

July 30, 2021

The House Legislative and Congressional Reapportionment Committee
and Senate Reapportionment and Redistricting Committee
Coverdell Legislative Office Building
18 Capitol Square, Suite 402
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

Re: Written Testimony for the July 30, 2021 Virtual Town Hall

Dear Chair Rich, Chair Kennedy, and Committee Members:

The Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to upholding the fundamental right of all citizens to vote and to ensuring that their vote is not diluted by unfair or unlawful redistricting plans.

On June 15, 2021—the day the House Legislative and Congressional Reapportionment Committee and Senate Reapportionment and Redistricting Committee (collectively, the “Redistricting Committee”) held their first town hall for this redistricting cycle—SPLC provided oral and written testimony which included several proposals that, if adopted, would allow more Georgians to participate and provide more meaningful input to the Joint Redistricting Committee. See June 15, 2021 SPLC written testimony, attached hereto as Exhibit A, at 3. Sadly, the Redistricting Committee did not adopt any of these proposals. The predictable result was that the process excluded many Georgians—especially hard-to-reach communities and Georgians of color—and those who could participate were unable to offer input with updated Census numbers.

The Joint Redistricting Committee has refused the numerous entreaties by SPLC and other organizations including the ACLU of Georgia and Asian Americans Advancing Justice to provide notice of the redistricting town halls in languages other than English. June 15 written testimony, Exhibit A, at 4(2 n-0).

Receiving no response to ~~5.01(a)~~ 14.2(p) | 13.1(n) 0.9(i) 6.4(o) 6.4(o) 1(s) 3.9(e), 13.(o) enueens6n t8

knows as Chair Kennedy stated at the June 28 town hall in Atlanta, that you “can’t do a lot until [you] collect the Census data.” See [And](#), the Google document form the [June](#) Redistricting Committee provided for the

EXHIBIT A

June 15, 2021

The House Legislative & Congressional Reapportionment Committee
and Senate Reapportionment and Redistricting Committee
Coverdell Legislative Office Building
18 Capitol Square, Suite 402
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

Re: Fair Redistricting and Redistricting Process in Georgia

Dear Chair Rich, Chair Kennedy, and Committee Members:

The Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) is a non-profit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to upholding the fundamental right of all citizens to vote and to ensuring that their vote is not diluted by unfair or unlawful redistricting plans. Thus, SPLC strongly encourages the Joint Redistricting Committees to engage in meaningful, open, public, and transparent dialogues with residents and community groups as you collect important information about residents, their communities of interest, and how they have been helped and harmed by redistricting in the past. Fair redistricting plans are essential to the democratic process.

plan which would allow black voters, in one district, an opportunity to elect a candidate of their choice." ³ **The Conference Committee agreed to a 57.24% Black Congressional District after Chairman Wilson**, according to Senator Kidd, "indicated very strongly that that's as high as they (the House Conferees) could go." ⁴ **Senator Bond testified that the Conference Committee provided for a Fifth Congressional District with a 57 percent Black population because** House Conferees knew that the 57 percent black population district was in fact a 46 percent black voting district and that a black candidate for office would be unsuccessful in that district." ⁵ **After reviewing all of the evidence, the federal court concluded:**

The only reason the Georgia General Assembly failed to enlarge the black population in the Fifth District more than it did and failed to unite black neighborhoods was solely because the population was of the black race. There was no **legitimate**, nondiscriminatory reason why the Fifth District was drawn the way it was. . . . The Fifth District was drawn to suppress black voting strength in Georgia.

The Department of Justice twice denied Section 5 preclearance to Georgia's 1991 State **House and Senate** redistricting plans, **after concluding that they fragmented certain concentrations of Black population in the state to minimize the number of majority Black districts and to ensure the reelection of white incumbents at the expense of Blacks?** Then, in defending its 2001 redistricting plans before another three-judge federal court, Georgia focused its expert analysis on **attempting to prove that Black voters in certain districts would have an "equal opportunity" to elect a candidate of their choice where they composed less than a majority of the districts' voters, in an effort to avoid its obligation to draw majority**

EXHIBIT B

Committee and Senate Reapportionment and Redistricting Committee on
June 28, 2021 at the Georgia State Capitol in Atlanta, Georgia

Hello, my name is Jack Genberg and I am a Senior Staff Attorney with SPLC Action Funds a 501(c)(4) affiliate of the Southern Poverty Law Center. SPLC Action Funds is dedicated to upholding the fundamental right of all citizens to vote. On our June 15th virtual town hall testimony we strongly encourage the Redistricting Committee to provide community members an opportunity

EXHIBIT C

Hello, my name is Jack Genberg and I am a Senior Staff Attorney with SPLC Action Fund, a 501(c)(4) affiliate of the Southern Poverty Law Center, which is dedicated to upholding the fundamental right of all citizens to vote.

Yesterday I discussed how Georgia's redistricting process ~~reflects~~ ~~reflect~~ the State's diversity which includes over 100,000 Georgians with limited English proficiency. These Georgians can only be included if the Redistricting Committee ~~provides~~ ~~provide~~ information in languages other than English.

But even if Georgians with limited English proficiency ~~are~~ ~~give~~ the opportunity to participate, the process ~~must~~ ~~improve~~ for everyone else too, if anyone is to have meaningful input.

The Google document form the Committees ~~provided~~ ~~for~~ the submission of written testimony does not allow community members to attach documents, which forecloses their ability to submit proposed redistricting maps, ~~community~~ ~~of~~ interest maps, or longer testimony that includes text and ~~graphics~~ ~~graphics~~.

Chairman Kennedy, you said yesterday that you "can't do a lot until [you] collect the census data." We agree with you. And that also ~~applies~~ ~~applies~~ to the public