Hearing none, Assemblyman, would you

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2 call up our first witness?

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Thank you,
4 Senator. We remind you: we try and keep this as
5 concise as possible. You have in most cases
6 submitted a prepared statement. Please summarize
7 your statement--if you can, stay within five
8 minutes. We don't want to have to enforce that
9 rule, but if you're wandering too far afield, in
10 courtesy to the other people here--officially
11 there's so far 22 members of the public that are
12 coming in to testify. There will probably be
13 others before the end of this hearing. We will
14 sign people up as long as they are coming in,
15 stay here as long as necessary. Our first
16 individual is the honorable Anthony Picente, the
17 Oneida County Executive.

18 [background noise]

19 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Executive?

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Good
21 afternoon.

22 MR. ANTHONY PICENTE JR., ONEIDA COUNTY
23 EXECUTIVE: How's that? Now, let me say again,
24 good afternoon, Senator and Assemblyman, members

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2 of the committee. I appreciate the opportunity
3 to be able to give testimony on behalf of my
4 county, Oneida County, New York. I have been
5 County Executive since 2007, and I would like to
6 speak about this process as it affects our level
7 of government and in particular the residents of
8 Oneida County. I would like to specifically talk
9 about the redistricting that has an impact on the
10 congressional district of the 24th congressional
11 district, currently represented by Congressman
12 Richard Hanna, as well as the senate and assembly
13 districts, also, which I'll get to in a moment.

14 Oneida County is unique. It is right in
15 the central part of New York. We have 26 towns,
16 19 villages, and 3 cities--one of the few
17 counties with that many cities in New York State.
18 And although they may be small in population,
19 they do contribute a great deal to the fabric of
20 Upstate New York and in particular, the areas
21 that are represented by Congressman Hanna include
22 a number of military and Air Force-related
23 entities that are important to the overall
24 economic viability of Oneida County.

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2 Currently all of Oneida County, with the
3 exception of 8 towns in the northern part of the
4 county, are located in the 24th congressional
5 district. I'm here to ask that in consideration
6 of this, and the efforts and the review of this
7 committee that you look at Oneida County in terms
8 of this representation and make it whole.

9 Along with that, Herkimer County, for
10 which we share an NPO in terms of the state
11 transportation process, have similar needs,
12 similar working relationships on a variety of
13 issues concerning transportation, water, and
14 infrastructure. It is the intent of both
15 counties that they remain in the 24th and be put
16 whole in the 24th district, or whatever district
17 is comprised of--you know, once redistricting
18 takes place.

19 We understand that due to population
20 that New York will have to lose two congressional
21 seats. Even with that, it really is important
22 that the emphasis be put on the relative needs of
23 a community, and in terms of this, how a
24 community can fare in terms of balanced

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2 representation. To break up Oneida County as it
3 has been, and including which a time when the
4 federal government is cutting back severely in
5 the department of defense, which would impact
6 areas of Oneida County, in particular the Air
7 Force research lab in Rome, DFAS, and numerous
8 other companies that do business with the Air
9 Force and the federal government, with
10 representation of one, we have our better chance
11 of our case being heard and being made more
12 imperative to the issues of remaining whole.

13 It is, while it does look like we're
14 trying to be selfish, Upstate New York has
15 suffered greatly over the past several years, and
16 my county has been no different. The same moves
17 over to the senate and the assembly lines--
18 currently, we have two senators representing
19 Oneida County, Senator Griffo and Senator
20 Valesky, and while both have done an admirable
21 job, it should be represented by one senator,
22 given the nature of the composition of the
23 county, the issues of the county, and the fact
24 that it gets broken up into areas that are not

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2 demographically or economically similar.

3 Currently there are three assembly
4 representatives in Oneida County. The current
5 redistricting process shows that that will go to
6 five. That's ludicrous. It does no good that
7 the assembly would be represented by five
8 different people in an area of 234,000 for which
9 districts would cross over multiple county lines,
10 north, south, east, and west. It makes no sense.
11 It's not fair to the people of Oneida County, and
12 I urge you to reconsider and have at least two,
13 possibly the three that currently exist, in terms
14 of the assembly districts.

15 So in summarizing, it is important that
16 Oneida County be given the representation that it
17 deserves, that it is entitled to, and that keeps
18 it cohesive within the relative importance of
19 where it fits in the demographics and in the
20 economic situation of New York State. Oneida
21 County is strong; it is vibrant; it has suffered.
22 It has suffered severe state and federal losses
23 in terms of job and economic loss over the past
24 several years. To continue to treat it in an

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2 area which gets broken up into multiple pieces
3 does not serve the people of my county well--it
4 only fractures them more. It only looks as if
5 the state continues to ignore us or break us
6 apart and make us irrelevant or insignificant in
7 terms of the economic situation, the importance
8 of our people, and the representation that we
9 deserve.

10 So I would urge this committee to take a
11 hard look at those lines, put the congressional
12 line all in one Oneida County district, make
13 Oneida County whole, make it whole in the Senate,
14 and take a serious look at the assembly
15 districts, which are really--I mean, checker
16 boarding is an example that gets used, but it's
17 not even that. It's really an insult that this
18 county gets broken up into five different
19 districts which have nothing in common with the
20 others, other than the fact that it just makes it
21 more diverse in terms of representation that
22 cannot come together--

23 MS. DEBRA LEVINE, CO-EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
24 NYS LEGISLATIVE TASK FORCE ON DEMOGRAPHIC

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2 RESEARCH AND REAPPORTIONMENT: Mr. Picente, you
3 need to summarize, please.

4 MR. PICENTE: --On specific issues now.
5 Thank you.

6 [applause]

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Thank you very
8 much. Any questions to the panel? Thank you.
9 Our next testifier is Keith Zimmerman. Good
10 afternoon.

11 MR. KEITH ZIMMERMAN, DIRECTOR OF
12 PLANNING, ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY: Good afternoon.
13 Thank you for the opportunity to address the
14 taskforce. My name is Keith Zimmerman. I am the
15 Director of the St. Lawrence County Planning
16 Office. I come before you today sharing the
17 views of the County Board of Legislators.

18 As you have currently proposed it, the
19 legislative redistricting would create three
20 senate districts and four assembly districts to
21 represent the needs of fewer than 110,000 people.
22 To say that St. Lawrence County is confused by
23 the proposed legislative redistricting effort is
24 a massive understatement. With a county

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2 geography that consists of the seventh largest
3 land mass east of the Mississippi River, and with
4 an area that is nearly 250 square miles larger
5 than the 12 smallest counties in New York State
6 combined, St. Lawrence County feels a bit
7 shortchanged by this proposal. We have distance
8 and density obstacles that challenge us in the
9 fiscally responsible delivery of required and
10 desired services at all times under the best of
11 circumstances. We will surely not benefit from
12 political filleting that ensures a lack of
13 singular and powerful voices in Albany to
14 champion our causes and issues.

15 This plan, if adopted, would punish this
16 county with a lack of meaningful representation,
17 the likes of which are unparalleled in any other
18 county in the state. The table and graphics
19 attached to this presentation portray the effects
20 of this redistricting proposal, and while we
21 certainly respect the good intentions of those
22 who serve the public in elected office at this
23 level, we know that those who serve do so with
24 certain awareness of the needs and the geography

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2 of their constituent populations.

3 Of the 57 counties in New York State,
4 not including the five boroughs of New York City,
5 12 are presumed to be too large to be represented
6 by a single senate district, and another 10 are
7 too large to be represented by a single assembly
8 district. In each of those 22 counties, at least
9 one senate or assembly member will represent a
10 substantial portion of the county. Of the
11 remaining counties, which could in fact have 100%
12 of their population represented by at least one
13 single senate or assembly member, only two--St.
14 Lawrence and Herkimer--do not. Of these two,
15 only St. Lawrence's population is proposed to be
16 substantially underrepresented by being parsed
17 into seven separate districts.

18 Let me focus on the assembly plan first:
19 In only assembly district 116 would the county
20 even have a bare majority of the population of
21 the district, at 52.3%. Known colloquially as
22 the River District, the 116th would find the
23 river towns of our county combined with our two
24 largest college towns, and thus incorporating our

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2 four largest population centers, offset by the
3 city of Watertown, the Thousand Island regions,
4 and several townships abutting the burgeoning
5 Fort Drum area in Jefferson County--and this is
6 the best scenario for representation we have
7 under your plan. On a descending percentage of
8 population basis comes the representation of
9 assembly districts 118, 115, and 117, with
10 relative percentages of county populations per
11 district of 25.18%, 5.17%, and incredibly, 0.64%.

12 Now, in that second best district, the
13 118th it may take us a little time to figure out
14 points of common interest and needs with our
15 neighbors in Fulton County, which is about 170
16 miles and a four-hour car ride away. On the plus
17 side, you do get to enter into and pass entirely
18 through the greatest extent of the beautiful
19 Adirondack Park on the way down.

20 Another plus--the assembly redistricting
21 plan for the county is laudable compared to that
22 for the senate. As shown from the accompanying
23 tables and graphics, county residents make up a
24 very small proportion of the overall district

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2 populations, at 18.9% for the 48th, 16.1% for the
3 47th, and 2.36% for the 45th. More troubling in
4 the senate districts is the fact that in all
5 three of the districts, every county has more
6 than 90% of its population represented by a
7 single representative, except St. Lawrence
8 County. Even within these districts, when there
9 may be divergent views to be advanced, those
10 other counties and their senators understand and
11 appreciate that their only senator must be their
12 voice in Albany.

13 The board of legislators and the
14 residents of our county want to know who speaks
15 for us? Who speaks for the citizens of St.
16 Lawrence County? Counties, as you know, view
17 their role in large measure as the managing
18 partner on behalf of the state for myriad
19 programs and services. For most counties,
20 something akin to 90% of their local budgeted
21 costs are attributable to nine or ten broad
22 mandates of the state. How can you folks view
23 this as being a representative government plan
24 for the people of St. Lawrence County?

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2 The pending resolution attached at the
3 end of my submission package was passed by the
4 committee of the whole of our county legislature
5 last evening and will be formalized in March. It
6 requests that the governor reject this plan and
7 calls upon the members of the taskforce to renew
8 your collective efforts to find better
9 alternatives. Surely your taskforce can, and in
10 our opinion should, do better.

11 This intentional marginalization is
12 unacceptable based on the principle of equal
13 representation. The citizens of St. Lawrence
14 County should be neither a political afterthought
15 nor an accidental outcome of what otherwise
16 should be a thoughtful and an intentional
17 reapportionment process. It seems inconceivable,
18 even given your constraints, that a population of
19 110,000 people in this great state needs to have
20 their voice taken away from them by being
21 fragmented into seven different districts.

22 MS. LEVINE: Mr. Zimmerman, you need to
23 summarize, please.

24 MR. ZIMMERMAN: I appreciate it. We

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2 encourage you to rethink and redraw your plans
3 with the intention to make certain that those at
4 the extreme edge of representative government,
5 those with the greatest difficulties and
6 challenges in being fairly represented, have
7 their needs addressed first, then work your way
8 in. Thank you for your time and consideration.

9 MS. LEVINE: Thank you.

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Thank you very
11 much.

12 [applause]

13 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Honorable Ray
14 Meyer [phonetic]? Senator Meyer? We'll call him
15 again. Henry Balmer [phonetic]? Henry Balmer?
16 Sam Bernadino?

17 MR. SAM BERNADINO, PRESIDENT, MOHAWK
18 VALLEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (ONEIDA & HERKIMER
19 COUNTIES): Good afternoon. Thank you for the
20 opportunity to be here. My name is Sam
21 Bernadino. I am a businessman from Utica, New
22 York, and Chairman of the Mohawk Valley Chamber
23 of Commerce. The Chamber of Commerce represents
24 approximately 900 businesses throughout Oneida

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2 and Herkimer Counties. I would like to comment
3 on the redistricting process at the federal and
4 state levels.

5 With regard to the congressional
6 redistricting, the Mohawk valley Chamber of
7 Commerce is the largest voice for business in
8 Oneida and Herkimer Counties, and our board of
9 directors is requesting that both counties be
10 included in the same congressional district.
11 Currently, the majority of Oneida County and all
12 of Herkimer County is located in Congressman
13 Hanna's 24th congressional district.

14 It should be noted that there is much in
15 common between Oneida and Herkimer Counties, and
16 they should be in the same district to ensure
17 coordination of economic development efforts, as
18 well as assist in an effort to control taxes
19 through the consolidation of services. A number
20 of services are currently shared at the county
21 level, and over the years major nonprofit
22 organizations have joined together to function as
23 one regional entity. We urge you to consider the
24 negative impact to the private and public sectors

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2 by not maintaining a common congressional
3 district for Oneida and Herkimer Counties, and we
4 hope Congressman Hanna has the opportunity to
5 continue representing us in the US House of
6 Representatives after 2012.

7 Additionally, New York needs a true
8 independent and nonpartisan citizens
9 reappointment commission now. Our board of
10 directors established an official public policy
11 position seeking the establishment of a
12 commission that would be comprised of people who
13 are not public officials, whether relatives,
14 lobbyists, political parties or office holders.
15 These individuals would submit recommendations
16 for redistricting to the legislature for approval
17 in accordance with the New York State
18 constitution. Such a commission would help
19 ensure a fair and competitive election process,
20 and the process of gerrymandering, and keep
21 together communities of common interest. Thank
22 you for your consideration. Have a good
23 afternoon.

24 [applause]

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2 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Thank you.

3 Mary Q. Chapin?

4 MS. MARY Q. CHAPIN, PRESIDENT, DISPUTE
5 RESOLUTION INTERNATIONAL: Thank you. Good
6 afternoon, and honorable--

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Press the
8 button and there will be a little red light that
9 will stay on. Okay?

10 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: No, press it again.

11 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Try again.

12 MS. LEVINE: It has to have a red light.

13 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Yeah, hold it
14 down a little longer when you do it. Okay.

15 MS. CHAPIN: Hello? Honorable Senator
16 Nozzolio, and honorable Assemblyman McEneny, and
17 members of the taskforce, representing the
18 taskforce, I am Mary Chapin. I am president of a
19 company called Dispute Resolution, so I believe,
20 I believe in resolution of disputes through
21 looking at the situation and finding common
22 ground. And I must--I'm going to go off message
23 here for a minute, and say that I have been to
24 Senator Nozzolio's office because I am a great

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2 admirer of his, and the work that he's done on
3 behalf of women.

4 But today, I have come to this taskforce
5 meeting today to formally express my
6 disappointment regarding the proposed assembly
7 district lines. I could have said "ditto" to
8 everything that our county executive, Picente,
9 expressed. The reapportionment committee, I
10 believe, has failed to adhere to the
11 redistricting criteria of community cohesiveness,
12 commonality of interest, geographic compactness,
13 and equal sized district served by an elected
14 representative who understands the needs of the
15 community, and the constituent tax payers and
16 voters who this redistricting is supposed to
17 serve.

18 Now, in particular I am concerned that
19 the redistricting plan divides Oneida County,
20 fracturing the county representation by
21 eliminating any hope of cohesiveness. Since I
22 live New Hartford, the economic base and growing
23 force of the 115th, present 115th assembly
24 district, the taskforce has shown an amazing

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2 disregard for my town and other towns and cities
3 in the county. This proposed plan eliminates the
4 current 115th district to the detriment of all
5 involved. The taskforce plan divides Oneida
6 County among five districts rather than the
7 present three, which results in representation
8 and competition rather than cohesiveness. This
9 does not serve the best interests of our county.

10 The taskforce has not held to the
11 criteria of geographic compactness, nor equal-
12 sized districts, when the majority of the towns
13 in the 115th district are placed in a North
14 Country district--where's the commonality of
15 interest between New Hartford and up by, in the
16 North Country? The proposed upstate districts
17 have higher populations than proposed down state
18 districts, which violates the criteria of equal-
19 sized districts.

20 In conclusion, I really urge the LATFOR
21 to reconsider the proposed lines and make the
22 adjustments so that Oneida County receives
23 effective representation. I am sure that when
24 you review this request, you will act to restore

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2 and guarantee the rights of Oneida County and
3 upstate residents. Thank you.

4 MS. LEVINE: Thank you.

5 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you.

6 [applause]

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Thank you.

8 Charles T. Hage?

9 MR. CHARLES T. HAGE, COMPLIANCE OFFICER,

10 MOHICAN FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT: Am I on? Yes.

11 Good afternoon. My name is Charles Hage, and I'm
12 here to comment, of course, on the congressional
13 redistricting process. I'm a lifelong
14 businessman and community leader from Otsego
15 County. I reside in the 24th congressional
16 district represented by Congressman Richard
17 Hanna. I wish to make the point that the entire
18 extent of Otsego County should be located within
19 a single congressional district, based in Utica,
20 because there is economic commonality among the
21 communities in that region.

22 By way of explanation, Otsego County is
23 located in the Central New York region, which
24 includes Oneida and Herkimer Counties. This

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2 region has been identified by Governor Cuomo as
3 containing communities that share important
4 similarities. In creating regional economic
5 development councils, he placed Oneida, Herkimer,
6 and Otsego Counties among six, six counties
7 within the Mohawk Valley regional council, with
8 Utica as its population center.

9 This regional approach to economic
10 development enhances communication and
11 collaboration among the governments, businesses,
12 and economic groups that share common purpose, so
13 it helps us to pool our resources, attract jobs,
14 and create economic growth. Defending this
15 particular region is important to our public and
16 private efforts going forward. Further, the
17 closest large city with healthcare access and
18 transportation options serving Otsego County is
19 Utica, and we're also included in the Utica media
20 market. In other words, the point I'm trying to
21 make is consistent, historically and practically,
22 with the realities of the region.

23 And finally, Congressman Hanna is an
24 effective representative for Otsego County. He

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2 lived in the county for ten years. He
3 understands the region because his small business
4 served Central New York for over thirty years.
5 Of course, I understand that New York State will
6 lose two congressional districts in
7 reapportionment. It's important that in the
8 process, we retain the 24th congressional
9 district as a Central New York district that is
10 based in Utica and includes Otsego County. Thank
11 you very much for your time, attention and
12 consideration.

13 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Thank you.

14 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Mr. Hage?

15 [applause]

16 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Mr. Hage?

17 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Mr. Hage?

18 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Mr. Hage? Before you
19 leave, what would you define as the region--you
20 say your region--how would you define that
21 region? What counties would you say would be in
22 your region?

23 MR. HAGE: Where I referred to, Central
24 New York, or to Mohawk--I think I referred to--

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2 oh, just generically, when I said "the region"?

3 Yes. I was talking primarily about Oneida,

4 Herkimer, and Otsego Counties, in that instance.

5 In terms of the Mohawk Valley regional region, or

6 Regional Council, it's more than that. It

7 includes Montgomery County, for example.

8 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: We certainly

9 appreciate hearing from you about proposed

10 congressional lines. It's very important to have

11 public input about concerns. You reside in the

12 24th congressional district?

13 MR. HAGE: Yes.

14 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: And you live in

15 Oneida County, correct?

16 MR. HAGE: Yes.

17 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: I reside in the 24th

18 congressional district, and I live in Seneca

19 County, and that is not the most further

20 westernmost county in this current 24th

21 congressional district. As a matter of fact, the

22 district goes west from my home, near Seneca

23 Falls, into Geneva, which is in Ontario County.

24 Would you--I don't hear you say Seneca or

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2 Ontario, or for that matter, even Cayuga, which
3 is also in the 24th congressional district, or
4 Tompkins, which is in the 24th congressional
5 district. I don't hear you mention those
6 counties at all within the communities of
7 interest that you seem to be pushing for. Do you
8 believe that they're not in the same area, or not
9 in the same region?

10 MR. HAGE: Well, there are a couple of
11 reasons I left them out. First of all, I'm less
12 familiar with them. I'm not involved with them.
13 I've never lived in those parts of the district.
14 But also, I think basically I'm here to say what
15 I think should be, should occur in part of the
16 district, recognizing humbly that it's your task
17 to deal with what will happen in the district.

18 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Your comments are
19 very well taken. It's with the demands and
20 requirements that we have--first of all, each
21 district must be mathematically exact, even
22 though you could be splitting towns to achieve
23 that objective, unlike the state constitution
24 which says you can't split towns for state

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2 legislative lines.

3 But the issue I am, I would like to
4 leave with you is that the districts are so large
5 today, that we are given a number, that's 700--
6 it's over 700,000 people that we must put into
7 these districts, regardless of how many regions
8 they may cover. That's 717,000 people is the
9 requirement, and that that requirement is in the
10 face of, in some parts of Upstate New York, a
11 declining population, so we appreciate very much
12 your objectives. We try to reflect those
13 objectives as much as possible, and that your
14 input is extremely helpful in that effort. Thank
15 you. Any other questions?

16 MR. HAGE: Thank you, sir.

17 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you.

18 [applause]

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Thank you.

20 Vita Demarchi?

21 MS. VITA DEMARCHI, CHAIRWOMAN, ONONDAGA
22 COUNTY DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE: Hello, taskforce
23 and panel. Thank you for coming to Onondaga
24 County on Valentine's Day to hear the love that

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2 people have for their communities and their
3 interest. Can you hear me?

4 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Now, yes.

5 MS. DEMARCIH: Okay, thank you. So
6 again, thank you for coming. I'm Vita Demarchi.
7 I'm here as the chairwoman of the Onondaga County
8 Democratic Committee, and a lifetime resident of
9 the county, and a business owner here in
10 Syracuse. I'll be speaking primarily about the
11 congressional district today.

12 First, I want to say that I am
13 personally a bit idealistic when it comes to
14 expecting taskforce and our legislators to do
15 what's best for the people that they represent.
16 In preparation for today's comments, I again
17 reflected on the sentiments shared with me from
18 members of the Onondaga County Democratic
19 Committee, various voters, colleagues, friends,
20 and my family. And regardless of what their
21 specific comments were, it seems that many of
22 them still go back to the basic question of what
23 are the rules of redistricting? What and who
24 should be considered in drawing political

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2 boundaries, and thus a constituent's, voter's
3 opportunity for fair representation at all levels
4 of government? So let me just share with you
5 again what they've shared with me.

6 The repeated concepts of fair
7 redistricting, equal population--obviously the
8 clear requirement based on population changes.
9 Onondaga County overall and the city of Syracuse
10 have experienced really negligible changes in
11 population. Number two, districts need to be
12 geographically contiguous--well, that seems
13 obvious. However, this concept has been
14 stretched, as we know, in narrow stretches of
15 road connecting various districts, and I think
16 this criteria obviously speaks for itself, and
17 when it doesn't, it's obvious to everyone.

18 Number three, recognizing existing
19 geographic divides and boundaries--New York is
20 such a diverse geographic state with much of our
21 agriculture and economic development linked to
22 the nature of that territory, and here in
23 Onondaga County, we are the center of Central New
24 York's region. We look at ourselves as a center

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2 and a hub, centrally located in the state, and
3 drawing people inward for economic development.

4 Number four, do not divide communities
5 of common interest; avoid disenfranchising ethnic
6 and minority groups to dilute their voting
7 strength--again, clearly obvious. But also
8 consider common interests: Onondaga County has
9 become a more unified community, especially over
10 the past decade, particularly with respect to
11 economic development initiatives and the quality
12 of life that they lead us to. Much of the county
13 commutes to the city of Syracuse--again, a
14 middle-sized city, pulling the surrounding areas
15 into it and radiating out its influence. As a
16 county, we are a community.

17 Number five, consider transportation
18 connections. Commerce and economic development
19 connect people. Syracuse and Onondaga County are
20 crossroads for connections in New York State.
21 All the primary east-west and north-south
22 highways and roads connect in Central New York in
23 Onondaga County, serving as a center for a
24 transportation hub. And number six, the most

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2 optimistic recommendation of all, is avoid
3 drawing lines solely for the purpose of favoring
4 any political party or incumbent.

5 I was asked to again just share those
6 criteria as it relates to Onondaga County.
7 Onondaga County has considerable momentum
8 building a positive future that is inclusive of
9 our city, and spreading out to our county and
10 towns and adjacent counties. In great part
11 because of the bipartisan political leadership at
12 the county and city level, center state
13 initiatives and Central New York Regional
14 Council, Onondaga serves as an organizer and
15 binder for many outward initiatives in adjacent
16 counties within this region.

17 Syracuse is one of our state's
18 significant middle-sized cities. It is a
19 significant part of our county's community
20 identity, and it is a significant part of central
21 New York. Segmenting the Central New York hub,
22 Onondaga County, could derail the political,
23 social, and economic progress and goals achieved
24 to date for the people in the county. Unifying a

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2 momentum is hard to get rolling. It is rolling
3 now. Syracuse, New York is a center, and it
4 needs to retain its radius of influence and
5 direct association around it. Leaving Onondaga
6 County intact at the congressional level will
7 continue to provide fair representation at the
8 federal level for Central New York residents.

9 The idea of splitting Onondaga County
10 into two or three slices at the congressional
11 level is what people feel, essentially an attack
12 on our ability to have that fair representation
13 and to keep our commonalities. Onondaga County
14 is not a fringe community of other districts. It
15 is a center. It is center state, a hub,
16 radiating out from the city of Syracuse and
17 welcoming in the surrounding regions and
18 counties.

19 MS. LEVINE: Ms. Demarchi, you need to
20 summarize, please.

21 MS. DEMARCHI: Okay, and I can't help
22 but throw in one more progressive, maybe even
23 radical concept of redistricting, and that would
24 be considering sustainable community concepts.

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2 In closing, I want to thank those of you who have
3 the ability to influence redistricting, and
4 recognize the privilege and opportunity bestowed
5 on you, and know that constituents and community
6 people are paying attention and appreciate it.
7 Thank you very much.

8 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Thank you.

9 [applause]

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Sheriff
11 Christopher Barber? Christopher Barber? Carolyn
12 D. Fitzpatrick?

13 MS. CAROLYN D. FITZPATRICK, CHAIR OF THE
14 BOARD, JEFFERSON COUNTY LEGISLATORS: Testing, 1,
15 2, 3... Okay. Hi, I'm Carolyn D. Fitzpatrick.
16 I'm the Chairwoman of our Jefferson County Board
17 of Legislators. Closer--how's that, Senator?
18 Thank you. Carolyn Fitzpatrick, and I'm the
19 Chairwoman of the Jefferson County Board of
20 Legislators up in Jefferson County, and my
21 district entails the city of Watertown.

22 I do not have a written testimony. I
23 was asked just yesterday if I would attend and
24 I've had meetings all day yesterday, today, and

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2 for the first time I think I broke the speeding
3 barrier coming down 81, but normally the
4 difference between us up in the North Country,
5 the northern counties, we're usually getting
6 tickets for going too slow, while everyone else
7 down here is getting a ticket for speeding.
8 That's the difference right off.

9 I'm asking--I'm not looking and talking
10 about the individuals who want a position on the
11 assembly or in the senate or congress. I'm
12 asking you to keep the Northern New York counties
13 together, intact, even if you have to add a
14 little bit more of several of them that are up
15 there in the North Country. Please, please,
16 please don't put us down in the Syracuse area.
17 We're not Central New York. We're not Western
18 New York. We're not Leatherstocking. We're not
19 the Finger Lakes. We're not over there by the
20 Saratoga speedway, or the horse tracks. We're
21 not Albany. We're Northern New York. We're
22 where the St. Lawrence River meets Lake Ontario.
23 We're right along the Canadian border.

24 We're old-fashioned--I know that. I'll

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2 admit it. We have the oldest county fair in the
3 United States. The oldest county fair. You
4 didn't know that, did you? Somebody's shaking
5 his head. We take pride in our people. We're
6 not about necessarily manufacturing or industry,
7 but we are all about tourism, farming, dairy--a
8 lot of wineries, lately--hay, apple orchards,
9 all the good things, and it's like a man who has
10 a sign on the back of his car--no farm, no food,
11 no life. That's what we're about up there.
12 We're about people. We're about the North
13 Country, whether it be Jefferson County, St.
14 Lawrence County, Lewis County, Oswego County,
15 Clinton, Essex, Hamilton--all of them are up,
16 we're in a great big circle. And what we're
17 seeing is somebody is trying to make us look like
18 we belong to a spider, and everything is jutting
19 out. And it's happening in a lot of areas
20 throughout New York State, not just ours.

21 I grew up here in the Syracuse area--I
22 grew up in Fayetteville, New York. Fayetteville
23 and Syracuse is not the North Country. I love
24 where I am now. I've raised two kids--actually,

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2 one is a doctor who does practice down in
3 Syracuse, and a son who lives in Cooperstown and
4 in New York City. They are not the North
5 Country. I'm asking you to take a good look at
6 us and realize that we're good people, the North
7 Country means something to all of us, and we'd
8 like to stay intact.

9 And one thing that I did write that
10 someone mentioned earlier--let's look at fair,
11 fair redistricting. Keep our counties together
12 that have a common interest. I thank you and I
13 appreciate your time.

14 [applause]

15 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you. Thank
16 you.

17 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Mayor Joe
18 Moriana [phonetic]? Joe Moriana? Donald Goulet?

19 MR. DONALD GOULET, COMMON CAUSE: Good
20 afternoon, ladies and gentleman. My name is
21 Donald Goulet and I'm here as a member of Common
22 Cause. I appreciate the opportunity to testify.

23 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Excuse me, pardon me--
24 -did you have written testimony?

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2 MR. GOULET: Yes, sir.

3 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you very much.

4 MR GOULET: All right.

5 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Would you introduce,
6 would you introduce the person to your right,
7 please?

8 MR. GOULET: The young lady to my left
9 is Susan Lehrer [phonetic]. She is also with
10 Common Cause and her title is?

11 MS. SUSAN LEHRER, COMMON CAUSE: - -

12 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Good to see you
13 again, Susan.

14 MS. LEHRER: Thank you. It's nice to be
15 here.

16 MR. GOULET: Thank you. I want to take
17 the opportunity presented by this hearing to
18 compare and contrast the LATFOR state legislative
19 drafts with the Common Cause reform plan. First,
20 the state senate--as you can see on page 4 of
21 this testimony, the proposed LATFOR lines divide
22 the Syracuse and Central New York regions into an
23 awkward jigsaw puzzle. The proposed senate
24 district 51 stretches almost 150 miles, from

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2 Cayuga all the way to Ulster County. It's
3 especially egregious. By itself, the proposed
4 SD-51 contributes to the division of six counties
5 that could otherwise fit entirely in a single
6 district. That would seem to be in direct
7 contradiction to the state constitution
8 guidelines to minimize division of counties.

9 In contrast, the Common Cause reform
10 plan proposes compact senate districts. As you
11 can see on page 5 of the testimony, the Common
12 Cause plan keeps the entire city of Syracuse and
13 its surrounding suburbs in a single district.
14 This is quite in contrast to the legislators'
15 proposed plan, which carves out a narrow corridor
16 that looks to be custom-drawn for the district 50
17 incumbent, John D. Francisco, a republican who
18 just happens to live within the corridor.
19 Districts like this are why the LATFOR plan is
20 often referred to in the press as the incumbent
21 protection plan.

22 In the state assembly, the partisan
23 gerrymandering looks just as bad. As you can see
24 on page 6 of this testimony, the proposed

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2 assembly districts 128 and 129 are exactly the
3 same as the current ADs 119 and 120. These
4 districts continue to divide the city of Syracuse
5 into a jagged, twisting shape that breaks up
6 neighborhoods and communities. These districts
7 appear to have been designed to maximize the
8 chance of electing two democrats to the
9 legislature.

10 Again, we see that the LATFOR places
11 partisan advantage and incumbent protection above
12 all else, and again, the Common Cause reform plan
13 shows us what Syracuse assembly districts would
14 look like if drawn by a nonpartisan independent
15 process. Almost the whole city would fit in a
16 single district, with compact districts drawn for
17 the surrounding suburbs. Keeping Syracuse almost
18 entirely within a single assembly district also
19 allows for increased influence among the city's
20 minority communities that are currently broken
21 up. As drawn, Common Cause reform AD-119 would
22 be 26% Black and 7% Hispanic. This district
23 allows the minority community of Syracuse almost
24 30% more voting influence than in the districts

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2 proposed by LATFOR.

3 Now, for congress: It's really a shame
4 that the public will not have the opportunity to
5 comment on a draft congressional plan, but Common
6 Cause has had a congressional plan available to
7 the public for almost two months. As you can see
8 on page 7 of this testimony, the current
9 congressional districts zig and zag all across
10 the central New York region. In contrast, the
11 Common Cause reform plan for congress focuses on
12 creating regional districts--one district the
13 North Country, one district for Syracuse and the
14 Mohawk Valley, one district for the Southern
15 Tier, and one district for the Finger Lakes.
16 Yes, it is that simple, if the lines are drawn
17 with public interest in mind rather than tailored
18 to the desires of the political parties and their
19 incumbents. I urge you to take another look at
20 the recommendations of the Common Cause reform
21 plan. Thank you again for the opportunity to
22 testify.

23 [applause]

24 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Mr. Goulet,

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2 for the benefit of people watching this, your
3 testimony is accurate as to what you're
4 describing, but the page numbers don't match. I
5 think everything that you discussed is shown
6 here, but the page numbers are different on the
7 copy I have.

8 MR. GOULET: There were some typos; I
9 apologize. There are sidebars by the testimony,
10 by the maps describing what the maps outline. I
11 apologize for the typos.

12 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Everything you
13 said was accurate in describing your message, but
14 the page numbers are different.

15 MR. GOULET: All right. We'll try to
16 correct that, but if you look at the maps, the
17 sidebar describes the issue.

18 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: All right.
19 Thank you.

20 MR. GOULET: Thank you.

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Fred
22 Beardsley? Fred Beardsley? Good afternoon.

23 MR. FRED BEARDSLEY, LEGISLATOR, OSWEGO
24 COUNTY: Good afternoon. My name is Fred

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2 Beardsley. I'm from Hastings, New York. I was a
3 councilman supervisor in my town for 12 years
4 before being elected to the Oswego County
5 Legislature. Recently I was named Chairman of
6 that legislature. I'd like to talk to you today
7 about the congressional redistricting. It's my
8 understanding that the lines have not been drawn
9 yet, and I'd like to give you my input.

10 Simply put, as has been mentioned here
11 earlier, we need a North Country congressional
12 district. This district should include my home
13 county, Oswego, and like-minded areas, many of
14 which are already included in the 23rd
15 congressional district. While our county borders
16 this one, our concerns are far different than the
17 more metropolitan areas, like our neighbors to
18 the north and the east. We rely heavily on
19 tourism and agriculture to make our local
20 economy. Dairy farms, apple orchards, maple
21 syrup, lumber, hay, and vegetables are
22 commodities you'll find in abundance in the North
23 Country. I think of Central New York and the
24 Mohawk Valley as more focused on manufacturing.

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2 Although I don't live there, I think it's a good
3 idea to keep those like-minded areas together.

4 One of the great advantages of the
5 current congressional district is that no one
6 city or town dwarfs any other. Watertown is our
7 biggest city, and even then, it's only 27,000
8 people. To me, that's not much different than
9 the hometown of Hastings that I live in that has
10 little more than 9,000 people. I truly think
11 that this arrangement keeps our member of
12 congress equally accountable to his entire area.
13 If you were to combine us with Syracuse, with its
14 145,000 people, or Utica, with 262,000 people,
15 the district would revolve around those two
16 areas. With all due respect, Syracuse and Utica
17 have different priorities than us, and I feel
18 it's inappropriate to combine them with us. Our
19 farmers and tourist-based business would lose
20 their advocate, and we'd lose an important ally
21 on issues that affect the United States and
22 Canadian border.

23 I understand that the current 23rd
24 congressional district must grow. To me, it

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2 makes sense to add rural areas that are similar
3 in identity to the counties already included.
4 This could be accomplished by taking more people
5 from Essex, Fulton counties, or adding folks from
6 Herkimer County.

7 I'm not alone in suggesting this change.
8 Ken Blankenbush, the state assemblyman who
9 represents the area just north of where I live,
10 has testified in front of this committee about
11 the need for a North Country congressional
12 district. Common Cause, a good government group
13 has suggested lines of their own, using the
14 assemblyman's testimony as proof that the North
15 Country should keep its congressional district.
16 Common Cause map showed a North Country district
17 that kept Jefferson, Lewis, St. Lawrence,
18 Franklin, Clinton, Fulton, and Hamilton counties
19 together, and included more of Essex and Herkimer
20 as I suggested. While adding some rural areas
21 from Warren and Washington, I believe that this
22 could work, although I would encourage you to
23 keep Oswego County whole, as there is little
24 difference in mindset between our northern and

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2 southern parts.

3 On top of my written statement, I'd just
4 like to add one statement--it was mentioned by my
5 colleague from the legislature in Jefferson
6 County, and I think the picture is clear on both
7 our parts--these are two different economic
8 areas, and they are two entirely different
9 cultures, and I believe that congressional
10 district should remain. Thank you.

11 [applause]

12 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Deborah
13 Warner?

14 MS. DEBORAH WARNER, VICE PRESIDENT FOR
15 PUBLIC POLICY, CENTERSTATE CEO: Good afternoon.
16 Thank you Senator Nozzolio and Assemblyman
17 McEneny, and the members of the taskforce for
18 your leadership on a very difficult and
19 challenging issue. I'm Deb Warner, Vice
20 President for Public Policy at the Centerstate
21 Corporation for Economic Opportunity. We are the
22 business and economic development organization
23 for a 12-county region that stretches from the
24 St. Lawrence almost to the Pennsylvania border,

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2 west nearly to Rochester, and to the east to the
3 Herkimer area.

4 On behalf of our 2,000 members, we
5 appreciate that you are holding another round of
6 hearings now that we have some census data to
7 react to, and I'd like to start by reiterating
8 two key recommendations I discussed at the July
9 hearing that you held previously: Keep county and
10 metro areas as whole as possible, especially in
11 congressional redistricting; be strategic to
12 regional economic development. This is a
13 critical concern, especially for businesses that
14 are state and federal contractors and
15 subcontractors, which is a significant portion of
16 businesses and small businesses in our area.

17 Because we have certain concentration of
18 specific types of businesses and technologies,
19 it's advantageous to keep those businesses
20 together in the one district, rather than
21 splitting them up among several congressional
22 districts. An example would be to keep Lockheed
23 Martin, SRC, Anaren, and Sensis radar censor
24 businesses together in the same congressional

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2 district so that they're appropriately
3 represented at the federal level for both policy
4 and regulatory purposes.

5 We would point to an important progress
6 step that's already taken place this year with
7 the Regional Economic Development Councils,
8 emphasizing the districts in whole or combination
9 would well serve our communities by mirroring
10 these groupings. Centerstate, our 12-county
11 region, is deeply involved with major projects
12 with the Brookings Institution, both of which are
13 regional across our 12 counties in nature. One
14 of them is a metropolitan export initiative to
15 boost exports from our region over the next few
16 years. The other, larger initiative is the
17 regional metropolitan business plan. These
18 projects are throughout the 12-county region,
19 involve many organizations and elected officials
20 throughout the region, and are therefore another
21 compelling reason to recognize that groupings of
22 counties, and how important they are for cohesive
23 collaboration of our state and federal elected
24 officials.

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2 Regarding census data, I'd like to point
3 out that Onondaga County has actually gained
4 population over the last 10 years. Our
5 population grew by about 9,000 individuals, or
6 nearly 4%. Our 12-county region is basically
7 flat, so that would be a reason that we should
8 not have our representation further dissipated.
9 I point this out to stress that our region should
10 not be losing representation, since we are not an
11 area of declined population. The fact that
12 Onondaga County's population is growing should be
13 a lead indicator that it should be kept whole,
14 especially, again, in congressional
15 redistricting.

16 The Centerstate CEO 12-county region is
17 based on a number of dynamics that interconnect
18 the region--although, and I certainly respect the
19 comments made by some of the previous speakers
20 that there is difference, there are differences
21 in some of the areas throughout our region--we
22 are bound together by transportation, by
23 infrastructure, our higher education
24 institutions, by agribusiness, by tourism

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2 business and industry commonalities, labor force,
3 retail demographics and so on.

4 Our regional delegations at the federal
5 and state level are working together at a new
6 level of cooperation and effectiveness. Because
7 we have seen the success of these synergies, we
8 strongly urge you to recognize this footprint so
9 that you can reinforce and enhance these
10 connections as you create congressional state
11 representative districts within the 12 counties.

12 Thank you for your time today, and on
13 behalf of Centerstate, we offer to be further of
14 assistance if we can provide data from
15 demographics, the research that we have from
16 Brookings that may be relevant or of
17 consideration, should you be interested in that.

18 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Ms. Warner, thank
19 you. Before you leave, it was appreciate your
20 testimony last summer. We appreciate it again
21 this winter. Tell us for the record the 12
22 counties that are part of this group.

23 MS. WARNER: Oh, I may not remember all
24 of them, exactly, but--

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2 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Let me ask you this:

3 Is Cayuga County?

4 MS. WARNER: Yes.

5 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Is Madison County a
6 portion of this?

7 MS. WARNER: Yes.

8 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Are the--

9 MS. WARNER: Certainly Jefferson,
10 Oswego, Onondaga, Cayuga, Madison, Oneida,
11 Cortlandt, Herkimer--I'm going to--we get a
12 little further out...

13 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: In the Regional
14 Economic Development Councils--

15 MS. WARNER: Yes.

16 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Were you part of
17 those councils? Did you participate in the
18 deliberations?

19 MS. WARNER: I didn't directly, but many
20 people on our staff did, I was peripherally
21 involved and our CEO is one of the co-chairs of
22 our region.

23 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: And within that
24 regional council, was Cayuga County a portion of

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2 that region?

3 MS. WARNER: Yes.

4 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: And was Madison
5 County a portion of that region?

6 MS. WARNER: I don't--yes, we were the
7 five counties. Of the 12-county footprint, we
8 have the core five-county region is included, and
9 then we actually have pieces of another five of
10 the regional councils. The recommendations that
11 came from those councils--there are
12 commonalities, there are joint projects where we
13 have some cross-pollination from one or more, or
14 two or more of the regional economic development
15 councils focusing on some similar concerns.
16 There was a lot of cross-pollination.

17 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Well, the regional
18 approach is something that the MDA--the
19 Metropolitan Development Association--has worked
20 on for years. Have you been part of that work?

21 MS. WARNER: Well, Centerstate is the
22 merger of the Greater Syracuse Chamber of
23 Commerce and the MDA, so I came from the Chamber
24 side, but we were involved in some regional

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2 initiatives, and certainly it's important to
3 recognize that in a global economy, with
4 economies of scale, a region is the unit that you
5 need to reach to be competition, you know, to be
6 an entity that can compete in an economy, in
7 economic development, and you need a population
8 of at least a million people, so our region I
9 think is about a million and a half.

10 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Miss Warner, thank
11 you very, very much. Any other questions,
12 members of the panel?

13 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Did you agree
14 with the map of the regional development area
15 that was drawn up by the state?

16 MS. WARNER: You mean the existing 10
17 economic development regions?

18 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Yes.

19 MS. WARNER: That's what we worked with,
20 but I guess we had had some discussions about how
21 we could go beyond just the five-county region
22 because there is so much commonality with the
23 Thruway, the 81 corridor, our transportation
24 infrastructure, the ports in Oswego, you know,

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2 the rail lines run east and west and then down
3 south to New Jersey. There's any number of
4 elements of infrastructure and business and
5 community infrastructures that run throughout the
6 region that we like to think a lot larger than
7 that five-county footprint.

8 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Who drew those
9 maps?

10 MS. WARNER: You know, those were
11 existing. They had been drawn by Empire State
12 Development a number of years ago. I don't know
13 when they were drawn. They certainly were not
14 drawn for this--they weren't drawn by the current
15 administration. They were pre-existing.

16 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Thank you very
17 much.

18 MS. WARNER: Okay, thank you.

19 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you.

20 [applause]

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Michael
22 Marinaccio?

23 MR. MICHAEL MARINACCIO, SUPERVISOR, TOWN
24 OF DICKINSON, PRESIDENT, COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENT:

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2 Good afternoon.

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Good
4 afternoon.

5 MR. MARINACCIO: My name is Mike
6 Marinaccio. I serve as the Supervisor for the
7 town of Dickinson in Broome County. I also serve
8 as the president of the Greater Binghamton
9 Council of Governments and Association of
10 Municipal Governments for Broome County. In
11 addition, I am the Vice President of the Broome
12 County Association of Towns and Villages. I
13 would like to briefly speak regarding the
14 reapportionment process at the federal level.

15 My town is located in the 24th
16 congressional district, represented by
17 Congressman Richard Hanna. This district
18 stretches south from the Utica area through
19 Chenango and Cortland counties, into Broome and
20 Tioga counties. I respectfully ask they remain
21 in a similar district after reapportionment
22 because Broome County shares many commonalities
23 with other communities in this region.

24 One of the most important similarities

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2 is the economy. Binghamton, the largest city in
3 Broome County, is a formal industrial and
4 manufacturing center, similar to other upstate
5 cities of its size in the area. Today, high-tech
6 industry and research universities help drive the
7 economies of this region and our county.

8 Defense-related companies are increasingly more
9 important to Central New York's economy. Broome
10 has several of these companies, the largest being
11 Lockheed Martin, employing 3,000 individuals, and
12 MBNA systems employing 1,600 individuals. It is
13 important we retain our connection with other
14 communities who have companies with federal
15 defense connections, such as the defense-related
16 companies located at the former Griffiss Air
17 Force Base near Utica, as an example. An
18 effective federal representative like Congressman
19 Hanna will help advocate in Washington on our
20 behalf.

21 Broome County is also a major
22 transportation junction that supports and
23 advances Central New York's commerce. Interstate
24 81, interstate 88, and the New York State Route

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2 12 form main routes that transport goods
3 throughout central New York and connect these
4 communities.

5 In addition, our entire county is served
6 by Senator Tom Libous at the state level, and the
7 district he represents includes Chenango and
8 Tioga Counties as well. Parts or all of these
9 three counties are currently included in the 24th
10 congressional district, which again, demonstrates
11 how connected the counties are with each other.

12 I understand our state will lose two
13 congressional seats. However, I want to express
14 my support for a district that includes all of
15 Broome County and connects it with related
16 communities. Thank you so very much for allowing
17 me to speak today.

18 MS. LEVINE: Thank you.

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Thank you very
20 much.

21 [applause]

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Gregory
23 Landcotte? Good afternoon, Mr. Landcotte.

24 MR. GREGORY LANDCETTE, PLUMBERS AND

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2 STEAMFITTERS LOCAL 267: Good afternoon, Mr.

3 McEneny. Are we on? My name is--it's actually

4 Greg Landcette. I totally understand; it's a

5 really tough one to make it there.

6 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: So the O is an

7 E? Land, C-O-T-T-E, so it's C-E-T-T-E?

8 MR. LANDCETTE: Yes, that's correct.

9 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Thank you.

10 MR. LANDCETTE: I've been going through

11 it my whole life, I totally understand. My

12 name's Greg Landcette and I represent the

13 building trades council of Central New York. I'm

14 also the business manager of the plumbers and

15 steamfitters union here in Syracuse. I would

16 like to thank the members of the committee for

17 giving us the opportunity to share our views and

18 for their work on this committee.

19 As the largest city and metro area in

20 central New York, in recent years, Syracuse and

21 the surrounding county of Onondaga have seen the

22 benefit of being wholly contained within a single

23 congressional district. Having a member of

24 congress who understands the needs of the

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2 community has allowed us to have our voice heard
3 in congress in ways that otherwise might have
4 been impossible, and that is a voice that
5 deserves to be heard in any fair system.

6 With well over 460,000 people, Onondaga
7 County would make up approximately 65% of a new
8 district. Furthermore, Onondaga County has seen
9 a slight population increase since the last
10 census, as you have already heard, unlike some
11 other communities in New York. Given that,
12 keeping the county as an anchor of any new
13 district is both fair and equitable on a
14 congressional level. As a majority of the
15 population in the district, the community could
16 be confident that any representative would be
17 responsive to our concerns.

18 If the population of the county or city
19 were instead to be split amongst multiple
20 congressional districts, we could no longer be
21 sure that the needs of this community would be
22 met. Those needs would be significant in the
23 years ahead, from the necessity of rebuilding and
24 expanding our transportation alternatives to

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2 improving our education system, our area will
3 find great value in fair, cohesive
4 representation.

5 I also believe that given our location,
6 what is good for Syracuse and Onondaga County can
7 be good not just for all of Central New York, but
8 for New York State as a whole--a vibrant
9 community in the center of the state will benefit
10 all those who travel to or through our county.

11 I am sure that ours is not the only
12 community that has voiced this concern in
13 hearings before this committee, and I am equally
14 sure that it will be difficult or impossible for
15 the committee to keep every community whole. I
16 do not envy your work, but I ask that when you
17 make your decisions you closely consider the
18 following: Onondaga County is a vibrant and
19 growing community with a major metro area and a
20 world class workforce and employers. It is the
21 population anchor of Central New York and it is
22 fair and equitable that it should also be the
23 population anchor of its congressional district.
24 Thank you again for your service on this

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2 committee, and for the opportunity to speak with
3 you today.

4 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you very much.

5 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Thank you.

6 [applause]

7 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you.

8 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Kevin Acres?

9 Good afternoon.

10 MR. KEVIN ACRES, DIRECTOR, ST. LAWRENCE
11 COUNTY FARM BUREAU: Good afternoon. Welcome to
12 the home of the Syracuse Orangemen, soon to be
13 the nation's top number one basketball team.

14 I haven't submitted any written
15 testimony. We had a county board meeting last
16 night that I got home at 11. At 3:30 in the
17 morning, I fed my 650 head of Holsteins and it's
18 a two and a half hour drive down here and so I'm
19 operating on about 2 liters of high-test
20 caffeine, so my handwriting's pretty jittery.

21 Well, I'm Kevin Acres, a dairy farmer
22 from St. Lawrence County, who also serves as a
23 director on the St. Lawrence County Farm Bureau.
24 Presently, I'm a St. Lawrence County legislator,

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2 and previous to that, a - - school board member
3 for 22 years. I come from the North Country,
4 which has a distinct cultural identity of its
5 own. We are primarily an agricultural entity
6 with two private universities--St. Lawrence and
7 Clarkson--and SUNY, with Canton and Potsdam, and
8 Potsdam's the home of the famous Crane School of
9 Music.

10 Our needs are very distinct. We need
11 representation that addresses our farm issues
12 such as nutrient management, labor needs,
13 regulation relief, right to farm laws, and food
14 safety issues. Most importantly for the ag
15 community, we need representation that
16 understands our business and is able to
17 adequately comprehend and protect our business
18 practices and the face of anti-animal
19 agricultural groups, and to be able to provide
20 clear direction when dealing with potentially ag-
21 threatening legislation from legislators who
22 don't know which end of the cow that the milk is
23 produced. We also need a representative who
24 understands the level of poverty in St. Lawrence

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2 County, and the need for state education formula
3 reform for adequate funding for our public
4 schools. We have specific needs in ag and
5 education in St. Lawrence County that need to
6 have a voice in Albany.

7 The proposed changes to the districts
8 cut St. Lawrence County into several pieces with
9 minority shares or percentages in multiple
10 districts that leave us without a majority voice
11 in all but one of those seven representatives.
12 St. Lawrence County deserves a voice in Albany.
13 Thank you.

14 [applause]

15 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Thank you.

16 Nancy Martin? Good afternoon.

17 MS. NANCY MARTIN, ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY
18 REPUBLICAN CHAIR: Good afternoon. Thank you for
19 the opportunity to speak to you today. My name
20 is Nancy Martin and I'm speaking as a resident of
21 St. Lawrence County, New York. However, I
22 currently serve as Chairwoman on the St. Lawrence
23 Republican County Committee. I do not intend for
24 my comments today to be partisan in nature, but

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2 rather evolving from geographic population and
3 economic perspectives. My comments are
4 specifically concerned with the interests of the
5 people of the present 122nd assembly district.
6 You know the area as the proposed 115th, 116th,
7 117th, and 118th assembly districts.

8 By the way, in no way does this
9 redistricting proposal meet criteria to keep
10 counties as whole as possible to the maximum
11 extent possible. St. Lawrence County presently
12 has two senators and two assembly persons
13 representing its citizens. Under this proposal,
14 St. Lawrence County will have three senators and
15 four assembly persons. Under this proposal, the
16 112nd assembly district looks like a very
17 different district. The district has been
18 shattered. More representatives does not mean
19 better representation.

20 I fear that some of our rural farmers,
21 as Mr. Acres has just spoken, will have different
22 representation than that of their adjoining
23 neighbor as a result of the severe splintering of
24 the county. Our county legislature is composed

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2 of 15 legislators; 8 of them are affected by this
3 proposal, resulting in some having as many as 4
4 state legislators representing their
5 constituents.

6 St. Lawrence County is the largest
7 county in New York based on area. The present
8 122nd assembly district runs east-west in St.
9 Lawrence County along US Highway Route 11 from
10 Gouverneur to Brasher Falls, nearly 65 miles, or
11 1 hour and 20 minutes, and it runs east-west in
12 the southernmost part of St. Lawrence County,
13 along State Highway 3 from Pitcairn to
14 Piercefield, nearly 55 miles or 1 hour and 5
15 minutes. There are no identifiable roads leading
16 directly to Hamilton or Herkimer counties. New
17 York's constitutional provisions on redistricting
18 require that state legislative districts be
19 composed of contiguous territory--thus, without
20 direct access to Herkimer and Hamilton Counties,
21 there may exist a violation of the constitution
22 of New York state.

23 The current 122nd AD extends from Sandy
24 Creek to Brasher Falls, nearly 115 miles, 2 hours

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2 and 18 minutes. The proposed 115th, if extended,
3 would add an additional 20 miles at its farthest
4 point, Rouses Point to - - Corners. However, the
5 proposed 118th AD would run north-south along a
6 number of routes from Norfolk to Danube, nearly
7 200 miles, or 4 hours and 27 minutes, through
8 three regional designations in New York State--
9 the St. Lawrence River Valley, the Adirondack
10 Mountains, and the Mohawk Valley.

11 I don't see how any state legislator
12 could effectively represent St. Lawrence County
13 under this proposal. Citizens of St. Lawrence
14 County may have to travel greater distances to
15 meet with their representatives in the district
16 offices that typically gravitate towards district
17 population centers. More district offices will
18 not be an option, considering the fiscal position
19 of the State of New York.

20 St. Lawrence County has long identified
21 itself as one of the many border counties of New
22 York State known as the North Country as we align
23 along the majestic St. Lawrence River and the
24 Canadian border. Further, we consider ourselves

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2 a third of the tri-county area--Jefferson, Lewis,
3 and St. Lawrence counties. Many of our employees
4 are proud members of the Jefferson, Lewis, and
5 St. Lawrence Counties Central Trade and Labor
6 Council. Our schools are members of the St.
7 Lawrence, Lewis Board of Cooperative Educational
8 Services. St. Lawrence County is presently
9 associated with three media outlets--Oswego,
10 Watertown, and Rome. Under redistricting, we
11 pick up a number of additional outlets--Malone,
12 Plattsburgh, and outlets in Herkimer, Hamilton,
13 and Fulton counties that I am not familiar with.
14 St. Lawrence County will lose its identity. Tri-
15 town in St. Lawrence County is composed of the
16 towns of Brasher, Lawrence, and Stockholm.
17 Under--

18 MS. LEVIN: Miss Martin, you need to
19 summarize, please.

20 MS. MARTIN: Under one school district.
21 These three towns will be represented by two
22 senators and two assembly persons. Under this
23 proposal, the Parishville-Hopkinton School
24 District will be represented by two assembly

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2 persons, as will the Colton-Pierrepont School
3 District. The people of St. Lawrence County have
4 more in common with our neighbors to the east and
5 west--we shop in Jefferson County and we travel
6 through Clinton and Franklin Counties seeking
7 medical treatment in Burlington. Several of our
8 towns in the southernmost part of the district
9 are members of the Adirondack Park, and may
10 therefore share common concerns with the proposed
11 118th, but the irony is that our commonality with
12 Herkimer and Hamilton Counties, the Adirondack
13 Mountains, is what cuts us off from them. I
14 thank LATFOR for its hard work, difficult work,
15 and for giving me the opportunity to speak before
16 you. Thank you.

17 MS. LEVINE: Thank you.

18 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you.

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Thank you.

20 [applause]

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: The one thing
22 I noticed with Lewis County--there's one town
23 with 27 people in the whole town. I think that's
24 the smallest town in population in the state, and

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2 for those who study the North Country, there are
3 not 5,000 people in all of Hamilton County, so it
4 makes it very difficult, but we appreciate that,
5 and your commuting input is very helpful. Dan
6 Jeror?

7 MR. DON JEROR: Good afternoon. My name
8 is actually Don Jeror--they got it wrong somehow
9 or other.

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Thank you.

11 MR. JEROR: Okay, good afternoon. My
12 name is Don Jeror. I'm a private citizen from
13 Oneida County. I'm way out of my comfort zone,
14 here, but this is too important an issue, I feel,
15 to let slide by like everybody does. I guess
16 mostly what I have are questions for you--just
17 rhetorical questions, but questions nonetheless.
18 I've noticed that nobody but nobody has come up
19 here and said, "Boy, you guys have got some great
20 ideas." Let's start with that, okay?

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Let's go with
22 the assumption that anybody that thinks they've
23 got a great district is home today keeping their
24 fingers crossed--

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2 MR. JEROR: Absolutely--

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: As the nature
4 of public hearings--

5 MR. JEROR: Absolutely, and I'm here to
6 make sure that doesn't happen.

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Stay quiet,
8 stay below the radar, maybe they'll leave it just
9 like it is.

10 MR. JEROR: Yes. Well, I'm here today
11 regarding the current plan for the assembly
12 redistricting here in New York. I'm sure and I
13 know you've already heard from people who have
14 all their facts, all their ducks in a row.
15 That's not the tact I'm going to take. I think
16 the proposal as it is, especially for the
17 proposed 102nd is blatantly unfair.

18 And I'm going to attack this--and I will
19 use the word attack, just from your own criteria--
20 -number one, effective representation. How can
21 you have effective representation when the
22 proposed 102nd assembly district would stretch
23 across half the width of New York State?
24 Community cohesiveness--once again, how can you

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2 have community cohesiveness when the proposed
3 102nd assembly district would stretch across half
4 of New York State? Commonality of interest--how
5 can you have commonality of interest when the
6 proposed 102nd assembly district would stretch
7 across half the width of New York State, not to
8 mention six distinct regions? Who could possibly
9 represent that--one person? Not going to happen.
10 In geographical compactness--how can there be any
11 kind of geographical compactness when the
12 proposed 102nd assembly district would stretch
13 across half the width of New York State?

14 By following the most basic precepts of
15 the New York constitution, this process could
16 restore some integrity that people believe has
17 been lost by the taskforce, and restore some of
18 the faith that New Yorkers have in their leaders.
19 I thank you very much for the opportunity to come
20 to speak to you today, and folks, I hope you take
21 a good, hard look at this, because the way it's
22 set up now is atrocious. It's just not good in
23 any way, shape or form, okay? Thank you. Have a
24 nice day.

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2 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Thank you very
3 much.

4 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you.

5 [applause]

6 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Julie Miller?
7 Julie, are you testifying to us or to the
8 audience, because I have no idea what you just
9 put there?

10 MS. JULIE MILLER, CHAIR, ONEIDA COUNTY
11 CONSERVATIVE CHAIR: That's a graphic for the
12 audience, because you know the districts that you
13 drew.

14 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Okay.

15 MS. MILLER: You don't need to look at
16 them.

17 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: If it's a map
18 of the districts we have it up here.

19 MS. MILLER: Okay, right.

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Thank you.

21 MS. MILLER: My name is Julie Miller.
22 I'm a teacher and I'm a resident of Oneida
23 County. I'd like--

24 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: - -

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2 MS. MILLER: Yeah, I got it. I'd like
3 to address the population and geographic
4 inequities of the proposed new assembly
5 districts. The proposed changes unfairly skew
6 the population deviations for upstate districts.

7 Perhaps it's time for a math lesson.
8 The 2010 US census states that New York's total
9 population is a little over 19 million. This
10 figure divided by 150 assembly districts equals
11 about 129,000--the median number for the
12 population of a district, and the number for
13 determining deviations. Proposed district
14 populations may deviate from this figure plus or
15 minus 5%--in other words, district populations
16 must fall roughly between 123,000 and 135,000.
17 The proposed New York City districts all contain
18 approximately 124,000 in population. Contrast
19 this with the upstate districts--nearly every
20 district in Central New York contains 132,000 or
21 more, which reflects a disparity of 8,000 more in
22 our districts when compared with New York City
23 districts.

24 Downstate districts contain populations

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2 which are considerably lower than the optimal
3 district population, and upstate districts
4 contain populations which exceed the optimal
5 population by thousands of persons. Essentially
6 this is packing representatives downstate at the
7 expense of upstate representation. I'm not a
8 math teacher, but anybody can see that this just
9 doesn't add up.

10 The proposed geographic boundaries
11 unfairly fracture Oneida County, and other
12 upstate communities, negatively impacting
13 efficient and effective representation. Perhaps
14 it's time for a drawing lesson--take for instance
15 one of the proposed New York City districts,
16 assembly district 43. The district is drawn to
17 be geographically compact, and being comprised of
18 city blocks one can say that there is community
19 cohesiveness and commonality of interest in this
20 district. It's two miles from one end of the
21 district to the other--a 20 minute drive in
22 traffic--and it's population is 124,000, the low
23 end of the deviation.

24 In contrast, the proposed assembly

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2 district 102 is drawn to sprawl across six
3 upstate counties, and steals from Oneida County
4 its economic engine, the town of New Hartford.
5 It's 120 miles from one end of the district to
6 the other, a two-and-a-half hour drive. Its
7 population is 132,000, the high end of the
8 deviation. The situation is similar in the
9 proposed 117th district, where many Oneida County
10 towns would end up. Obviously these upstate
11 districts are not drawn with community
12 cohesiveness and commonality of interest in mind,
13 and they certainly are not examples of efficient
14 and effective representation. I'm not an art
15 teacher, but it looks like the committee needs to
16 go back to the drawing board.

17 Based on the obvious population and
18 geographical inequities of the proposed assembly
19 districts, it is evident that the commission
20 completely disregarded their own guidelines.
21 Oneida County is being robbed of effective
22 representation. The constitution guarantees one
23 man, one vote. Why is Upstate New York being
24 denied its fair share of representation? I urge

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2 you to redraw the assembly lines fairly so that
3 the constitutional rights of the residents of
4 Oneida County and other upstate communities are
5 restored and preserved. Thank you for your time.

6 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Just for the
7 record--

8 MS. MILLER: Yes, sir.

9 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: At least as
10 far as the City of New York is concerned, there
11 are some voting rights concerns there, but you
12 mentioned your district around 132,000.

13 MS. MILLER: Right.

14 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Every district
15 in Manhattan is 132,400, in New York County.

16 MS. MILLER: Right, and they're all
17 packed into high rises within a few city blocks.

18 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: No--

19 MS. MILLER: Okay.

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: That has
21 nothing to do with anything here.

22 MS. MILLER: Right, no, I know, it's
23 strictly based on population.

24 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: No, it's that-

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2 -

3 MS. MILLER: I'm just saying for the
4 most part the city districts are drawn on the low
5 end of the deviation.

6 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: but the best
7 known county in the state of New York is New York
8 County, Manhattan--

9 MS. MILLER: Right.

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: And it's
11 132,444, 446--they vary by very few people within
12 that county.

13 MS. MILLER: Right--

14 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: You also have
15 some upstate counties, there's one I'm thinking
16 of in the mid-Hudson, it's 120 something or
17 other--it's off by 4000 or 5000--

18 MS. MILLER: Yeah, I wonder which
19 legislator drew that district for himself.

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Because we
21 can't break towns.

22 MS. MILLER: Right.

23 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: So there are
24 voting rights restrictions that are federal.

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2 There's a prohibition, at least upstate and for
3 most, but not all of Long Island, where you can't
4 break a town, even if you'd like to to make the
5 map more exact, so it's not--you have a
6 legitimate complaint, perhaps, in the big
7 picture, but there's not an exclusive situation.
8 There are exceptions starting with Manhattan
9 being about the same as it is--

10 MS. MILLER: Right, I found about 20
11 districts in New York City that were on the low
12 end of the deviation.

13 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Okay, thank
14 you very much.

15 MS. MILLER: Thank you.

16 SENATOR MARTIN M. DILAN, NEW YORK STATE
17 LEGISLATIVE TASK FORCE ON DEMOGRAPHIC RESEARCH
18 AND REAPPORTIONMENT: Miss?

19 MS. MILLER: Yes, sir.

20 SENATOR DILAN: Excuse me--did you do an
21 analysis for the New York State senate?

22 MS. MILLER: No, I did not. I was
23 focusing on the assembly districts.

24 SENATOR DILAN: Okay. Is there any

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2 reason?

3 MS. MILLER: Well, because we're losing
4 representation in the current 115th assembly
5 district.

6 SENATOR DILAN: Okay, so are you aware
7 that in the senate it's a reverse? Are you aware
8 of that?

9 MS. MILLER: I am not focusing on the
10 senate at this time--

11 SENATOR DILAN: I'm just asking you, are
12 you aware that in the senate it's the reverse,
13 where the districts in New York City--

14 MS. MILLER: Well, then, that would have
15 to be addressed then, wouldn't it?

16 SENATOR DILAN: Excuse me?

17 MS. MILLER: That would have to be
18 addressed, also, then.

19 SENATOR DILAN: Well, I'm just letting
20 you know.

21 MS. MILLER: Right.

22 SENATOR DILAN: Yes, okay.

23 MS. MILLER: I understand.

24 SENATOR DILAN: Thank you.

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2 MS. MILLER: Okay, thanks.

3 [applause]

4 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Thank you.

5 Cassandra Harris Lockwood?

6 MS. CASSANDRA HARRIS LOCKWOOD, CEO, FOR
7 THE GOOD, INC.: Good afternoon.

8 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Good
9 afternoon.

10 MS. HARRIS LOCKWOOD: I'm Cassandra
11 Harris Lockwood. I am the CEO and president of
12 For the Good, Incorporated in Utica, New York,
13 and I'm publisher of the Utica Phoenix, and I've
14 left a copy with all of you and I think on page
15 five is a letter from a constituent on the issue
16 of redistricting, and I'm here today to express
17 my grave disappointment in the proposed new
18 assembly district lines.

19 I live in the current 115th, and in
20 order to get to work I would have to drive now
21 through the new 102nd from the 115th, through the
22 102nd, into the 116th, and if I want to visit my
23 father after the end of my work day, I have to
24 drive north again, and bump back into the 115th,

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2 I believe it is--the current 115th. It just
3 makes a hodgepodge of what we call our community.

4 In recent years, New York State
5 leadership has taken actions that have been
6 extremely detrimental to the residents of Oneida
7 County. Our county and its citizens have been
8 suffering an economic depression and lack of jobs
9 while we've continued to absorb legions of
10 refugees and other underserved populations. The
11 state's response has been to reduce school
12 funding, shut down local prisons, and now the
13 state hospital, and to choose to invest elsewhere
14 in New York State. Over the years, these now-
15 diminished industries have provided employment
16 for hundreds of our residents. These cuts have
17 further plunged our county into economic
18 hardship, limited educational opportunities for
19 our children, reduced our economic base, and
20 forced a much longer recovery time.

21 Now the state leadership has decided to
22 virtually eliminate our local representation by
23 drawing our assembly district without any
24 relevance to constituents' commonality or sense

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2 of community. This proposed plan would leave
3 Oneida County with an even weaker voice in Albany
4 at a time when we need it the most. The
5 residents of Oneida County are tired of being
6 targeted for these devastating reductions, job
7 losses, and now the loss of a coherent
8 representation. I'm urging the leadership to
9 take the necessary steps to correct this
10 injustice and blatant attack on the good citizens
11 of Oneida County and restore our local
12 representation with the district that takes into
13 consideration our mutual circumstance, our
14 relevance, and our needs.

15 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Thank you.

16 [applause]

17 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Sandra Parker?
18 Sandra Parker? William Pabes, or Pabes? Please
19 pronounce your name for us when you get here.

20 MR. WILLIAM PABES: Good afternoon, it's
21 William Pabes.

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Pabes?

23 MR. PABES: Yes.

24 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Thank you.

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2 MR. PABES: Thank you for the
3 opportunity to speak with your panel today
4 regarding the proposed lines for assembly and the
5 senate seats in the New York State legislature.
6 My name is William M. Pabes. I'm from Little
7 Falls, New York, Herkimer County. I'm currently
8 represented by the 117th assembly district.

9 Let me first say that it appears from my
10 initial review that several assembly seats in the
11 Central New York Mohawk Valley region are being
12 dramatically affected by shifting lines. These
13 are newly proposed assembly districts 118, 102,
14 and the North Country district that is being
15 pulled into Oneida and Lewis County.

16 My first concern is that as a region
17 that is dramatically impacted by the proposed
18 changes, I find that the closest hearing sites
19 are Syracuse and Albany. For working people, it
20 is difficult to take the trip to testify at these
21 hearings from the greater--it is a difficult trip
22 to testify at these hearings, and would be much
23 nicer if they were held sometimes in the Utica
24 area. Has anyone considered that ever?

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2 Secondly, the rationale for this
3 proposal escapes me. Herkimer County, for
4 example, would be carved into three separate
5 assembly districts and two senate districts.
6 Oswego County would again be divided and several
7 townships in the Oneida County would be added to
8 the counties with which they share little
9 relationship. In the 118th district specifically
10 I see a huge sprawling district that would
11 require a superhuman effort to reasonably
12 represent--some 16 rural townships in St.
13 Lawrence County would be joined with portions of
14 Herkimer, Oneida, Fulton and Hamilton counties.
15 I see no logic in putting these townships
16 together in a district that really has no core.

17 While Central New York communities
18 appear to have maintained their level of
19 population according to the latest census
20 figures, it appears that our districts are being
21 gutted and that population numbers are being
22 stretched to the maximum allowed under the
23 redistricting rules, approximately 132,000 or
24 more, while downstate districts are almost

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2 invariably in the lower to mid-120,000 range.

3 Whatever influence we may have in the
4 legislature, and I know that the members most
5 affected are members of the republican minority,
6 will be further splintered and our voice in
7 Albany will be further weakened under this plan.
8 In my view, this plan is blatantly unfair,
9 heavily weighted to benefit the majority members,
10 and creates the possibility of political chaos in
11 our Central New York region. I urge you to
12 return to the drawing board and come forward with
13 a plan that is fair to all New Yorkers, not just
14 for a chosen few. Thank you very much. I
15 appreciate the time.

16 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Thank you.

17 [applause]

18 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Mark Hall?

19 Good afternoon.

20 MR. MARK HALL, SUPERVISOR, TOWN OF FINE,
21 NY: Thank you. My name is Mark Hall. I'm
22 supervisor of the town of Fine, which is a rural
23 St. Lawrence County town, wholly within the
24 Adirondack Park, and I'm here, and I hope not to

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2 echo a lot of what my friends some St. Lawrence,
3 Jefferson and Lewis County have said, so I
4 appreciate the opportunity to speak with you
5 today.

6 My belief is that the districts should
7 be about representing the constituents, not about
8 protecting elected officials. Being a three hour
9 drive away from constituents is not about
10 representing constituents. Districts should have
11 continuity and commonality--boy, haven't we heard
12 that a few times today. Districts to me should
13 go together like milk and cookies, peanut butter
14 and jelly. The 118th that you've created for the
15 assembly to me looks like oil and water--it just
16 doesn't fit together. Looking at this, it's over
17 200 miles long and has very few commonalities.
18 The barriers in the district are many, but they
19 include St. Lawrence County being divided into
20 four assembly districts, three senate districts,
21 and the commonality is destroyed.

22 A lot of people have talked about
23 transportation today. There are no roads through
24 the 118th assembly district. There's over 30

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2 miles of pure wilderness between St. Lawrence,
3 Herkimer, and Hamilton Counties. Most of this
4 area is state-owned forest preserve where
5 motorized vehicles are prohibited. I've given
6 you a map on the second page there to show that
7 there's just no roads through there. It took me
8 about two and a half hours to drive to Syracuse
9 today--I would welcome that, rather than drive
10 from the top of that assembly district to the
11 bottom.

12 There are three different major media
13 outlets that cover the district. That's not fair
14 to the constituents or the elected official.
15 You've got Watertown, you've got Syracuse, and
16 you've got Utica--they just don't have
17 commonality.

18 The proposed districts are in and out of
19 the Adirondack Park, one of the most protected
20 areas of New York State. It adds confusion when
21 boundaries intersect at many different points.
22 These boundaries cross numerous lines including
23 the Adirondack Park agency, different DEC
24 regions, different DOT regions, and different

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2 regional economic council regions, just to name a
3 few. As a rural representative who always has
4 difficulty with representation, don't make it
5 worse for us.

6 St. Lawrence County is huge--my friend,
7 the legislator, spoke about the four colleges in
8 St. Lawrence County. My town hosts the fifth
9 college St. Lawrence County, the SUNY-ESF School,
10 so even within the county, people make that
11 mistake of four colleges instead of five, so
12 that's about representation. Sorry, Kevin. My
13 point is simple--keep it simple. Do the right
14 thing and create districts that represent we the
15 people. Thank you.

16 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you.

17 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Thank you.

18 [applause]

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Charles
20 Mansell? And I may be--Marcelle? Charles
21 Marcelle? Kimberly Hutton? Good afternoon.

22 MS. KIMBERLY HUTTON: Good afternoon,
23 ladies and gentlemen. I do represent the 118th
24 and I just wanted to give you a little insight of

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2 what my little neighborhood is. For instance,
3 just off-note, my speech was all ready but this
4 morning I went for a three-mile jog, and my
5 three-mile jog this morning--between 7:45 and
6 8:45, I walked a little and got off the beaten
7 trail and did some nature walking, but I only had
8 two vehicles pass me in that amount of time. One
9 of the vehicles was the town employees; another
10 was a lady who just drives around every day, so
11 that's how rural we are.

12 I had been asked to attend the public
13 hearing to address the issue of the proposed
14 senate districts. St. Lawrence County is home to
15 many rural townships--Rossie, New York of St.
16 Lawrence has a population of 878 people, and they
17 do care about the consideration given to our
18 legislative representatives. The area newspapers
19 informed us that there was a sense that the
20 public didn't care that much about legislative
21 redistricting. We beg to differ.

22 We do understand the meaning of
23 challenge--it's more than hoping you can hail
24 down the first taxi you see and not stuck in

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2 gridlock on your morning commute to the office,
3 or hoping the line at Starbucks isn't too long.
4 Challenge to us is hoping the 30 below temps the
5 night before hasn't frozen the pipes that prevent
6 that morning shower, or the foggy conditions that
7 you have careful not to run into the back end of
8 an Amish horse and cart--I'm not kidding about
9 that, either--and hoping that you never really do
10 have your vehicle break down in Timbuktu. Yes,
11 our roads really do lead to Timbuktu--just ask
12 our legislative representatives about our
13 beautiful geographical layout. Everyone seems to
14 want their piece of the pie, and that's a fair
15 way to look at it, as long as the pie is enough
16 to feed everybody.

17 The limitations outweigh the
18 possibilities when looking at some lack of basic
19 needs. Emergency services have difficulties
20 reaching victims due to the conditions of the
21 roads. Hospitals are more than an hour away from
22 the accident scene. Cell phone usage is limited
23 due to signal availability, because telephone
24 companies don't turn profits on pay phones--that

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2 is a luxury from the past. And on a side note,
3 when Mr. Wright was senator, Mr. Jim Wright
4 helped me put in a pay phone for a youth group.
5 I serve five dozen children at any time every
6 Tuesday night in Little Rossie, so I needed a pay
7 phone because I could not get cell phone service--
8 --you talk about representation, what new person
9 is going to understand that unless they come to
10 my youth group meetings?

11 In most areas, and these two facts
12 alone--the phone alone is the difference between
13 life and death in the true North Country. In
14 most areas of our county, we have no idea about
15 high speed internet services. Therefore, the
16 opportunity for better businesses to offer a
17 better quality of job does not exist. People say
18 times are tough--we understand, just watching gas
19 prices continue to increase every day. We ponder
20 why this was not a factor while looking at this
21 redistricting issue, since getting reimbursement
22 for your mileage is not part of the budget.

23 Has anyone taken a road map out--and
24 that will be the road map behind my speech, all I

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2 did was take your redistricting and place it on
3 top of a common map and you can see the
4 geographical differences there. Has anyone taken
5 out this road map and experienced how far it
6 actually is from one town to the next? Imagine
7 how difficult it is being unemployed with an
8 increasing gas and food prices in our rural area.
9 But you couldn't, unless you lived there. And I
10 invite you for your next hearing, please come to
11 my town barn--we'd be more than happy to let you
12 see what mileage is. Thank you.

13 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you.

14 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Thank you.

15 [applause]

16 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Ken Bush?

17 MR. KENNETH L. BUSH, SUPERVISOR, TOWN OF
18 ELBRIDGE: Thank you. We're going on to two and
19 a half hours you folks have been here, and we
20 certainly appreciate your patience and
21 understanding. I'm approaching this from a
22 little different perspective. I'm the town
23 supervisor for the town of Elbridge located in
24 Western Onondaga County, and I'm here to tell you

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2 I am very pleased with the plans that you have
3 drawn. We go across county lines--I'm not afraid
4 to go across county lines--

5 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: If we had
6 known that, we would have put you on first.

7 MR. BUSH: Thank you. In reference to
8 the gentlemen that just spoke a little while ago,
9 I am one of the people--I've been in town
10 government for almost 20 years, and Cayuga County
11 and some of the other counties that you've chosen
12 to put us in are very fine counties, as well as
13 part of Onondaga so that goes for both the
14 assembly district and the senate district. We
15 are not afraid of our neighbors in the
16 surrounding counties.

17 I didn't realize that we'd also be
18 talking about the congressional district. I
19 thought it was very interesting when the
20 gentlemen before me spoke about keeping the
21 congressional district concise in Onondaga County
22 and that would make up 65% of the district. Now,
23 just think about that for a minute--what about
24 that other 35% that has to round it out to 100?

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2 How do you think those people might feel? Do
3 they think they have a piece of the pie when it
4 is so dominated by one, quote, metropolitan area?
5 So from my perspective I would not be unhappy if
6 Western Onondaga County were divided and we moved
7 into the Finger Lakes area. That is a very
8 rational decision for those of us in Western
9 rural Onondaga County.

10 We're not all tied to the city of
11 Syracuse, in the metropolitan area, and we
12 deserve to have equal representation regardless
13 of boundary lines. County lines can be
14 artificial just as well as assembly lines and
15 state senate lines, so look at the people and
16 give them fair representation. Don't allow them
17 to be dominated by one political unit simply
18 because of population size. That is not fair to
19 some of those of us in rural areas. So thank you
20 for your time--I appreciate it.

21 MS. LEVINE: Thank you.

22 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you.

23 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Thank you very
24 much.

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2 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you very much.

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Is there
4 anyone else here whose name I do not have who
5 would like to testify?

6 [background noise]

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Come forward,
8 please. Give us your name for the record.

9 MR. JAMES ANNUTTO: My name is James
10 Annutto.

11 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Last name,
12 James? I'm sorry.

13 MR. ANNUTTO: Annutto.

14 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: A-N-A-T-O?

15 MR. ANNUTTO: A-N-N-U-T-T-O, and I'm
16 here representing Sylvia Rowan [phonetic],
17 Chairman of the Herkimer County Republican
18 Committee, Executive Committee and Herkimer
19 County Republican Committee.

20 Dear taskforce members: I have recently
21 been advised of the proposed changes in assembly
22 and senate districts covering Herkimer County. I
23 am quite mystified by the layout of the proposed
24 117th assembly district. I am sure many hours of

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2 work went into this taskforce; however, I do not
3 understand how this design will serve the
4 constituents of the district. It takes
5 approximately one and a half hours to travel from
6 county seat in Herkimer to Old Forge in the town
7 of Webb. Under this plan it appears it would now
8 take an assembly representative well over four
9 hours to visit the northernmost town of the
10 district.

11 I am also concerned these changes will
12 negatively impact the ability of Herkimer County
13 to increase economic development. The Herkimer
14 County Industrial Development Agency would now
15 need to coordinate its efforts in three assembly
16 districts instead of one. It seems odd to divide
17 the county's population base into three separate
18 districts. I am very concerned it will seriously
19 undermine the ability to improve economic
20 conditions. It is quite well known that the
21 northern part of the state tends to lag during
22 economic recovery. This change certainly will
23 not enhance Herkimer County's ability to prosper.

24 The distance to travel to Onondaga

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2 County for these hearings is at least one and a
3 half hours to two hours. Why was Onondaga County
4 chosen for a location and not the areas affected,
5 Oneida or Herkimer County? The time of day is
6 also difficult and inconvenient for those people
7 who work--not much consideration was given to the
8 residents of Herkimer County so their voices may
9 hear concerning this very important issue.

10 This redistricting process could be
11 interpreted as an unfair division for the
12 residents of Herkimer County. Further, the plan
13 seems to be especially unfair as it will divide
14 the county into three parts. Each part would
15 have to work with unfamiliar entities, perhaps at
16 times one area working against another instead of
17 working as a whole for the good of the county. I
18 hope the committee will seriously review these
19 proposed changes and keep Herkimer County whole.
20 Thank you.

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Thank you very
22 much.

23 [applause]

24 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Is there

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2 anyone else here who would like to come forward?
3 I'm going to go back over the list and read the
4 names of individuals who did not come when I
5 called their name, and as far as the location is
6 concerned, there are a number of places in New
7 York State. We've done 20 public hearings so
8 far. This round is 9, and the federal judge gave
9 us a June 26th primary, so we have a lot of time
10 deadlines and we're sorry that we couldn't have
11 come to Utica, or a number of places, Jamestown,
12 Binghamton, etcetera.

13 Following names are people who are on
14 the list and may well have been here earlier or
15 will be sending in written testimony as we
16 encourage across the state. These hearings are
17 not the only way that one participates. One may
18 send in maps and testimony to LATFOR--it all
19 becomes part of the official record. Ray Meyer,
20 Henry Balmer, Christopher Farber, Joe Moriano,
21 Fred Beardsley--he did speak, I apologize, Fred.
22 Sandra Parker, and it looks like Charles
23 Marcelle.

24 There being no further testimony, we

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2 thank you for your participation and your good
3 citizenry. The next public hearing will be in
4 Rochester scheduled at 11:30 tomorrow--it's on
5 the LATFOR website--and a final public hearing
6 will be in Buffalo the day after, I think that's
7 11 in the morning or 10:30 in the morning, again,
8 on the LATFOR website. Senator, did you have any
9 comments before we close or any other member of
10 the taskforce?

11 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Our 21st hearing is
12 completed. Any other members of the taskforce
13 wish to speak? Hearing none, we will see you
14 tomorrow at 1130 AM in Rochester.

15 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Thank you.

16 (The public hearing concluded at 4:53
17 p.m.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Anna Galassini, do hereby certify that the foregoing typewritten transcription, consisting of pages number 1 to 103, inclusive, is a true record prepared by me and completed from materials provided to me.



Anna Galassini, Transcriptionist

February 21, 2012