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STATE OF NEW YORK ONONDAGA COUNTY LEGISLATURE
COUNTY OF ONONDAGA

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In the Matter of
REAPPORTIONMENT

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Public Hearing
held in
Syracuse, New York
Wednesday, October 27, 2021

Reported by:
Mary Agnes Drury, RPR, NYACR, CLR

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A P P E A R A N C E S :

REAPPORTIONMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

KEVIN HULSLANDER

DAVID KNAPP

MICHELE SARDO

DUSTIN CZARNY

JOE RAINONE

SHARON MORAN

PROCEEDINGS

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2 MR. HULSLANDER: Good evening,
3 everyone. This is a public hearing of the
4 Onondaga County Reapportionment Commission.

5 Thank you all for attending. We are
6 here to listen to your comments regarding
7 the redistricting of the Onondaga County
8 Legislature. That's our job here tonight
9 is to listen to you, the public.

10 I'm going to call speakers in the
11 order that you signed in. I'll identify
12 you by name, and I'll call you up to the
13 podium, and you can then provide us your
14 commentary.

15 As I said before, we won't be
16 answering questions. We'll be listening,
17 however, very intently on what you have to
18 say.

19 The first speaker is Kari
20 Egerbrecht.

21 MS. EGEBRECHT: Good evening, my
22 name is Kari Egerbrecht. I'm a lifetime
23 resident of Onondaga County, a 20-year
24 public school teacher, and a candidate for
25 Clay Town Board.

PROCEEDINGS

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2 My comments are mostly directed to
3 Commissioner Hulslander. You were recently
4 quoted as saying, "We're not rushing, we've
5 never rushed," regarding condensing
6 districts and town lines that should take
7 three months; but instead, it's compacted
8 to 21 days.

9 Why? What are you so afraid of?
10 Let the election season conclude and then
11 -- the work set forth for the redistricting
12 process. Why the rush?

13 Is it the fact that whole
14 legislature is up for re-election?

15 It appears that you are rushing
16 things, as evidenced by the timeline.
17 Scheduling the public hearings; the
18 majority of which were held during the work
19 hours shows what a disconnect you have with
20 the working people.

21 We, the people, want equal and fair
22 processes along with representation for
23 both parties. It's imperative that all the
24 resident of Onondaga County are properly
25 represented, and the process should be

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collaborative and truly bipartisan.

There is an area of parameters to work under to ensure that the map that is drawn is constitutional. To the lens of rushing this looks questionable to me.

Considering you, sir, are the campaign lawyer for the County Executive, you might want to think how you frame things, because perception, in politics especially, is everything.

Living in Clay down from White Pines property, I have seen firsthand how the County Executive and a flight of residents, most of which are of the Republican Party.

I have looked at the terrible results, front and center domain, and truly believe that the McMahon threatened to forcibly remove members of his own party from the homes.

Why wouldn't it possible to imagine a Republic Majority Commission would make choices to disenfranchise the democratic norm.

I worked to raise my children to

PROCEEDINGS

1
2 believe in fairness and being truthful. I
3 would hope that all decisionmakers on this
4 committee do just that; working
5 collaboratively to negotiate maps that
6 serve people, all the people. Rushing the
7 process can have long-lasting consequences.
8 Thank you.

9 MR. HULSLANDER: Thank you. The
10 next speaker is Judy Schmid.

11 MS. SCHMID: Hi, my name is Judy, I
12 live on the east side of the City of
13 Syracuse. My husband and I raised our
14 daughter in the university area of the City
15 of Syracuse.

16 Prior to that, I bought my first
17 house at the age of 24 and lived in
18 Tipperary Hill in the City of Syracuse.
19 But I was born in Lyncourt, grew up in
20 Baldwinsville, and spent many, many years
21 in Liverpool and the Town of Clay, other
22 than a short stint as a journalist in the
23 Marine Corps.

24 These are of my concerns: 15 out of
25 17 county legislature candidates signed a

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2 pledge to support non-partisan
3 redistricting prior to the last election.

4 Once elected, oddly, the Republican
5 signees reneged on the pledge. All
6 legislature Republicans then voted down the
7 proposal to give redistricting power to a
8 panel of non-partisan citizens.

9 It appears to me that the
10 Republicans are concerned by the
11 possibility that the Democrats will become
12 a majority party in the county legislature;
13 and therefore, based on how Republicans
14 choose to keep the redistricting commission
15 format as is; the Democrats then would have
16 majority on the commission after the
17 November 2nd election.

18 It also appears to me that there is
19 no other reason for this process to be
20 rushed through before the election without
21 community review.

22 In the course of one week the
23 Republican County Legislators proposed
24 establishing this Commission, voted on it,
25 and then appointed its members, the

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majority of them Republicans. One week.

The open meetings for citizen input on the unseen maps up until now have been scheduled during the day. The excuse that, we're busy too and we find the time to meet during the day, as espoused by some legislators is demeaning.

Many of us fellow citizens work or have daytime commitments and are not paid a full-time salary for a part-time elected position.

As the districts to be re-drawn are not due until the 2023 election, we should have time to study these new maps and give our input into the process.

The way the districts are now towns, villages, and city neighborhoods are sliced and diced that only make sense if one party is trying to outmaneuver the other.

Will they be this way again in an election process? I register my opposition to the ridiculous power grab that will affect our towns for the next ten years.

In my experience in living in towns

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2 and in the city, I have found that people
3 align themselves with their school
4 districts within their communities; whether
5 it's a village or a few city blocks.

6 And now that we do have maps to
7 compare and study and learn, we need to
8 understand them and the logic that created
9 both of them. Thank you.

10 MR. HULSLANDER: Thank you for your
11 comments. The next speaker is Stew
12 /Ko-nig/.

13 MR. KOENIG: I'm Stew /Kay-nig/,
14 actually.

15 MR. HULSLANDER: Oh, sorry.

16 MR. KOENIG: And that's fine.

17 MR. HULSLANDER: I never met you.

18 MR. KOENIG: I hear that often. And
19 I'm happy, I'm married to Judy, and that's
20 why I'm here today.

21 I'm not a person that sees the world
22 through rose-colored glasses. And at the
23 same time, the way things are going in our
24 country, we're at a crossroads of
25 democracy, and I want to expect better of

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my home.

I've been a resident of Syracuse for more than 40 years, and I'm quite involved in the community, and I'm ready for our people, our government to be able to act in fairness.

And in this case, it's very, very important not for the Democrats or for the Republicans, but for the citizens to get a fair shake. And what that means is the Republicans should not be jamming a plan down before election day.

It absolutely makes no sense, and it's wrong. And I would like the Republicans, the ones that I'm talking to tonight and the people that you work with to think long and hard about what is fair and what is right, and to do the right thing. And all that means is waiting until we get a better chance to understand the maps. I assume there will be compromises, but not to jam this down the county's throat. Thank you.

MR. HULSLANDER: Thank you, Stew.

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The next speaker is Sandy Smith.

MS. SMITH: Good evening. My name is Dr. Sandy Smith. I live in the Town of DeWitt, and I thought that instead of telling you what I think about the redistricting process, I would fill you in on what I had been hearing at the doors while canvassing over the last several weeks.

I have been canvassing mostly unaffiliated voters, but some Democrats and Republicans as well. I've had dozens of conversations with voters, and this is what they have told me: For those who have been following the county races, the one issue that seems to animate them is the gerrymandering issue, and it seems to cut across party lines.

They all seem to understand that partisan gerrymandering is antithetical to good governance and bad for democracy.

They believe that all votes, regardless of where you live in the county, should have the same weight. And they

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understand that the current district maps result in some people's votes carrying more weight than others.

They would like to see -- well, when I asked them what would you like to see they said, we would like to see competitive districts so that legislators have to earn their votes. They would like to choose their representatives instead of the representatives choosing them. They would like to see districts drawn so the communities of common interests are not divided up.

The voters I spoke with are more aware of what is going on than I would have predicted. Maybe this has to do with newspaper coverage, but they really seem to be aware of what's going on. They're consciousness about gerrymandering has been raised, and they don't like what they're seeing in the current process. They know that this is a partisan commission despite the pledges made two years ago to make it a non-partisan process.

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2 They don't like the fact that the
3 process is being rushed. They don't like
4 the fact that hearings are scheduled at
5 inconvenient times. They would like to
6 able to respond to the proposed maps once
7 they are available, which just happened
8 today.

9 Probably, they would appreciate
10 hearings to explain the proposed maps and
11 for the people who drew the maps to be able
12 to answer their questions.

13 The voters I spoke with want
14 fairness above all else, and I think they
15 deserve that.

16 Let's slow the process down and get
17 it right this time. Thank you.

18 MR. HULSLANDER: Thank you, Sandy.
19 The next speaker is Doug Wolf.

20 MR. WOLF: Thank you. My name is
21 Doug Wolf, and I'm a 30-year resident of
22 Syracuse, and my comment concerns where the
23 lines are drawn on the map that we end up
24 with.

25 The current practice of having

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2 districts that include some of Syracuse and
3 lots of the suburbs, especially the ones
4 that have not a lot of Syracuse and a lot
5 of suburbs are drawn in such a way that
6 they dilute interest in the city and
7 legislature and ultimately undermine the
8 representative of the legislature.

9 I did some calculations today based
10 the newest numbers, and the state of
11 Syracuse has over 31 percent of the
12 population of the county.

13 And the previous speakers talked
14 about residents that she's been in contact
15 with who say the legislature should
16 represent -- the districts should represent
17 groups of people with common interests.

18 And I believe that the city in which
19 one lives is a very leading aspect of that
20 common interest.

21 With Syracuse having over 30 percent
22 of the county's population, if you just
23 randomly pick the legislature of 17 people
24 from where the people live, you should end
25 up by 30 Syracuse residents on the

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legislature.

Now, there's different ways you define common interest; that could be identity, facial identity, common identity, partisan identity, but there are other ways of doing it.

For the rest of the remainder of my comment I want to elude to a letter that appeared in the local paper over the weekend from someone whose name I don't remember, a former member of the legislature, and they seemed to be arguing for diversity within the districts that are drawn; not arguing that's a flawed argument, what you want to end up with is diversity in the legislature, not the individual districts that make it up.

So that's another way of arguing that the city should be represented proportionally from the city and the suburbs should be represented proportionally from the suburbs.

And if we have that, I think we have a very different legislature than we do

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now.

MR. HULSLANDER: Thank you. The next speaker is David Driesen.

MR. DRIESEN: Hi, my name is David Driesen. I'm a professor of environmental law and constitutional law at Syracuse University College of Law.

My recent work has been a study of democratic decline and how democracies are lost and a seed that that informs plant perspective on these proceedings.

I've lived in this community for decades, first in the City of Syracuse, and now the Town of Dewitt. And I think -- I want to start off with a positive note, and note the opportunity that this commission has to write fair maps.

By that I mean maps that appear to draw the lines that are paved with no attention to voting patterns or party membership or anything of that with fair lines, and they would look nothing like the existing maps which are clearly a product of what is called cracking and packing.

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2 So the techniques for gerrymandering
3 are pretty well-understood. What the
4 majority party does is try to lock
5 themselves in the office and create unfair
6 maps is they take the voters of the
7 opposition party and scatter them about the
8 districts so that they are a minority and
9 they pack the remainder in a few places as
10 they would people where they have a great
11 majority.

12 And my anxiety is this might -- it
13 looks like -- I've haven't had a chance to
14 study these maps and -- and makes a ton of
15 study. But my anxiety is this would be an
16 exercise for a law lecture called
17 gerry laundering, where the objective is
18 more or less follow the path, maybe that's
19 how it's happened.

20 The opportunity to have fair maps is
21 really important for healing division and
22 making the elections fair. And I'm going
23 to talk about some of the values of that.

24 There is a big problem in this
25 county where people, even people who are

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2 politically active do not know who their
3 legislators are. And that's partly a
4 product of districts where they don't
5 always correspond very often in community
6 lines, and so that would help with that.

7 America is more divided than it has
8 been since the Civil War. A lot of the
9 population believes that elections have
10 been either stolen or rigged. And I'm glad
11 that we have not quite the degree of
12 division here as we do in other places, but
13 I see the division increasing here, and I'm
14 anxious about it not getting worse.

15 So if this committee can agree on
16 maps that all parties think is fair, I
17 think it could do a lot in healing that
18 division and seeing to it that this county
19 is not disintegrated into a place where
20 half the people of the county or more think
21 the process is unfair.

22 So I think it's very important to
23 come to an agreement, I'm very distressed
24 to see the two-party maps up here, that's
25 not the way the process should work.

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2 I think the principle that Sandy
3 mentions is absolutely right; voters should
4 collect candidates, politicians should not
5 choose voters. And that has an over
6 salutary effect that forces politicians to
7 challenge positions that their constituents
8 want and to listen to their constituents in
9 order to win, because they can't be short
10 of winning otherwise, and that's what
11 gerrymandering does, it makes it a foregone
12 conclusion to a large extent to a great
13 extent. It should be who is going to win.

14 That implies the commission members
15 must ignore the others politicians to favor
16 their own parties.

17 And, Kevin, I have a question for
18 you with respect to that. Are you
19 representing a client in these proceedings?

20 MR. HULSLANDER: I can't answer the
21 question, but I can tell you one thing that
22 everyone's gotten wrong: I've met Ryan
23 McMahon twice in my life, and everyone's
24 calling me his campaign lawyer, because I
25 wrote a letter, one letter on his behalf,

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and I hadn't been able to talk to him about that letter, because his opponent was saying untruthful things.

MR. DRIESEN: Well, Kevin --

MR. HULSLANDER: I am not his campaign lawyer. I barely know him but.

MR. DRIESEN: You didn't answer the question about whether you represent a client under Rule 3.9.

MR. HULSLANDER: Absolutely not, I'm a volunteer.

MR. DRIESEN: So you're not representing a client?

MR. HULSLANDER: Absolutely not.

MR. DRIESEN: Thank you.

MR. HULSLANDER: Not even close. Not even close.

MR. DRIESEN: Good. Okay. Very well.

But you all need to. I'm glad you're not under that impression --

Another question I had is: When was the Republican map prepared?

MR. HULSLANDER: We're not here to

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give you information, we're here to listen to you.

MR. DRIESEN: No. No. You said we can ask you questions.

MR. HULSLANDER: No, I didn't. I said just the opposite. I said we're not here to answer questions. We're not here to answer questions.

MR. DRIESEN: It doesn't seem like you are going to review with what's going on with the process.

MR. HULSLANDER: I am here to listen to you. Have you looked at the maps?

MR. DRIESEN: I've had five minutes to look at the maps.

MR. HULSLANDER: Both maps; did you look at both maps?

MR. DRIESEN: Yeah.

MR. HULSLANDER: Okay.

MR. DRIESEN: I was surprised that you answered that question because --

MR. HULSLANDER: No, we're not here to answer questions; Dustin agrees.

MR. CZARNY: No, I don't agree, but

PROCEEDINGS

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2 I will answer: That map was provided to
3 the committee at 8:30; that's a matter of
4 public record from this morning's
5 committee.

6 MR. DRIESEN: Okay. So part of my
7 anxiety about this is that the other thing
8 is gerrymandering is a well-known cause of
9 partisan division, it exacerbates it. The
10 people know they can win when they appeal
11 to their party's base and they don't move
12 toward the center, and then it becomes hard
13 for legislators to work towards compromise.

14 And I noticed that in many of the
15 cases this legislature is not working
16 properly. There are a lot of party-line
17 votes, things done last minute, not done in
18 consultation with the minority party, and
19 some of that may be because of the
20 gerrymandering that we experience.

21 And the anxiety is pretty high on
22 this because division and gerrymandering
23 have caused losses to democracy in other
24 countries. And this county should not be
25 contribute to the loss of democracy in the

PROCEEDINGS

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2 United States, which I think is a real
3 possibility.

4 The behavior of this committee so
5 far suggests that it has no intention of
6 being fair, even to its members, let alone
7 the public.

8 My understanding is that the
9 schedule for these hearings was announced
10 by the majority of the committee without
11 consulting the calendars of the minority.
12 I don't even know if you considered the
13 majority, and that's disrespectful. It's
14 contrary to the constitutional tradition,
15 which is a tradition of fairness, a
16 tradition of respect for minority parties,
17 a desire for everybody to participate, and
18 that kind of process requires when doing a
19 set of public hearings that people's
20 availability about when they should be held
21 and heard, and that if at all possible, it
22 could be set, as I said, when they're
23 available.

24 The request of the election
25 commissioners to postpone the hearings so

PROCEEDINGS

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2 they could focus on the elections were
3 ignored. I feel like this is not as gross,
4 but a part of a pattern of disrespecting
5 election officials that are threatening
6 keeping those people in office that
7 desperately bipartisan election commissions
8 where everyone has faith in the officials
9 and they have a good job. It looks like
10 undermining public officials is bad news.

11 The reason I ask the question is
12 that the schedule of the commission is odd.
13 It suggests that people establishing the
14 committee have already written a map and
15 the commission will not create a
16 cooperative proceeding based on public
17 input, because that requires more time than
18 this schedule allows. I think it's
19 critical that the map be re-mapped, not one
20 proposed by one party or the other;
21 otherwise, you fail the function to inspire
22 confidence and peer revisions.

23 I'm grateful to be able to speak
24 about the general principles of fair maps
25 here. Obviously, I'm out of time to study

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2 these maps. The source of the hearings
3 with ample notice, explanation and
4 opportunities to study the maps.

5 There's no reason to rush. If this
6 committee approves gerrymandering districts
7 supported only by one party, the other
8 party will have to throw out the maps as
9 soon as it takes power. Fair maps would
10 create stability.

11 And if the current party remains in
12 power, we'll have ample time to write maps
13 if things are fair; we'll still write fair
14 maps.

15 A rushed and obviously unfair
16 process harms the Republican party by
17 harming the reputation to the public. So I
18 urge you to slow it down to reach a
19 bipartisan solution and to draw fair maps
20 that are about keeping communities
21 together, and do not take into account
22 voters' party affiliations and --

23 MR. HULSLANDER: Thank you. The
24 next speaker is Mary Jensen.

25 MS. JENSEN: Can I take my mask off

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or should I leave it on? I don't know what the rules are. Can you hear me?

MR. HULSLANDER: I don't care, but I think you better ask Dustin.

MR. CZARNY: Mr. Hulslander, I believe that the procedure in here is you can take it off if you feel like you need it.

MR. HULSLANDER: It's fine with me if you want to take your mask off.

MS. JENSEN: Thanks, because -- I believe in them, just for the record. But we're here, I don't want anybody to miss what I want to say.

The first thing I want to say is it's not easy following David Driesen, can we acknowledge that? That man has forgotten more than I will ever learn about gerrymandering and the constitution and the right to vote. When I saw I was next, I was a little nervous, so I hope you can bear with me.

I'm hear today as a mom. I'm here today because I heard somebody say that

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none of us cared about any of this. I care. I want you to know I deeply care about this.

There is no reason to rush this. I read the Syracuse.com editorial. I read lots of stuff. You guys have time. There's only one reason to rush this, and it's not pretty; that's something I think is important.

As a mom, I want you to know and -- first of all, I'm representing my family, a few of my neighbors, some of my friends. I've lived in Onondaga County for more than 35 years, most of that time in the Town of Manlius, some of it in Dewitt. But I've lived in Manlius for more than 20 years, and I don't think you guys care what I think anytime.

So given this opportunity, I'm coming, and I'm going to stand here and let you know what I think, what my friends think, what my family thinks, what my neighbors think, because we're all thinking the same thing.

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2 We're thinking you guys all play a
3 game every couple of years and we lose.
4 You rearrange things to keep yourselves and
5 your friends employed, and we lose.

6 I don't know how to couch it the way
7 David Driesen does, but I know what it
8 feels like to lose a game I am not playing
9 where I have no control over the rules,
10 none. None, none, none.

11 You guys signed pledges saying that
12 you would support fair maps; and then given
13 the opportunity to vote on it, you voted
14 against that.

15 So what that told me, my family and
16 my neighbors is that you can't be taken at
17 your word. None of you that signed it and
18 then voted against it can be taken
19 seriously on anything.

20 Okay. Voting is a gift. Voting is
21 a gift that democracy gives to the people,
22 and you guys are working to interfere with
23 that gift. And I, Mary Jensen, the mom
24 that I am has a problem with that.

25 This is why I have a problem with

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2 that. My kids graduated from high school
3 here, went to college 1500 miles away; they
4 both went to college in Rochester. Neither
5 one of them is coming back here; one is in
6 Seattle and the other is in Texas.

7 It's not just me: People across the
8 street from me, two kids PhDs; one lives in
9 New Mexico and one lives in Maryland. Two
10 doors down from her; one child, he lives in
11 Boston. People next door, three kids, not
12 one of them lives in Onondaga County, all
13 of them are professionals, all of them are
14 doing really well, none of them live here.

15 So when many of my friends or
16 neighbors tell me they are going to see
17 their kids, my first question is: Do you
18 need me to get your mail, because they're
19 going to be gone for a long time.

20 You've guys have been in charge for
21 40 years. We deserve better than that. We
22 just deserve better than that.

23 We deserve better than what's going
24 on here. There is no reason to rush this
25 other than you are going to try to keep

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2 yourselves employed. Again, you are
3 playing a game, and we lose. I am angry
4 about that.

5 I want the people who thought that
6 nobody cares about this issue to know that
7 lots of us care about this issue. We see
8 what you're doing. We see it. We're not
9 okay with it. It's a problem.

10 I'm not moving on from this and just
11 pretending it's okay and there is nothing I
12 can do about it. I'm going to keep saying
13 the same thing; nowhere near as eloquently
14 as David Driesen, but there are a lot of
15 moms like me out there who are angry about
16 what's happening here and it needs to stop.
17 Thank you.

18 MR. HULSLANDER: Thank you. The
19 next speaker is Dan Lindenfeld.

20 MR. LINDENFELD: My name is Harris
21 Lindenfeld. I live in Manlius and I have
22 for some time, but I don't think how long
23 I've lived there makes a difference; this
24 is America and it's supposed to be fair.

25 I have two principles that concern

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2 me about redistricting. One is that 37
3 states have rules about compactness of
4 districts, compactness in size and, in
5 fact, equations to determine whether
6 they're compact in size.

7 None of these meet that.

8 The second issue that I have is that
9 voters should choose politicians;
10 politicians should not choose voters. And
11 what you've done here in this partisan sham
12 is to take away the rights of voters, and
13 that's not right. That's wrong. That's
14 very wrong. Thank you.

15 MR. HULSLANDER: Thank you. The
16 next speaker is Eric VanDervort.

17 MR. VANDERVORT: Hi, my name is Eric
18 VanDervort. I am a resident of Syracuse.
19 I have the dubious -- lived here for around
20 ten years, than most the people spoken
21 before me.

22 In that time I've lived in five
23 county legislative districts. I've been
24 represented by Linda Ervin, (inaudible)
25 Chris Ryan, Bill Kinne, and some other

PROCEEDINGS

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2 whose name I don't even remember. I've
3 always lived in the city and I've been
4 invited to districts that I have been
5 connected to my neighbors in Dewitt and
6 Liverpool and in all kinds of communities
7 that don't feel a particular connection.

8 My concerns about the process are
9 pretty succinct. There is a lot that
10 happens in this that you guys don't seem to
11 want us to know about; meetings happen
12 during the day at the legislature, meetings
13 happen in near times without announcements,
14 and there are maps that we only got today
15 where you are holding hearings where we
16 can't ask questions about the maps that we
17 didn't get to talk about until today.
18 Apparently what I read and heard from
19 Chairman Knapp and Mr. Hulslander is that
20 these are hearings that we will use to
21 later discuss the other hearings.

22 When you have a legislature or you
23 have a political process that tells people
24 the hearings are happening, but we're going
25 to have more later; that is another way

PROCEEDINGS

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2 that you hide evidence. That is another
3 way to keep people from being engaged.
4 That is another way of keeping people from
5 showing up to meetings like this and
6 telling you that you are doing incorrect
7 things.

8 This is not an open, honest, or fair
9 process. In fact, some would probably say
10 it's immoral, some will say it's wrong, and
11 many of these people --

12 I do not believe that you can have
13 an open and fair process where you're
14 telling people I'm not taking questions
15 from them and then yelling at them and
16 being sarcastic when they dare to ask you
17 -- and don't -- please don't shake your
18 head, you were.

19 In conclusion, the last thing I will
20 say is when you look at something like this
21 in the gerrymandering process, you take a
22 city which is largely people of color and
23 lower income folks and you divide them up
24 and you give them the privilege of being
25 linked to their neighbors out in suburbs

PROCEEDINGS

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2 and we saw the exact same process and the
3 exact same conversation happening when we
4 were talking about -- what you do with that
5 by virtue of making the county into one
6 government, taking the voices of the people
7 of Syracuse and eliminating them; making it
8 irrelevant and getting rid of it. They are
9 inconvenient and you don't want us, most of
10 you don't, you don't want to hear from us.
11 That is unfair and probably illegal. Thank
12 you.

13 MR. HULSLANDER: Thank you. Next
14 speaker is Rachel May.

15 MS. MAY: Thank you. I have the
16 privilege of representing most the City of
17 Syracuse and six towns in Onondaga County,
18 as well as all of Madison County and part
19 of Oneida County in the New York State
20 Senate.

21 You and I have our positions because
22 of an audacious experiment that decided
23 that the representatives should be elected
24 by the people they represent.

25 And it's an experiment that's been

PROCEEDINGS

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2 going on for a long time now and has
3 reached a critical point where the efforts
4 to undermine people's faith in our
5 democracy have floundered to the point
6 where a former president is involved, where
7 there are media outlets and social media
8 amplification of this message that we
9 should not have faith in our government.

10 That truly is bringing us to the
11 brink of losing our democracy. This kind
12 of process where people feel that they
13 don't have a voice or they are being frozen
14 out of meetings where the meetings are
15 being held in a rush about something this
16 important also contributes to that sense
17 that we are losing our democracy.

18 I have a little bit of good news
19 today, which is today the governor signed a
20 bill that we have that requires Onondaga
21 County to follow fair processes in
22 redistricting, and I believe that you will
23 need to go back to the drawing table and
24 look at these maps again and apply the
25 principle of fairness of compactness, of

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keeping like communities together, and holding these kinds of hearings over and over again, because these maps do not satisfy those requirements.

So I feel like -- I feel optimism about that. I think that Onondaga County will be held to the standards that the county legislature has not held itself to in the past, and I look forward to seeing the new maps that you draw as a result of the new guidelines that the state is giving you.

So I thank you for the time to speak to you and I look forward to the changes that are made in these maps under the new principles. Thank you.

MR. HULSLANDER: Thank you. The next speaker is David Thomas.

MR. THOMAS: Hi. My name is David Thomas. I've been a county resident since 1974. And I can't do any better than the people that appreciated me in terms of critiquing the -- I'll be generous in calling it an expedited process.

PROCEEDINGS

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2 So I'll just critique this
3 particular process, this so-called
4 listening session. I never heard of it
5 before. I didn't know it was a thing where
6 people would be given the opportunity to
7 spout off and not have any reaction.

8 Well, Mr. Hulslander, you broke the
9 rules of the listening session. You chose
10 to speak and respond to something, instead
11 of just demurring. So let me suggest that
12 if you're not temperamentally suited to do
13 this job, then give it to somebody else.
14 Sitting there shaking your head, looking up
15 at the ceiling; you're supposed to be
16 listening; create the illusion at least,
17 please. Thank you.

18 MR. HULSLANDER: Thank you. Does
19 anyone else wish to be heard?

20 (No response was given.)

21 MR. HULSLANDER: This meeting is
22 hereby adjourned. Thank you all for
23 coming.

24 (Proceedings concluded).

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C E R T I F I C A T E

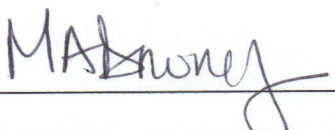
STATE OF NEW YORK)
) ss.:
COUNTY OF ONONDAGA)

 I, Mary Agnes Drury, a Notary Public
within and for the State of New York, do
hereby certify:

 That the Public Hearing, the witness
whose deposition is hereinbefore set forth,
was duly sworn by me and that such
deposition is a true record of the
testimony given by such witness.

 I further certify that I am not
related to any of the parties to this
action by blood or marriage; and that I am
in no way interested in the outcome of this
matter.

 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto
set my hand this 2nd day of November, 2021.



Mary Agnes Drury

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