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IN RE: SENATE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE CHICAGO ELECTED  
REPRESENTATIVE SCHOOL BOARD

SENATE HEARING

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October 3, 2023

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APPEARANCES

Senators:

Kimberly A. Lightford

Seth Lewis

Dan McConchie

Celina Villanueva

Ram Villivalam

Elgie R. Sims

Mattie Hunter

Omar Aquino

Robert F. Martwick

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APPEARANCES (continued)

Witnesses:

Eli Brottman

Hilario Dominguez

Mark Franklin

Griselda Vega Samuel

Valerie F. Leonard

Corrina Demma

Blaire Flowers

Melanie Lopez

Vanessa Espinoza

Also present:

Ashley Jenkins (Clerk)

Giovanni Randazzo

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1 PROCEEDING

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3 THE RECORDER: Good evening. Today is  
4 Tuesday, October 3rd and it is 5:15 p.m. We can  
5 proceed.

6 SENATOR LIGHTFORD: Thank you. Good evening.  
7 The Senate Special Committee on the Chicago Elected  
8 Representative School Board will please come to order.  
9 Please take the roll, Madam Clerk.

10 THE CLERK: Senator Lewis?

11 SENATOR LEWIS: Senator Lewis here.

12 THE CLERK: Senator McConchie? Senator  
13 Villaneuva?

14 SENATOR VILLANUEVA: Here.

15 THE CLERK: Senator Villivalam?

16 SENATOR VILLIVALAM: Here.

17 THE CLERK: Senator Sims?

18 SENATOR SIMS: Present.

19 THE CLERK: Senator Hunter?

20 SENATOR HUNTER: Present.

21 THE CLERK: Senator Aquino? Vice-Chair  
22 Martwick?

23 SENATOR MARTWICK: Present.

24 THE CLERK: And Chair Lightford?

1           SENATOR LIGHTFORD: I am present. Thank you,  
2 Ashley. We have six members present. We shall proceed  
3 to conduct business on tonight. The BlueRoomStream  
4 seeks leave of the committee to take photos and videos  
5 of the proceedings. Seeing no objection, leave is  
6 granted.

0:01:24

7           I'd like to just start with opening remarks  
8 by sharing with you over the past few months since we  
9 extended the deadline to craft district boundaries.  
10 We've continued to solicit input from the public about  
11 the best way to move forward. Our goal remains the  
12 same, to establish boundaries that will provide  
13 equitable representation for all of the city's diverse  
14 communities.

15           I thank all of you, I really do, for your  
16 participation and for joining us again here today or  
17 even if it's your first time coming on, welcome, to  
18 continue this important work.

19           Tonight's hearing will focus on reviewing  
20 proposed maps that have been submitted by the public.  
21 As you all know, we have encouraged parents, education  
22 advocates, community groups, and others to draw and  
23 submit proposed district boundaries through our online  
24 map making portal at [www dot I-L-S-E-N-A-T-E](http://www.ILSENATE.com)

1 redistricting, R-E-D-I-S-T-R-I-C-T-I-N-G dot com,  
2 Illinois Senate Redistricting dot com.

0:02:43

3           You know your communities best and your  
4 insight is vital to this process. We've received  
5 numerous submissions through the portal, as well as via  
6 e-mail by those using other mapmaking software and we  
7 want to take the time today to explore them more in  
8 depth. And all submissions received have been posted  
9 on the Senate redistricting page or on the committee  
10 page on www.ilga.gov. So before we dive in, I want to  
11 take a minute to remind everyone of how we got to this  
12 point.

0:03:20

13           So how do we get here? Date us back to 2021.  
14 The Senate and House passed House Bill 2908, which  
15 required the Chicago Board of Education to become fully  
16 elected by 2027. Under that law, starting January 15th  
17 of 2025, a two-year hybrid period begins with 10  
18 members being elected to four-year terms. Ten members  
19 being appointed by the mayor to two-year terms and the  
20 Board President being appointed by the mayor for a  
21 two-year term.

0:03:58

22           In 2027 when the mayor-appointed terms  
23 expire, the 10 members and the elected-at-large members  
24 will be elected to four-year terms. Based on Chicago's

1 population, the 10 districts will be comprised of  
2 approximately 274,601 people and the 20 districts will  
3 be comprised of around 137,301.

4           According to the census, the City of Chicago  
5 is 35.9 percent White, 29.8 percent Hispanic, 29.2  
6 percent black, 7 percent Asian, and about 11 percent  
7 describes themselves as two or more races. The school  
8 code requires that the districts be compact,  
9 contiguous, and substantially equal in population and  
10 consistent with the Illinois Voting Rights Act. 0:04:57

11           If you know someone, who wants to provide  
12 input, but could not make it today, additional  
13 opportunities to provide a comment can be accessed at  
14 the website I described, [www.ILsenatedistrict- --  
15 redistricting.com](http://www.ILsenatedistrict- --<br/>15 redistricting.com) or via e-mail at Chicago E-R-S-B in  
16 all caps, Committee at [senatedem.ILGA.gov](mailto:senatedem.ILGA.gov).

17           Again, thank you for taking the time to be  
18 here with us today and I know -- I'd now like to turn  
19 it over to the vice chair of this committee, Senator  
20 Martwick for additional comments.

21           Senator Martwick. 0:05:46

22           SENATOR MARTWICK: Thank you so much, Madam  
23 Chair. It's great to be back here with everybody  
24 working on this very important issue. So I wanted to



1 say thank you to all of my fellow colleagues, our staff  
2 members who worked so hard on this issue, and of  
3 course, all of the people that are here to give  
4 testimony because that's what we're here for, is to  
5 hear your voices, so, you know, we are on our way.

6 We are on a -- a very deliberate march  
7 towards a historic moment when Chicago will have an  
8 elected school board, but we really need to roll up our  
9 sleeves and do this work so that our students, our  
10 constituents, the residents of the City of Chicago, the  
11 families that access our schools have a school board  
12 that functions in the best way possible to create  
13 accountability and transparency and to better serve our  
14 children.

0:06:41

15 So I want to thank you everyone for  
16 participating and bringing your voices to this. I  
17 appreciate you taking the time out of your day to work  
18 on this important issue and I look forward to hearing  
19 all of the -- your input today. So with that I will  
20 turn back to the Chair. Thank you very much.

21 SENATOR LIGHTFORD: Thank you, Senator  
22 Martwick. As we proceed, we know that changes of this  
23 magnitude aren't easy and it takes time and it gets a  
24 little messy and sometime requires a few pivots, but at

1 the end of it all, we will have set a new path forward  
2 for our children and our communities.

0:07:20

3 A path that ensures better representation for  
4 all of cities -- all of Chicago's city's vibrant  
5 neighborhoods. A path that will allow us to reverse  
6 years of disinvestment in our schools and properly  
7 invest in our students and teachers. A path to a  
8 brighter future for our city. And I'd like to offer my  
9 sincerest appreciation again for everyone who has  
10 fought so hard to get us to this point and those that  
11 are here tonight as we continue to do that work.

0:07:53

12 So, with that, I know passions run high so I  
13 want to urge -- urge everyone to please stick to the  
14 topic at hand as we focus on a successful  
15 implementation of this transition. So with that, I'd  
16 like to welcome, in order, Eli Brottman, on behalf of  
17 himself to the microphone. Mr. Brottman, welcome.

18 MR. BROTTMAN: Good evening. Good evening.  
19 Thank you, Leader Lightford and thank you to the rest  
20 of the committee members for taking the time to listen  
21 to everybody's feedback tonight. I am a Democratic  
22 Political Consultant and have used data driven  
23 strategies to work on dozens of campaigns.

0:08:40

24 I want to start off by thanking this body for

1 extending the deadline to draw the maps. I think that  
2 was a really essential move in order to get more  
3 community feedback. I am excited to see what feedback  
4 is garnered through that time period.

5 I want to turn my focus to concerns that I  
6 have about the transparency of the process of drawing  
7 the boundaries. As I testified, and others did, in the  
8 hearings last spring, there were many concerns that the  
9 maps proposed by the General Assembly could contribute  
10 to and maintain many of the deep racial inequities in  
11 the City of Chicago.

0:09:21

12 Since the hearings last May, the public has  
13 not heard from this body, any revised maps, or any more  
14 detail regarding the process for drawing the maps.  
15 After a June 30th deadline, before there was -- well,  
16 prior to that deadline, I should say, of June 30, 2023,  
17 I'm aware there were some attempts to consider passing  
18 a map at the end of the spring session in May.

19 Thankfully, that deadline was extended to  
20 April of 2024, but it's unclear right now if the intent  
21 is to pass them right around April 2024 or could it be  
22 earlier in the next spring session or during the  
23 upcoming veto session?

0:10:07

24 So I would urge this body to do two things.

1 One is to, as soon as possible, release a clear,  
2 detailed timeline of what the actual process is going  
3 to look like and when the intent to vote on these maps  
4 is. Ideally, by the next hearing on October 12th, and  
5 secondly, to commit publicly to not call any proposed  
6 maps for a vote during the upcoming veto session.

7 In order for the public to give quality  
8 feedback, they need to know what the timeline of this  
9 process is so that they can provide that feedback in a  
10 manner that it can be received and implemented by this  
11 body, by the House, and by everybody else involved in  
12 the map making process.

0:10:53

13 It's imperative that this body work with  
14 Chicago Alderpersons to get community feedback on all  
15 of the proposed maps so that the people impacted most  
16 by this process will have their voices fully heard.  
17 And Alders have the ability to get more targeted  
18 feedback on the grounds that will be helpful.

19 We can create a true community map, but it  
20 takes community feedback. And like I said, I would  
21 just urge all of the maps, such as the one proposed by  
22 me, and the many other maps proposed by others to be  
23 fully considered by this body and by others, who can  
24 work with the community to get feedback to provide it

1 back to you.

0:11:35

2 So, again, I want to thank you for your time  
3 and all of your hard work on this. I know it is not an  
4 easy process by any means, but I just want to encourage  
5 more transparency so we can work together to produce a  
6 true community map. Thank you so much.

7 SENATOR LIGHTFORD: Thank you, Mr. Brottman.  
8 The ERSB community coalition, Hilario Dominguez,  
9 welcome to the podium. Is Hilario Dominguez? Okay.  
10 We'll move on to MALDEF, Griselda Vega Samuel.

0:12:23

11 MS. SAMUEL: Good afternoon everyone. Thank  
12 you so much for having me. Madam Chair Lightford,  
13 Co-Chairs Aquino and Martwick, and Members of the  
14 Committee, thank you really for the opportunity to  
15 testify. This is obviously, to MALDEF, a really  
16 important matter, and I think, to our community. So I  
17 really welcome this opportunity. My name is Griselda  
18 Vega Samuel and I am the Midwest Regional Counsel for  
19 the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational  
20 Fund, also known as MALDEF.

0:12:57

21 MALDEF is a national civil rights law firm  
22 and for the last 50 years, MALDEF has worked to protect  
23 the voting rights of Latinos through committee --  
24 community education, advocacy, and litigation. Our

1 organization has been involved in Illinois  
2 redistricting since the 1980s and has really been  
3 responsible for a lot of the representation in  
4 districts for minorities in this state.

5 Our organization -- we regularly partner with  
6 our stakeholders representing diverse communities.

7 We've monitored the state's compliance with minority  
8 voting rights and particularly the Federal Voting  
9 Rights Act and we've developed model maps.

0:13:39

10 We thank the committee for this opportunity  
11 to provide testimony on the electoral -- electoral  
12 districts for the Chicago Board of Education and the  
13 demonstrative map we submitted to the community.

14 Now, MALDEF really urges this committee --  
15 committee to meet its obligations under the Federal  
16 Voting Rights Act and to adopt a districting plan for  
17 the Chicago Elected Representative School Board that  
18 includes three Latino Citizen Voting Age Population,  
19 CVAP, majority districts out of the 10-district plan,  
20 and a six Latino CVAP majority district out of the  
21 20-district plan.

0:14:17

22 Now, MALDEF's map demonstrates that it is  
23 possible to draw a map that accomplishes this and still  
24 complies with the constitutional deviations and the

1 Federal Voting Rights Act. Now, the section -- section  
2 two of the Voting Rights Act requires the Illinois  
3 General Assembly to construct a plan that includes the  
4 three of the 10 Latino majority districts and six of  
5 the 20 Latino majority districts in which Latinos  
6 constitute a majority of the Citizen Voting Age  
7 Population.

0:14:47

8 Now, federal law is clear that in determining  
9 compliance under section two of the VRA, CVAP is the  
10 appropriate measure to -- to use in determining whether  
11 an additional effective majority-minority district can  
12 be created and it is -- and this is consistent with  
13 case law.

14 Now, in light of the growth of the Latino  
15 population in the city, at 27 percent of the total  
16 population as Senator Lightford just said, where Latino  
17 CVAP majority school board district is possible. The  
18 districting plan must include three of the 10-district  
19 plan and six of the 20-district plan to comply with the  
20 VRA, section two, in its adopted districting replan.

0:15:30

21 Now, the Illinois General Assembly's latest  
22 proposed maps, published back in May of 2023, and then  
23 the second map in May -- in May 17th of 2023 contained  
24 only five Latino CVAP majority districts of the

1 20-district plan, but it is possible to draw those six  
2 Latino CVAP majority districts.

3           Now, MALDEF submitted that demonstrative  
4 20-district map showing two compact school board  
5 districts on the north side and four compact school  
6 board districts on the south side of the city that  
7 would have a greater than 50 percent Latino CVAP.  
8 These districts can be drawn while also maintaining  
9 seven African American districts and respecting the  
10 Asian community of interest in the city.

0:16:14

11           Now, finally, MALDEF's demonstrative map  
12 complies with the constitutional deviations and the  
13 Federal Voting Rights Act. Now, MALDEF's submission  
14 has also presented a 10-district map with three  
15 majority Latino CVAP districts and similarly protects  
16 African American and Asian communities of interest  
17 while still complying with the federal requirements.

18           Both of MALDEFs 10- and 20-district maps  
19 demonstrate that a transition from a fully-appointed  
20 board to a hybrid board and then a fully-elected board  
21 can be done with maps that ensure that Chicago's Latino  
22 community and other minority communities of interest  
23 have the opportunity to elect our candidate of choice  
24 through the transition, as designed in the Chicago



1 Elected Representative School Board law by you, the  
2 Members of the Illinois General Assembly.

0:17:04

3           It is the responsibility of the Illinois  
4 General Assembly to provide Latino voters the  
5 opportunity to elect their candidate of choice in  
6 Chicago's first Elected School Board District Plan. We  
7 urge this committee to construct a map with the three  
8 10-district plan and a six of the 20-district  
9 VRA-compliant Latino majority district and the elected  
10 school board.

11           And I will also reiterate what Mr. Brottman  
12 said. The transparency is going to be key moving  
13 forward so we really do echo and support his  
14 proposition to have a timeline, as soon as you can have  
15 it, to let the public know what the next steps are and  
16 give the public as much time to really look at whatever  
17 updated published map that the legislature comes up  
18 with.

0:17:54

19           I thank you for your time and consideration  
20 and would welcome any questions. Thank you.

21           SENATOR LIGHTFORD: Thank you, Ms. Samuel. I  
22 do have a couple questions and thank you for speaking  
23 to the -- the map. One, I was hoping you could detail  
24 for me, which redistricting principles guided your

1 process in drawing your map. Just want to be clear on  
2 that, which principles you used.

0:18:19

3 MS. SAMUEL: So, from MALDEF's perspective we  
4 always -- the VRA, the Federal Voting Rights Act, is  
5 always the, sort of, key principle. That is the law.  
6 We're lawyers and so that is first and foremost what we  
7 look to.

8 And second, we also, obviously, the Illinois  
9 Voting Rights Act, which is basically a mirror image of  
10 the Federal Voting Rights Act, and so these ideas, the  
11 redistricting principles under the Federal Voting  
12 Rights Act, is that minorities must elect -- must have  
13 the opportunity to elect a candidate of their choice.

0:18:54

14 The district should be compact and  
15 contiguous, all of the principle you described earlier.  
16 And so, all of those things that are mandatory under  
17 the VRA is what we followed. And so, the charts, the  
18 data, the maps that we proposed are all compliant with  
19 that and the current case law that stands in the  
20 Seventh Circuit.

21 SENATOR LIGHTFORD: That's great to know. So  
22 I think I want to go a little deeper. So when you were  
23 creating the map, what demographic data did you use?  
24 So there's three areas I -- I think that could have

1 been focused. So was it from the total demographic  
2 data? Was it voting -- the Voting Age Population or  
3 the Non-Voting Age Population data?

0:19:37

4 MS. SAMUEL: So we look at all of it, but  
5 when we look to actually define the -- the district  
6 lines, we focus on Citizen Voting Age Population, which  
7 we believe, as MALDEF, and we believe that this is  
8 still the law, as -- as we know it, is that the -- that  
9 because -- to provide Latinos a fair opportunity to  
10 elect candidates of their choice, Latino majority  
11 district must be drawn to give Latinos an effective  
12 share of that Citizen Voting Age Population, and not  
13 total population.

14 So that it is high enough to account for the  
15 non-citizens and Latinos and the traditionally lower  
16 rates of voter registration. So that is why CVAP, or  
17 Citizen Voting Age Population, is what we focused on.

0:20:24

18 SENATOR LIGHTFORD: Okay. So what if -- if  
19 there's any previously established political boundaries  
20 did you use when you were drawing the map?

21 MS. SAMUEL: So part of what we always look  
22 at is to make sure that we are looking at where the  
23 communities are and we talk to our partners, and we  
24 have talked to partners, the African Americans, and

1 some of the partners are on this call today.

2 And when we are talking to community groups  
3 and looking at where they're living, we try to respect  
4 those community of interest boundary. So where there's  
5 the Pilsens and the Chinatowns, and you know, Austin  
6 neighborhoods. We try to keep those communities of  
7 interest as compact and contiguous as possible all  
8 within and still measuring the Citizen Voting Age  
9 Population and measuring those lines in that manner. 0:21:14

10 SENATOR LIGHTFORD: So and -- and why did you  
11 select those particular communities?

12 MS. SAMUEL: Well, I'm just -- those are just  
13 examples, but we looked at the entire City of Chicago  
14 or the elec- -- where the boundaries of Chicago School  
15 Board is, right, of the City and then we'd look at the  
16 various communities of interest wherever they may be.

17 Obviously for us the most important part are  
18 always focused on the growth of the Latino community,  
19 but we also know that it is important to work with our  
20 colleagues in the African American community, Asian  
21 community, up on the north side, up on the south side,  
22 because we're everywhere right? 0:21:50

23 But, so, what we really try is to keep them  
24 all, like I said, now, we are not always going to keep

1    them compact or keep them intact, but we did our very  
2    best and so, the map that we have proposed has, in  
3    fact, done that.

4                   And so, as I said in my testimony, we've  
5    respected the -- those African American communities.  
6    We've looked at those -- the Asian communities of  
7    interest. Because, as you mentioned, the Asian  
8    community is only 7 percent, but growing, and so, we  
9    looked at all of those communities to ensure that we  
10   tried to keep them as intact as possible.

0:22:24

11                   SENATOR LIGHTFORD: Thank you. Thank you for  
12   your work, Ms. Samuel. Senator Martwick, you've  
13   identified -- you have a couple questions? Senator  
14   Martwick.

15                   SENATOR MARTWICK: Thank you, Madam Chair.  
16   Yes. So you -- you talked a lot about the process you  
17   went through and I appreciate that. Was there anything  
18   that was -- that stood out as the most challenging  
19   aspect of drawing your map? Like, what -- was there  
20   any one particular thing that really you had difficulty  
21   with?

0:22:55

22                   MS. SAMUEL: So -- and I will also -- thank  
23   you for that question, Senator Martwick. So I just  
24   also want to say that obviously our map is a

1 demonstrative map. Right? And so, this is just a  
2 proposal for the legislature and you, as a committee,  
3 to take a look at and see that there are potential  
4 variations on this.

5           Now, what -- for us, it's always hard because  
6 we always want to keep as many of the communities and  
7 the various neighborhoods as intact and sometimes we're  
8 not able to because Chicago, let's face it, is a  
9 neighborhood city. But at the end of the day we look  
10 at the data.

0:23:31

11           We look -- we take our experience of over the  
12 last 50 years of -- of drawing maps across the country  
13 and especially the experience we've had in Illinois.  
14 We talk -- we talk to our partners, you know, community  
15 partners, so that we could get their feedback and try  
16 to listen to the concerns that they have.

17           But I think ultimately what we all want is to  
18 have an elected school board that's going to be  
19 representative of our families and the communities that  
20 these schools are in and so, you know, I think the  
21 hardest thing is probably not everyone's going to be  
22 happy with a -- a map regardless. Right?

0:24:04

23           But, at the end of the day, what MALDEF did  
24 in the process of creating our map was to try to be as

1 transparent as possible so we -- we talked to our  
2 partners and listened and -- you know, talked to them  
3 about what we were thinking and what we were going to  
4 propose and then to have them give us any feedback  
5 about any serious concerns that they had and try to  
6 address them to the best of our ability.

7           SENATOR MARTWICK: Thank you. So, next  
8 question, really the next two questions, are around  
9 process. And I'm wondering if, in the process, in --  
10 in the process that you went through in creating the  
11 map and proposing this if you discussed these and if  
12 so, if you have any thoughts.

0:24:49

13           So the law calls for 10 districts to be up  
14 for election in 2024 and the mayor appointing 10  
15 districts and the board president and then 2026 there's  
16 20 districts, each of one elected number, a second  
17 round of elections for those seats that have been  
18 appointed and the school board president.

19           So my question to you is do you have any  
20 thoughts or proposals on that transition from the 10  
21 elected and the 11 appointed members in 2025 to the  
22 21-member board that will be seated in 2027?

0:25:29

23           MS. SAMUEL: Well, thank you for that  
24 question. We don't really have a position on sort of

1 the transition because at this point, it is the  
2 statute. It is the law that you have passed and so, we  
3 sort of focused now on the next step, which is --  
4 there's also deadlines to those transitions and so,  
5 part of the -- the need to adopt this map is so that we  
6 can know where those districts are so that the folks  
7 that are going to run for those offices have the  
8 opportunity to do so. Right?

9 And so, understanding that, that changing a  
10 lot is a huge lift, we haven't, MALDEF doesn't have --  
11 doesn't take a position on that.

0:26:09

12 SENATOR MARTWICK: Okay. And -- and maybe  
13 that begs the answer to my second question, which is  
14 obviously we've already begun -- those of us up for  
15 election, have already begun the process of collecting  
16 petitions for the 2024 election cycle and -- and yet  
17 this election will also be on that cycle. So have you  
18 -- have you given any thought, or do you have any  
19 recommendations, on petition and election process for  
20 this particular race?

21 MS. SAMUEL: So, again, I mean, I -- we  
22 recognize the urgency with which people want to -- you  
23 know, given that this is the first time we're moving in  
24 this direction, you know, to Mr. Brottman's, you know,



1 feedback and recommendation was that the sooner the  
2 better.

0:27:03

3 But at the same time, I don't think it should  
4 be at the expense of rushing something because let's be  
5 -- let's all be clear, this -- the school board will  
6 become one of the most powerful bodies in the country  
7 and so we should do it right. We should, you know,  
8 take our time to try to do it and -- and have it be not  
9 only constitutionally legal, but to also be  
10 representative.

11 And so, I recognize that, you know, waiting,  
12 you know, further down into the spring, I mean I -- I  
13 welcome that you were addressing this now in veto  
14 because that gets us a little bit -- gives us hopefully  
15 some time to do some of the things that Mr. Brottman  
16 suggested, which is giving people a timeline, giving  
17 people the ability to give feedback.

18 But at the end of the day, there are  
19 deadlines to when people can run, and to your point,  
20 there is an election cycle that is happening and so,  
21 that the people need to know sooner rather than later.

0:27:59

22 But I would say that, at least from MALDEFs  
23 position, we would not say to rush something at the  
24 expense of -- I think you've got a little bit of time

1 and so, you know, November 2024 is -- is definitely  
2 around the corner, but I think we -- that the -- the  
3 legislature and this committee can take a little bit of  
4 -- in the next few months to -- to do it and give the  
5 public the transparency that we're all asking for.

6 SENATOR MARTWICK: Thank you very much.  
7 Thank you, Madam Chair. That's all I have.

8 SENATOR LIGHTFORD: Okay, Senator. Thank  
9 you. Thank you, again, for your testimony tonight, Ms.  
10 Samuel. I'll go back for a moment because I did not  
11 allow the previous speaker, Brottman, to elaborate on  
12 his map. I -- I -- he didn't speak on the map, so I  
13 kind of lost sight of that so.

0:28:56

14 Are there -- Brottman, are you still there?  
15 Okay. So I don't know that -- I don't know that you  
16 kind of went into any details more so about the map but  
17 wondering if you wanted to detail any of your  
18 principles that guided you in the map process or -- and  
19 kind of talk a little bit about the demographic datas  
20 that you used.

21 MR. BROTTMAN: Absolutely, yes. Thank you.  
22 So, my map is designed to promote equity based on the  
23 majority population and voting age population for  
24 racial and ethnic groups to match the city demographics

1 and the CPS demographics as close as possible.

0:29:37

2 By population -- general population, my map  
3 has six majority Hispanic districts, six majority Black  
4 districts, and one Asian plurality district. It also  
5 has a couple other districts. They have no racial or  
6 ethnic group having a majority and that our plurality  
7 people of color including one Asian influence district  
8 on the far north side.

9 The -- in terms of voting age population,  
10 there are five majority Hispanic districts. The sixth  
11 is 49.5 percent. So almost a majority. There are six  
12 majority Black districts and in the plurality Asian  
13 district is just under a plurality on voting age but  
14 very close.

0:30:20

15 So similar to what Ms. Samuel said, the goal  
16 is to promote equity based on having a sufficient  
17 number of districts to -- that have majorities of Black  
18 and Hispanic voters in order to achieve equity on the  
19 board. It also works to keep communities of interest  
20 together.

21 The maps proposed by the General Assembly  
22 keep many communities of interest split apart into many  
23 different districts often and we need to keep those  
24 communities together to achieve true representation.

1 And I've offered my questions on that or any of the  
2 previous testimony. Thank you.

0:30:59

3 SENATOR LIGHTFORD: Okay. Thank you. I've  
4 got a couple more questions because I want to  
5 understand to the political boundaries that you used  
6 when you're drawing the map. Any previously  
7 established boundaries.

8 MR. BROTTMAN: There were not previously  
9 established boundaries. I didn't go out of my way to  
10 divide them and when you look at an overlay of my map  
11 with the wards of the city, it's -- it keeps wards  
12 together as much as possible, but that wasn't used in  
13 the drawing of the map.

0:31:29

14 That's just how it turns out. It's really  
15 focused on keeping equity given the city, and how we  
16 can do that with a 20-district map, which has never  
17 been drawn for the city before.

18 SENATOR LIGHTFORD: Great. Okay. Thanks so  
19 much. Senator Martwick, did you have any questions you  
20 wanted to ask of Mr. Brottman? You Senator Seth? I'm  
21 sorry. I didn't see your hand. Senator Seth.

0:31:58

22 SENATOR LEWIS: Thank you Madam Chair. This  
23 question is for Ms. Samuel, if you're still with us. I  
24 believe you are. Thank -- thank you very much for your

1 testimony. Just quick expansion of your comment that  
2 caught -- that caught me, that this was going to be one  
3 of the most powerful boards in the country.

4 I'm just -- just curious if you could expand  
5 a little bit on that, and Madam Chair, I won't  
6 interrupt much more. That -- that comment struck me  
7 for a little -- for a question.

8 SENATOR LIGHTFORD: Understood. It struck me  
9 as well so thanks for the question, Senator. Ms.  
10 Samuel.

0:32:37

11 MS. SAMUEL: Sure. Well, I -- I -- thank you  
12 for the question. So MALDEF is a national law firm and  
13 so we have our headquarters in Los Angeles, which is a  
14 very large school district. And so, their school board  
15 is, I think, I -- I believe, it's only like seven or 10  
16 people and it -- it's a small -- it's a small board. I  
17 don't want to actually say how many because I -- I  
18 might get it wrong.

19 But this will be the first elected school  
20 board of this size in the country. Most other school  
21 boards, whether they're elected or appointed, are  
22 typically less than 10, 15 people. And so, to have 20  
23 is a huge -- is -- will be the largest board in the  
24 country.

0:33:24

1           And so, I think with that comes with a  
2 tremendous amount of responsibility and accountability.  
3 And so, I think there's a great opportunity here. So,  
4 you know, I think part of our advocacy is to ensure  
5 that in the creation of this board it is, as  
6 representative, as possible of the communities that  
7 live here.

8           SENATOR LEWIS: Thank you very much and thank  
9 you very much, Madam Chair.

10           SENATOR LIGHTFORD: You're welcome, Senator.  
11 My pleasure. Senator Martwick?

12           SENATOR MARTWICK: Thank you, Madam Chair, I  
13 -- I would have the same, similar questions I would  
14 have for Mr. Brottman, which was, have you given any  
15 thought or do you have any -- anything you'd like to  
16 share in regards to the process of how we transition  
17 from 10 elective seats and 11 appointed to the full  
18 board between '24 and '26? 0:34:22

19           MR. BROTTMAN: Absolutely. I think in order  
20 to maintain consistency and avoid having to create lots  
21 of different map (inaudible) different structure that  
22 it's best we follow a procedure similar to what's being  
23 done in the Illinois House and Senate.

24           We are two 20 district -- two of the 20, form

1 one of the 10, and they are paired off in a way that  
2 reaches the demographic goals to be representative of  
3 the city.

4 SENATOR MARTWICK: Thank you, Madam Chair.  
5 That's all I have.

6 SENATOR LIGHTFORD: All right, Senator  
7 Martwick. Thank you. So we will continue on. We've  
8 heard from Mr. Brottman and of course, Ms. Samuel. Did  
9 Hilario Dominguez join us yet?

10 MR. DOMINGUEZ: I did, Madam Chair.

11 SENATOR LIGHTFORD: Oh good.

12 MR. DOMINGUEZ: Thank you for --

13 SENATOR LIGHTFORD: -- you're here.

0:35:22

14 MR. DOMINGUEZ: I am here. I appreciate you  
15 being able to come back. Excuse me for the technical  
16 difficulties and I just want to thank you all for  
17 making space for this discussion. I'm here to testify  
18 on behalf of the Chicago Teachers Union.

19 My name is Hilario Dominguez. I'm the  
20 political coordinator at the union here generally to --  
21 to testify in short, you know, that we support -- at  
22 the union we support a map that is going to adhere to  
23 the Voting Rights Act, you know, ensure that there is  
24 fair representation for all communities including our

1 historically marginalized groups.

0:36:05

2 We also want to make sure that any map that  
3 is proposed is reflected on the student body and the  
4 demographics and diversity of that student body and  
5 that -- that it prioritizes fair representation of --  
6 for students of all backgrounds. All right. We want  
7 to make sure that all students get their voices heard  
8 and their interests are represented. And lastly, that  
9 there is community input.

10 As you know, Madam Chair, Chicago is made up  
11 of 77 neighborhoods, you know, soon to be 78 and we --  
12 we -- we must make sure that communities have their --  
13 their voices heard, you know, with all types of groups,  
14 diverse groups, that represent different bodies across  
15 the city.

0:36:59

16 So I also wanted to -- to testify in support  
17 of -- of getting the map done as soon as possible. As  
18 the senators know, elections are -- are difficult.  
19 They are a long road and candidates need as much time  
20 as possible to prepare for something like a school  
21 board of their base.

22 As many have mentioned, this is a historical  
23 moment and it will be a task nonetheless and folks need  
24 time to -- to engage the constituents and knock on



1 doors. And so, that -- I will end my testimony there  
2 and -- and thank you all for your patience and  
3 appreciate the space once again.

0:37:54

4 SENATOR LIGHTFORD: Good. Thanks, Dominguez.  
5 I'm glad you could join us and just wanted to know, is  
6 your organization the ERSB, who -- did they -- did you  
7 submit a map? Did ERSB submit a map? Your coalition?

8 MR. DOMINGUEZ: The coalition did submit a  
9 map and I will -- I will speed my time. I want to save  
10 my time for coalition members to be able to speak on  
11 that map and although, some members weren't able to  
12 make it today, I am under the impression they will be  
13 able to speak at the next meeting.

14 SENATOR LIGHTFORD: At the next meeting.  
15 Okay. Great. Okay. Well, thank you for your  
16 participation tonight. Look forward to hearing you  
17 all's feedback at the next meeting.

0:38:39

18 MR. DOMINGUEZ: Thank you, Madam Chair. I  
19 appreciate you.

20 SENATOR LIGHTFORD: Thank you. Did you guys  
21 hear me at all? How long we been on Zoom now? I'm so  
22 sorry. I don't know if Dominguez heard me thank him  
23 then for coming on and we look forward to -- okay. So  
24 then I didn't mute me.

1 I don't know what happened, but I would like  
2 to call on Ms. Valerie Leonard. Hi, Ms. Valerie from  
3 the Illinois African Americans for Equitable  
4 Redistricting.

0:39:23

5 MS. LEONARD: Hello, hello. I want to say  
6 thank you so much for the opportunity to speak and I'm  
7 feeling like I'm getting to know my elected officials  
8 from all over the state and different political  
9 persuasions a little bit better.

10 I -- I like this group. I like the folks  
11 assembled from the community as well. I just want to  
12 have permission to share my screen if possible. Okay.

13 SENATOR LIGHTFORD: Certainly.

14 MS. LEONARD: All right. I want to take this  
15 opportunity to kind of share where we are in this whole  
16 process. We've been engaged from the beginning and  
17 after listening to all the testimonies over the months,  
18 we are thoroughly, thoroughly, thoroughly convinced  
19 that we have the fairest map of them all and we're not  
20 saying that just to brag but we really, really, really  
21 believe it's true.

0:40:28

22 So our methodology, the first thing we did,  
23 is we reviewed the enabling legislation for the Elected  
24 Representative School Board, and as you know, that

1 legislation takes into account everything elected  
2 school board related.

3           It talks about the structure. It talks about  
4 the provision for creating districts and it also talks  
5 about the creation of a non-citizen advisory board.  
6 And that board would be focused on making sure that our  
7 non-citizen children, who are coming into the system  
8 will have a positive experience and that their parents  
9 would also be given the supports that they need to  
10 support their children.

0:41:14

11           All right. We also reviewed your proposals.  
12 We reviewed the communities' proposals and we're still  
13 thoroughly convinced that our map is the fairest map of  
14 them all. And we also incorporated feedback from other  
15 groups. All right.

16           So here is your proposal overlaid onto ward  
17 boundaries and we're using ward boundaries as our proxy  
18 for communities. We know that ward boundaries have to  
19 be drawn in such a way that they -- they conform to the  
20 Voting Rights Act, to our constitution, the other laws,  
21 as they relate to making sure they're compact and  
22 contiguous and all of that good stuff.

23           So we know that if ward boundaries are a  
24 basis and they've already gone through all that stuff

1 then whatever you have on top of it is pretty, pretty  
2 solid.

0:42:17

3           When we compared the last map that you did,  
4 you know, we expressed some concerns that all over the  
5 city, you know, there could be pockets of people, who  
6 might be separated from the center of gravity from  
7 their communities, from people that they normally work  
8 with and not ever have an opportunity to influence an  
9 election for the school board. Right?

10           And we also share the fact that the map  
11 didn't necessarily fulfill the law that you wrote.  
12 Right? You started off with the 20-district map versus  
13 10. You didn't share the 10 and I guess, you putting  
14 it on us, well, if you can do a better job then show  
15 us. Right?

0:43:05

16           And we were also concerned with the way this  
17 district in orange is drawn. This is such a very,  
18 very, very unnatural way that people currently work.  
19 In Austin, you know, the typical pairing is, and not  
20 even pairing, grouping we'll say, would be the 29th  
21 Ward with the 37th Ward with the 28th Ward and the 24th  
22 Ward and the 27th.

23           You know, that does not happen here. It  
24 breaks up the Black community, the Black political

1 structure as we know it. Right? And I'm not quite  
2 sure what the rationale for the way that was drawn.

0:43:52

3 Also, you know, a -- a problem that we have  
4 here, you know, if we're going to look at equity, we  
5 need to look at equity for everybody and that includes  
6 equity for the people who are doing the work, equity  
7 for the Aldermen, equity for the people who are  
8 elected. Right?

9 With this configuration, there is some  
10 Aldermen, who are going to have to try to figure out,  
11 you know, who five people are, you know, who -- who  
12 respond to the elected school board. Right? And in  
13 some cases, you know, there just might be two  
14 districts.

0:44:28

15 But we believe that every Alderman and every  
16 representative, who is elected for the school board,  
17 they should have an equitable amount of work. You  
18 know, it's -- this is not easy. And our proposal, you  
19 know, is twofold. Right?

20 We not only propose this map, which I'll walk  
21 you through, but we also, in the spirit of equity,  
22 propose a committee, a standing board committee, that  
23 will focus solely on Black student issues. As  
24 everybody knows, in looking at the statistics, reading

1 the newspaper, and watching the 5 o'clock news, Black  
2 children are doing worse in school than any other group  
3 including English language learners.

0:45:18

4 They're also filling the school-to-prison  
5 pipeline and we really, really need to have a  
6 comprehensive approach that is going to be accountable  
7 at the board level. I'll -- I'll talk about that  
8 later. Focus on the map.

9 When we looked at our map, right? Our map is  
10 not just a power play. You know, we didn't draw lines  
11 to keep certain people in power. You know, we could  
12 very easily have drawn a map with four majority Black  
13 districts if we're going to use these -- these  
14 political boundaries. And when I say political  
15 boundaries I'm talking about the ward boundaries as a  
16 basis.

0:46:02

17 But we didn't do that. We made sure that we  
18 took the input of other communities, right? We took  
19 them into account. So as a result, we have three  
20 majority Black districts. We also grouped them in a  
21 natural way, you know, all the Black Aldermen on -- on  
22 the west side, they -- they've been working together  
23 for years and years and we -- we keep them together.  
24 Right.

1 Same thing on the south side. We kept the --  
2 the Black groups together, the natural groupings, and  
3 we didn't just satisfy ourselves. We grouped the  
4 Latino communities together and kept the Asian  
5 communities together, as well as the White communities. 0:46:52

6 So what we have here is three majority Black  
7 districts, three majority Latino districts, and we also  
8 kept the Asian districts together, and Chinatown as  
9 well is on the north side, kept those communities  
10 together so that they can have significant influence in  
11 the outcome of an election.

12 We listened to the Jewish community, kept  
13 them together on the north side. So clearly here, you  
14 know, everybody in Chicago, regardless of your race,  
15 regardless of where you live, you have an equal  
16 opportunity to elect the candidate of your choice.

17 And these ward boundaries are already  
18 grounded in VRA. They pass legal muster. So if you 0:47:41  
19 use the ward boundaries as an underlying factor, right,  
20 as the base, you don't have to worry about whether or  
21 not this map will pass legal muster. Right?

22 And you know, I just want to go back to,  
23 while I'm thinking about it, to Attorney Samuel's  
24 point. She did meet with us. She heard our concerns,

1 but when we looked at her map, we're concerned that she  
2 broke up -- in the MALDEF map, she broke up the Black  
3 community in Austin.

4           You know, Austin is separated. Part of it is  
5 on the northwest side and the other part is more  
6 cohesive with the Black community. And we've heard  
7 from the west side Black elected officials that they  
8 prefer our map. They prefer to continue working  
9 together as they have been working together for years  
10 and years and years. This group has been together even  
11 before they were elected. 0:48:46

12           So this map is endorsed, for lack of a better  
13 word, by the Black west side elected officials, right?  
14 They are a group that represent -- they have Aldermen.  
15 They have Cook County officials. They have State  
16 elected officials. They even have a Congressman in  
17 that group. Together they represent over 500,000  
18 people and they're not the only ones who support this.

19           Of those 500,000 people, easily 250,000 are  
20 Black people. They support this map. We have letters  
21 of support from 31 organizations, who all have their  
22 own constituencies and these -- these organizations are  
23 from the west side. They're from the north side.  
24 They're from the south side. And they represent



1 thousands of people.

2           So this is not a map just for empowering  
3 Black people, it's for empowering our city. It's a map  
4 that encourages collaboration. And when I say  
5 collaboration, that's collaboration amongst our City  
6 Council, as well as our elected representatives from  
7 the board, as well as people from the community. You  
8 know, we have community-based organizations that work  
9 in specific geographies with their elected officials as  
10 well as with the schools.

11           This configuration provides an opportunity to  
12 have two officials from every district. Right? Two  
13 people, who are elected for the schools as well as five  
14 people, who represent this area in City Council.

15           Once we have the transition, they'll be able  
16 to decentralize, I guess, decision making, as well as  
17 the allocation of resources, and be laser focused on  
18 their specific communities. So you have seven people  
19 at all times, who are laser focused in their specific  
20 geography, allocating resources from the city,  
21 allocating resources from the schools, working hand in  
22 hand with police departments, with our local community  
23 groups, with Black clubs all in that geographic area  
24 with people that they already work with. When the city

1 maps are drawn, you know, the elected school board  
2 map's already drawn.

0:51:30

3           Let the people in City Hall have their little  
4 turf fights. Right? You don't have to have that same  
5 fight with the school board if you keep everything  
6 that's within the City Council districts. You know,  
7 we've learned -- we've learned the hard way, you know,  
8 we're having growing pains with our police district.  
9 Right?

10           Those districts were developed not really  
11 taking into account the Alder- -- you know, the  
12 Aldermanic wards. Right? And there's some confusion  
13 there about who people should be working with, et  
14 cetera, et cetera and we don't want to have that.

0:52:13

15           It's already going to be a shock when we  
16 have, what, 20 -- what 20 new people, so to speak, in  
17 their jobs. You know, it -- I think it would be  
18 really, really helpful to have all those 20 people to  
19 know exactly who their Aldermen are that they're going  
20 to be working with, know exactly what their boundaries  
21 are and have everything kept clean.

22           The second part of our proposal deals with  
23 the Black Student Achievement Committee. You know, as  
24 we shared with you before, there's already a committee

1 in place that deals with children and their families,  
2 who are not citizens. There's no such committee for  
3 anybody else let alone Black children and Black  
4 children honestly need this more than anybody else.

0:53:06

5 For far too long, we've had no accountability  
6 at the board level. We've been in situations, and  
7 we're in a situation now, where we thought we were  
8 working in good faith with Chicago's Board of  
9 Education, to have such a committee on the Chicago  
10 Board of Education. And lo and behold, presto chango  
11 after several months of good talks, we find out that  
12 rather than have a board committee that they're going  
13 to have a strategic plan and they will wrap up our  
14 strategies into everything else.

15 Now the problem with that is they have  
16 several committees that take care of everybody else and  
17 every year Black kids slip through the cracks. We're  
18 still holding up the rear.

0:53:57

19 In fact, when I testified in May that we need  
20 to have such a committee, somebody was Tweeting out,  
21 oh, we need to have a committee for special needs  
22 children. Guess what? Within six months -- I'm sorry,  
23 six weeks of the mayor being elected, we have a board  
24 advisory committee focused on children with special

1 needs. We have a law that focuses on children, who are  
2 not citizens to making sure that they have a positive  
3 experience.

4 Our Black children are being relegated to  
5 being subsumed into somebody else's or everybody else's  
6 strategic plan. Not that that's a problem. Everybody  
7 knows you need strategic planning, but we need a  
8 committee that's laser focused on our issues that's  
9 accountable at the board level and the line at the CPS  
10 level down to the school level. All right?

0:54:57

11 It needs to be data driven and not that  
12 you're so focused on numbers that you forget about the  
13 kids, but we need some way to measure whether or not  
14 we're moving the needle. Right? And we need to have a  
15 report card.

16 All right. And so, what would this look  
17 like? Now, I got this board structure from the Board  
18 of Education. We find that they have -- and I -- I  
19 think this might be a little old, but this is  
20 nevertheless what's on the website.

21 They have an Early Childhood Education  
22 Committee. They have a Finance and Audit Committee.  
23 They have an Whole Child Committee. They have a  
24 Workforce Development and Equity Committee. We're

1 suggesting that right up there with everything else, we  
2 need to have a Black Student Achievement Committee.

0:55:44

3           And we need to also make sure that this is  
4 written into law because we've seen left to their own  
5 devices, CPS, ignore -- now forgive me for you all, our  
6 elected officials will focus on our Black children.

7 There needs to be a law such that whoever is in office  
8 come rain or shine, Black student achievement is  
9 prioritized.

10           It needs to be just as important as finance.

11 And speaking of finance, we stand in solidarity with  
12 E4E. That's Educators for Excellence. They have a  
13 proposal. I'm sure you'll hear more about that. I'm  
14 not trying to steal their thunder, but we do stand in  
15 -- I'm sorry -- in solidarity with them for campaign  
16 finance reform making sure that you take out the  
17 serious influence of big money and special interests.

0:56:46

18           Make sure that there is more of a level  
19 playing field. Make sure that, you know, money is not  
20 the only factor that can make a difference in whether  
21 you participate or whether you can be elected.

22           So I -- I think I lied and said I would keep  
23 this down to seven minutes. Forgive me. I -- you  
24 know, once I get started I can't really stop talking

1 about this. This is a subject that I'm really  
2 passionate about. Thank you.

3 SENATOR LIGHTFORD: Thank you, Valerie. You  
4 know, and I -- I see your passion. I see it in the  
5 work that you and your group have done and I appreciate  
6 your time and effort in putting this together.

0:57:26

7 And you're so thorough and did so well that I  
8 think that I don't really have any questions. You  
9 actually answered all my questions in your  
10 presentation. So, thank you, for the details.

11 So, Senator Martwick, I don't know if he has  
12 any questions, but if you do, would you please at this  
13 time?

14 SENATOR MARTWICK: Thank you, Madam Chair,  
15 and just to the extent obviously you -- you took the  
16 initiative to -- to group into the 10 districts. Do  
17 you have any thoughts beyond the grouping, the 20 into  
18 10, how you'd want to see that play out?

0:58:08

19 Would you -- because obviously we have 20  
20 districts. Would you want someone to run from one-half  
21 of the appointed to the other, run at large in the 10  
22 and then cut it and only have half the district vote?

23 Do you have any thoughts on that Valerie?

24 MS. LEONARD: In terms of the elections, I

1 guess I would follow the law. The way I interpret the  
2 law is 10 people would be appointed by the mayor and  
3 I'm interpreting the law as that he would appoint one  
4 person from each of the 10 districts and then the other  
5 person would run.

0:58:44

6 And I'm assuming too, that given that they're  
7 eventually going to have a stagger at any given point  
8 you'll always have one person, who has some experience  
9 in that seat. So, you'll have, when I say stagger,  
10 half the people are going to be elected at -- during  
11 one election and then two years the other half will be  
12 elected.

13 In terms of, you know, the 10 and the 20,  
14 ideally we would like to keep the 10 districts. We  
15 like the idea of two elected representatives splitting  
16 up the work and collaborating, but if you absolutely  
17 have to subdivide those districts, obviously you would  
18 subdivide each of the 10 making sure that they still,  
19 you know, maintain compliance with, you know, VRA, as  
20 well as other laws.

0:59:40

21 You know, making sure that there's equal  
22 population and -- and that you have sufficient minority  
23 representation, et cetera. Did -- did I answer your  
24 question? Or did I leave something out?

1           SENATOR MARTWICK: I think so. You know,  
2 it's really your thoughts on -- on what that transition  
3 from 10 to 20 would look like.

4           MS. LEONARD: Okay.

5           SENATOR MARTWICK: And have you given any  
6 thought to the challenges of running an election cycle  
7 that's already begun?

1:00:09

8           MS. LEONARD: Oh my goodness. I personally  
9 have not given much thought to the political aspect. I  
10 -- I guess I'm one of those people who -- I -- I guess  
11 I ran for Alderman once and I'm done forever and ever.  
12 So I -- I guess I'm not looking at the political  
13 aspect, but I'm looking more at the government  
14 efficiency and the board governance and all of that  
15 stuff.

16           So I'm a little bit more in my -- in my  
17 little brain versus on the ground with the political  
18 stuff. But if you're asking whether or not we need to  
19 go ahead and pass this during veto session versus  
20 waiting until the fall, I -- I really do see the  
21 urgency for people running now because you really --  
22 these are large districts.

1:01:01

23           You really want to get out there and meet the  
24 voters, et cetera et cetera. You want to know, you



1 know, where the boundaries are. So I would urge you to  
2 -- to pass this during the veto session. And if the  
3 concern is you have to make sure that you do this right  
4 then that's even more reason to adapt -- adopt our map.  
5 Right?

6 This already passes muster legally as well as  
7 politically for the most part. So.

8 SENATOR MARTWICK: Thank you very much,  
9 Valerie. Thank you for your testimony and your work on  
10 this and thank you, Leader.

1:01:38

11 SENATOR LIGHTFORD: Thank you, Senator  
12 Martwick. Thank you, Ms. Leonard. I'll move on now to  
13 the Educators for Excellence. Mark Franklin. Mark,  
14 are you --

15 MR. FRANKLIN: Yes, how you doing, Madam  
16 Secretary. How you doing?

17 SENATOR LIGHTFORD: I'm well. How are you?

18 MR. FRANKLIN: I'm great. I'm great.

19 SENATOR LIGHTFORD: Good. Good. Good. You  
20 may present.

21 MR. FRANKLIN: Okay. Okay. Good evening  
22 Members of the Special Senate Committee on Chicago  
23 Elected Representative School Board. Again, my name is  
24 Mark Franklin. I'm a 30-plus-year CPS teacher veteran,

1 a proud member of Educators for Excellence, Elected  
2 School Board Teacher Action Team.

1:02:21

3 Educators for Excellence is a teacher-lead  
4 non-profit organization. You know, we work to ensure  
5 that CPS teachers' voices are a powerful presence in  
6 every policy conversation happening about what's  
7 happening in the schools and the classroom whether it's  
8 in Springfield, City Hall, or the Board of Ed.

9 Well, I'm here today to officially endorse  
10 the map submitted by Valerie Leonard and Illinois  
11 African Americans for Equitable Redistricting. Not  
12 only does that map keep communities together, but we  
13 know it will pass legal muster as it falls within  
14 automatic districts already drawn.

1:02:57

15 I'd also like to endorse IAAFER for its  
16 crucial recommendation of codifying to law an advisory  
17 committee on the Board of Education addressing  
18 achievement gap for Black students. It's very, very  
19 critical.

20 Finally, I'd like to take this opportunity to  
21 highlight absolute necessity of compensating Board of  
22 Education Members. Entire purpose of making those  
23 seats elected is to bring the board closer to being a  
24 body that is truly representative of CPS families and

1 students.

1:03:28

2           You know, how can we expect the critical work  
3 to be done by parents, teachers, and community members  
4 for free? If we don't -- we can't count on rich people  
5 or those backed by special-interest groups taking those  
6 seats. As it stands right now, teachers cannot run  
7 without leaving their classrooms. I could not afford  
8 to do that.

9           So I urge members of this committee to  
10 support legislation that will allow for board members  
11 to be compensated. And lastly, I just hope that you  
12 support and consider this in veto session in October.

13 Thank you. Appreciate you.

1:04:06

14           SENATOR LIGHTFORD: Thank you, Teacher  
15 Franklin. I -- I don't know that I have questions of  
16 you. It sounds like you endorse the map and we're  
17 clear on all of those questions being answered to -- to  
18 that particular map. So I can go on to Ms. Corrina  
19 Demma, your colleague over at Educators for Excellence.  
20 Hi, Ms. Demma.

21           MS. DEMMA: Hi. Thank you, Leader, Senator  
22 Martwick, and the other Members. Please pardon the  
23 background sound of Bluey if it interferes with my  
24 testimony. I have a tiny policy assistant on the couch

1 across for me. So I will just echo -- well, a little  
2 bit about me and most of you know me because you met me  
3 in the spring.

1:04:57

4 But yeah, I'm Corrina Demma, a former CPS  
5 graduate, former CPS math and science teacher, and I  
6 have two beautiful daughters in CPS. So I'm passionate  
7 about public education. I would like to officially  
8 endorse Valerie and IAAFER maps. They make good sense  
9 to me.

10 As a mom, I will say that I've experienced  
11 lots of frustration in the gaps between local, city  
12 services in schools like those maddening two weeks  
13 between school getting out and summer camp starting and  
14 then experiencing that same thing again at the end of  
15 summer camp before school begins again.

1:05:43

16 I love the idea of communities working  
17 together and keeping communities of special interest  
18 together. I will also say that as a former teacher and  
19 a community member, I live in a very diverse  
20 neighborhood. I live right on the cusp of Portage Park  
21 and Belmont Cragin.

22 I love the diversity of my neighborhood. I'm  
23 proud of the diversity of my neighborhood and I see  
24 huge disparities in the schools in my neighborhood

1 versus the schools in Lincoln Park or Lakeview and I  
2 think an advisory committee being codified into law as  
3 adjusted by IAAFER is absolutely critical and so I hope  
4 that is considered and supported by the members of  
5 these committees.

1:06:31

6 I will take my final moments. Today I found  
7 -- or I came upon this really great study by the School  
8 Board Partners, this fascinating organization of former  
9 board members from around the country. And so, in  
10 favor of compensation, in my opinion, as being a  
11 critical piece to allowing true representation of our  
12 elected school board, I will say that I agree with this  
13 study and I will share a little excerpt from it.

14 But part of that piece is, they talk about  
15 professionalizing the role of the school board seats  
16 and how that is key to dismantling things like systemic  
17 racism, and so, I -- I will just quickly read this one  
18 piece that I think is -- is -- makes a good argument in  
19 that way.

1:07:36

20 Electing the right people with the right  
21 mindsets and pushing for them to do the vital work of  
22 dismantling systemic racism in education are the first  
23 two steps that will make transformational leadership  
24 possible. The final component is a professionalization

1 of school boards.

2           There's training, support, staffing, and  
3 funding for every other group of decision makers in the  
4 school system. Principals, teachers, yet school board  
5 members are expected to govern effectively, communicate  
6 with their communities, respond -- now they're going to  
7 have to respond to political demands since we're  
8 electing them -- and manage multi million or billion  
9 dollar budgets with minimal training, support, limited  
10 staff, and no compensation.

1:08:21

11           Okay. So to that end, the need for school  
12 boards to evolve to become critical agents dismantling  
13 systemic racism, is daunting particularly without high  
14 quality support, training and compensation.

15           So in this vein, I will just say, that I  
16 truly hope that these things are considered and  
17 supported in veto session as the urgency, as Valerie  
18 was saying, urgency for getting these election cycles  
19 going so people can get to know their constituencies.

20           These are some key pieces that we see as  
21 essential in making these elections accessible and  
22 equitable and representative of their communities. And  
23 with that I will just say, thank you for your time.

1:09:20

24           SENATOR LIGHTFORD: Thank you, Ms. Demma. I

1 guess the same comments to your colleague, Mr.  
2 Franklin. By endorsing the map I understand where you  
3 are on the issues or that you didn't draw one but  
4 support another map.

5           So with that in mind, I did hear during  
6 Valerie's testimony that you mentioned -- what was her  
7 name, Ms. Samuels in your presentation and I just  
8 wanted to know if Ms. Samuels wanted to respond in any  
9 way to -- since you brought her name up in your  
10 presentation.

11           Ms. Samuel?

1:10:04

12           MS. SAMUEL: I mean we -- we did speak with  
13 Valerie and she raised her concerns and we gave her our  
14 perspective. We have not analyzed her map. I -- we  
15 don't have her files to do so, so I can't comment on --  
16 on her map in particular.

17           SENATOR LIGHTFORD: Okay. Great. Thanks so  
18 much. Thank you Educators for Excellence. So I can  
19 now go on to Nicole Lee, City of Chicago Alderman -- I  
20 didn't know the Alderman was on. I would have cut --  
21 My apologies, Alderman.

22           Are you still there Alderwoman?

23           ALDERWOMAN LEE: I'm here. No worries.

1:10:44

24           SENATOR LIGHTFORD: Welcome tonight. Thank

1 you for participating.

2 ALDERWOMAN LEE: Thank you. Thank you for  
3 allowing me to provide some testimony, Leader Lightford  
4 and Vice- -- Vice-Chair Martwick and distinguished  
5 Members of the General Assembly and all of those who  
6 care so passionately about this subject. As the Leader  
7 said, I'm Alderwoman Nicole Lee.

8 I represent the 11th Ward of the City of  
9 Chicago, which is comprised of Chinatown, Bridgeport,  
10 Armour Square, and parts of Canaryville, and McKinley  
11 Park. This ward has the distinction of being the first  
12 Asian majority ward in the City of Chicago.

1:11:19

13 I mention this point to highlight the fact  
14 that until this year, our community was subjected to  
15 gerrymandering preventing us from having a significant  
16 voice in any election until very recently. We are also  
17 -- The Asian-American community is also one of the  
18 fastest growing minority groups in the -- in Illinois  
19 and across the United States.

20 While I have not seen any of the maps  
21 currently under consideration, I am here as an elected  
22 official representing the 11th Ward. As a former local  
23 school council chair at Haines Elementary School, a CPS  
24 grad myself, and as the mother of two current CPS



1 students. I have a lot of skin in the game about this  
2 subject and I agree, excuse me, with Mr. Brottman and  
3 Ms. Vega Samuel on the subject of transparency on the  
4 timeline.

1:12:02

5 I know that this is -- well, first, let me  
6 -- let me say, thank you, for extending this  
7 conversation. I know we -- I gave testimony previously  
8 in the spring regarding this subject and it is --  
9 really I'm grateful for the fact that we've got some  
10 more time and I ask this body to engage directly with  
11 myself and my colleagues on the maps under  
12 consideration and invite those that have met proposals  
13 to meet with my colleagues and myself to provide, well  
14 in the community, with ample time to provide feedback  
15 knowing that this is a compressed timeline.

1:12:35

16 And as Vice-Chair Martwick so rightly pointed  
17 out, we are already in an election cycle. I also want  
18 to reiterate the importance of representation and not  
19 fracturing communities of color, ensuring that we're  
20 empowering these communi- -- communities, who make up  
21 the student population of CPS to have the strongest  
22 possible voice to elect representatives to the Chicago  
23 Board of Education.

24 Also, notable, and I'm sorry, I'm fighting a

1 post-COVID cough so I keep having to clear my throat.  
2 Given the current migrant crisis that we're all living  
3 through right now, we should be accounting for the  
4 continual migrant influx in the mapping process as  
5 well. I don't know what that looks like, but I think  
6 it's worth noting and something for consideration.

1:13:14

7           There's really not a map that can be drawn  
8 that would create any sort of Asian majority district.  
9 So my request really is, is that in any of these maps  
10 that the Asian Americans have the most significant  
11 voice possible in any districts. So looking at where  
12 the 11th Ward is that it not be cut up at all along  
13 with surrounding areas where there are significantly  
14 increasing Asian populations.

15           So with that, I thank you for the time and I  
16 thank you for your hard work on this.

17           SENATOR LIGHTFORD: Thank you, Alderman --  
18 Alderwoman Lee and congratulations and I'm very happy  
19 for you and all the constituents for the -- the whole  
20 Asian community. Congratulations.

1:13:57

21           ALDERWOMAN LEE: Thank you. Thank you so  
22 much.

23           SENATOR LIGHTFORD: You're welcome. So with  
24 that in mind, there was another Alderwoman that I

1 missed and forgive me, Alderwoman Ramirez. Are you  
2 available to speak now? I don't know. I hope I didn't  
3 have her waiting so long that she had to leave. Okay.  
4 Don't know --

5 ALDERWOMAN LEE: I'll shoot her a quick text  
6 message and see if she can rejoin.

7 SENATOR LIGHTFORD: Can you invite her back  
8 and tell her my apologies? I know we all have various  
9 meetings to attend. My apologies. So let us know when  
10 she returns.

1:14:33

11 So Kids First Chicago -- we'll keep going.  
12 There's a task force that was created and there's four  
13 speakers from this organization. The Chair being  
14 Blaire Flowers.

15 Would you like to present, Blaire?

16 MS. FLOWERS: Yes, hello.

17 SENATOR LIGHTFORD: Hi.

18 MS. FLOWERS: Hi everyone. Thank you so much  
19 for this time. So I'm just going to get started. I'm  
20 really nervous.

21 SENATOR LIGHTFORD: Oh, you don't have to be.  
22 Just dive right in. Welcome.

23 MS. FLOWERS: Okay.

24 SENATOR LIGHTFORD: Yeah. Welcome.

1:15:05

1 MS. FLOWERS: Good evening committee members.  
2 Oh, let me just say, I do have my little ones running  
3 around so if you all hear them try -- I got Bluey on  
4 and -- and Mickey Mouse so I'm sorry. Okay. Good  
5 evening committee members and thank you so much for the  
6 opportunity to speak with you all today.

7 Again, my name is Blaire Flowers. I am a  
8 mother of five with two currently in CPS, North  
9 Lawndale College Prep, my -- my junior, and my  
10 four-year-old in the cluster program at Milton Brunson  
11 Math and Science, Math and Specialty, and two  
12 graduating and one future student.

1:15:45

13 I have been a community activist on the west  
14 side for over 25 years. I sit on both the Austin and  
15 North Lawndale Community Action Councils. I am here  
16 today representing, again, the Kids First -- Kid First  
17 Chicago Elected School Board Task Force where -- thank  
18 you -- newly appointed -- I am the Chair of the School  
19 Board Task Force.

20 Our parent-led task force have been focused  
21 on four parent-identified properties -- I mean, I'm  
22 sorry, priorities for the future elected school board  
23 and that's fair racial representation, campaign  
24 spending limits, non-citizen participation, and parent

1 seats on the board.

1:16:30

2 This new law creates a huge increase in the  
3 direct representation of Chicago voters, but how well  
4 it represents CPS families will remain to be seen. The  
5 demographics of Chicago and CPS are very different.

1:16:46

6 CPS is nearly 90 percent students of color  
7 while Chicago is one-third White. This circumstance  
8 put Black and Brown students population both at risk of  
9 being under-represented and this is why the districts  
10 are so crucially important.

11 Everything we measure is somehow based on how  
12 the numbers of students -- I'm sorry. Everything that  
13 we measure is somehow based on the numbers of students,  
14 how much money that schools get from CPS, how much  
15 money CPS gets from the State of Illinois, or from the  
16 federal government.

1:17:25

17 But when we're talking about representation  
18 on the school board, some people will argue we  
19 shouldn't pay attention to the numbers of students or  
20 where they come from. I completely disagree. I have  
21 also heard people say that the district should be drawn  
22 so that the school board would represent all taxpayers  
23 and not just CPS families.

24 Because taxpayers also have an interest in

1 how schools do and I completely agree. That is a very  
2 valid point. It's a good argument. What I -- what I  
3 want to just put to you for a second, is the tax money  
4 more important than our students?

1:18:03

5 Which one is going to -- which one are we  
6 weighing in here? Please don't tell me that somehow if  
7 you pay your property tax, that is way more important  
8 than my child's education. Please don't make a false  
9 equivalency between property value for the residents  
10 without children in public school system and the  
11 300,000 children of color, who are in the school  
12 system.

13 Those things are not equal and in my opinion,  
14 we shouldn't be giving them equal weigh-in in these  
15 conversations about creating districts. I have heard  
16 people talking about making these districts equitable  
17 for all Chicago neighborhoods, talking about -- I'm  
18 sorry.

1:18:50

19 Talking about equity for all Chicago  
20 completely misses the mark. Equity is not given equal  
21 amount of something to everyone. It is about giving  
22 more to the people, who needs it the most. In this  
23 case, equitable -- equitable -- equitable  
24 representation would be about ensuring representation

1 for the groups, who are being historically  
2 disenfranchised and who will make up the largest  
3 percentage of the most impacted stakeholders, CPS  
4 families.

1:19:24

5           Now that we have finally had the opportunity  
6 to elect our school board members, we have to have a  
7 board that is truly representative of the people it  
8 serves. We have to ensure that our school board  
9 members are representing our students and that they  
10 understand the culture of CPS families, which are  
11 mostly Black and Brown.

12           Understanding the challenges and experiences  
13 of families in CPS is crucial for addressing their  
14 needs efficiently. This empathy and firsthand  
15 knowledge, enables the board to make policies and  
16 advocate -- advocate resources that address the unique  
17 challenges faced by these families leaning to more  
18 equitable education opportunities.

1:20:23

19           The map that this committee has released is  
20 unacceptable to the parents of our task force. The  
21 last map that we have seen does a good job of  
22 representing CPS Black student population but falls way  
23 short when representing our Latino families.

24           We keep testifying at these hearings we have

1 met with members of this committee over the summer and  
2 nothing has changed. We have tried talking. When are  
3 you going to listen? This committee should work to  
4 create at least eight primarily Latino districts with  
5 strong margins and maintain the seven primary Black  
6 districts you have already proposed.

1:21:13

7 Our task force has submitted a new map that  
8 falls -- that falls to these aligns with this -- that  
9 falls with these aligns at goal -- it falls there.  
10 Sorry. We continue to believe that ensuring our  
11 elected school board fairly represents CPS families  
12 will improve decision making at CPS and ensuring that  
13 CPS families are represented and listened to.

14 Finally, we encourage everyone here today to  
15 attend our town hall that Kids First Chicago is  
16 co-hosting. With the students at Mikva Challenge to  
17 discuss parents and students priorities for Chicago  
18 schools elected board. The town hall is virtual and  
19 will take place on Thursday, October 12th, at 6:00 p.m.

20 You can register to attend at [kidsfirstchicago.org](http://kidsfirstchicago.org).

1:22:13

21 Thank you so much for your time. I was  
22 nervous. I had tripped up a little bit, but thank you  
23 all so much for your time. I will see you all again.

24 SENATOR LIGHTFORD: Thank you, Ms. Flowers.



1 You did a good job. I can now go on to Melanie Lopez.

2 Melanie?

3 MS. LOPEZ: Hi. Thank you. Good evening  
4 everyone. Thank you. My name is Melanie Lopez and  
5 thank you so much for the opportunity to speak with you  
6 all today. I'm here today also to represent the  
7 parent-led Elected School Board Task Force for the Kids  
8 First Chicago. 1:22:45

9 I am a CPS parent of twin daughters and a  
10 dedicated CPS special education educator. I am of  
11 Cuban and Puerto Rican heritage, meaning my children  
12 are of Latino heritage and I do want their voices to be  
13 represented on this school board.

14 Most CPS students are children of color and  
15 with many of them coming from non-citizen families, all  
16 of them deserve to be represented by people who  
17 understand their background, their needs, and their  
18 struggles.

19 I believe the committee must consider the  
20 need for the school board to be culturally  
21 representative of the student population and the  
22 families whose children attend the schools that the  
23 board intends to represent. 1:23:24

24 I believe that equitable representation will

1 lead to equitable educational policies and that the  
2 demographics of Chicago and CPS are very different.  
3 And as Blaire said, it is 90 percent students of color  
4 within CPS while Chicago is only 33 percent Caucasian.  
5 The Black and Latino populations are both at risk of  
6 being severely under-represented compared to their  
7 share of the student population in CPS.

8           In spring of 2023 our task force did submit a  
9 map proposal to this committee. Our map aimed to  
10 promote fair representation for CPS Elected School  
11 Board districts.

1:23:58

12           Kids First Chicago has worked diligently with  
13 CPS families from across the city to create and vet  
14 different map prototypes and we are excited to submit  
15 an updated map now reflecting our continued belief that  
16 fair racial representation in Chicago School Board  
17 districts is vital for ensuring diverse perspectives  
18 and equitable decision making within CPS.

19           As much as possible and consistent with legal  
20 and constitutional requirements, these districts can  
21 and should be created in a way that takes into account  
22 the racial makeup of CPS students and families. We  
23 believe the new prototype map does more than any of the  
24 other maps we've seen throughout the process. To

1 fairly represent Chicago's population while also  
2 respecting and accounting for the diversity within CPS  
3 families.

1:24:43

4 Our map creates districts that give  
5 meaningful opportunities to communities of color with  
6 numerous Asian-influenced districts as well as Black  
7 and Latino districts that have significant margins.  
8 This is in contrast with some of the districts in this  
9 committee's last proposal, who gave only maybe 1 to 2  
10 percent advantages to Latino populations not taking  
11 into account eligibility to vote.

12 Finally, I would like to invite everyone, as  
13 Blaire did today, to join the town hall that Kids First  
14 Chicago will be co-hosting with the students from Mikva  
15 Challenge discussing parent and student priorities for  
16 Chicago's Elected School Board.

1:25:21

17 The town hall is vital and it will take place  
18 on Thursday, October the 12th at 6:00 and anyone can  
19 register at the Kids First Chicago dot org website.  
20 Thank you for your time.

21 SENATOR LIGHTFORD: Thank you, Melanie.  
22 Thank you for your testimony, your participation  
23 tonight. Karonda? Ms. Karonda Locust? Or Lokas  
24 (phonetic). Forgive me. Karonda Lokas (phonetic).

1 Okay. Vanessa Espinoza?

2 MS. ESPINOZA: Hi. Good evening and thank  
3 you.

4 SENATOR LIGHTFORD: Hi Vanessa. 1:26:02

5 MS. ESPINOZA: I think Karonda was having  
6 internet problems so we're texting her. So I will  
7 appreciate if you call her after.

8 SENATOR LIGHTFORD: Sure.

9 MS. ESPINOZA: Thank you.

10 So good evening committee members and thank  
11 you for the opportunity to speak to you today. My name  
12 is Vanessa Espinoza and I a parent of three students,  
13 who have attended Chicago Public Schools. I am a  
14 longtime advocate for our children's education.

15 I have served on local school councils,  
16 bilingual advisory committees, and parent advisory  
17 councils, and numerous other committees and working  
18 groups associated with education at CPS. I am here  
19 today representing the Kids First Chicago Elected  
20 School Board Task Force. 1:26:49

21 Let me start by acknowledging that drawing  
22 Chicago's first ever elected school board map is a  
23 challenging task to accomplish in a way that everyone  
24 will please everyone. Parents on our task force

1 appreciate that this committee's second map increased  
2 the number of plurality Latina district to seven where  
3 it had previously been six.

4           This same intended to respond to many of --  
5 of the concerns -- concerns, I'm sorry, that you heard  
6 from CPS parent on this topic; however, two of this  
7 district has such thin margins that when you consider  
8 citizen voting age population, they probably give a  
9 slight -- a slight advantage to White voters meaning  
10 that now there are only five primarily Latina  
11 districts.

1:27:45

12           We have not seen a new map from this  
13 committee since last spring. If you move forward with  
14 the last map you created, your committee will be  
15 perpetuating the inequalities and imbalance of power  
16 that have existed in the City of Chicago for far too  
17 long.

18           Unless you go back and draw a new map you are  
19 setting the stage for a plurality White school board to  
20 make decisions about policy and how to invest resources  
21 for a school body that is 90 percent children of  
22 colors. You promise us, as an -- an elected  
23 representative school board, but you are not delivering  
24 on that promise. Representation matters.

1:28:29

1           This map is not representative of the 300,000  
2 CPS students of colors and their families. We came to  
3 the hearing last spring and we are coming to you again  
4 this evening to say that CPS parents strongly prefer a  
5 board that reflects their students, has shared  
6 experiences, and understand the communities they are  
7 from.

8           The Kids First Chicago Elected School Board  
9 Task Force took time this summer to revise and  
10 ultimately decide to submit a new map that continues to  
11 take the diversity of CPS family into account and still  
12 adheres to the constitutional requirements guiding  
13 district creation.

1:29:17

14           Our new map has eight primarily Latina  
15 districts, seven primarily Black districts, and has a  
16 substantially equal population in each district, far  
17 more equal than Chicago's ward maps.

18           For example, unlike your last draft, our map  
19 also maintains substantial margins in Latina and Black  
20 popula- -- plurality districts creating a stronger  
21 opportunity for representation for protected minority  
22 groups. Yet after hearing repeatedly from parents  
23 asking you to consider the disparities in demographics  
24 and seeing now several examples showing that it could

1 reasonably be addressed, you have yet to put forth  
2 another map proposal that attempts to resolve this  
3 issue in a way that CPS parents want.

1:30:12

4           CPS parents understandably -- understandably  
5 feel that you have been ignoring their voices  
6 throughout this process. The last map you created only  
7 included five districts that are minority or a strong  
8 plurality Latina. Five out of 20 or 25 percent and  
9 they are meant to represent the nearly 50 percent of  
10 the CPS student population that is Latina. That is  
11 unconscionable.

12           We believe that a school board that reflects  
13 CPS diversity can better understand the needs of  
14 children in our communities and will deliver better  
15 result for our students.

1:30:55

16           We urge you to go back to the drawing board  
17 to come up with a map that better reflects CPS families  
18 including at least eight primarily Latina district with  
19 solid margins and maintaining this primarily -- seven  
20 primarily Black district that you previo- -- previously  
21 created.

22           The law gives you until April 1st of next  
23 year to complete this task. Please take the time you  
24 need to get this right for our children.

1           Finally, like my other two fellow parents, we  
2 encourage everyone here to attend a town hall that Kids  
3 First Chicago is co-hosting with students from Mikva  
4 Challenge.

1:31:39

5           Yes, you heard it right. With students. To  
6 discuss parents and students priorities for Chicago  
7 Elected School Board. It is a great opportunity to  
8 listen to CPS students what they want.

9           The town hall is virtual and will take place  
10 on Thursday, October 12th at 6:00 p.m. You can  
11 register to attend at KidsFirstChicago.org. I really  
12 appreciate your time. Thank you so much. Have a good  
13 evening.

14           SENATOR LIGHTFORD: Thank you, Ms. Espinoza.  
15 So I first wanted to know did Karonda Locust return?  
16 Okay.

1:32:16

17           So tonight's meeting is specifically to hear  
18 about your maps and to learn more about what you  
19 submitted so I did want to ask the questions to the  
20 Kids First Chicago group as it related to the  
21 principles that guided you in drawing your map.

22           Can you share that with me or with us,  
23 please?

24           MS. ESPINOZA: Sure. One of the principles



1 that we use is first we maintain law deviation, you  
2 know, that is one of the things that you guys think  
3 about it. Also, we kept the Asian influences all  
4 together as well.

1:32:58

5 We take in consideration that the district  
6 are compact and we have a priority example maps and  
7 chose the one that we felt will most closely mirrored  
8 CPS student demographics while still aligning with  
9 federal and state election laws.

10 I don't know if that answered your question.

11 SENATOR LIGHTFORD: It did. Thank you. And  
12 if anyone else in the -- your group want to chime in on  
13 some of the questions, please do, because I wanted to  
14 know a little bit more about like the -- the  
15 demographic data that was used for your map.

16 Was it based on the total demographics? Was  
17 it on the voting age population or the non-voting age  
18 population data?

1:33:42

19 MS. ESPINOZA: Let me see if someone else  
20 wants to answer or I'll keep answering. Blaire?

21 MS. FLOWERS: I was -- I was trying to look  
22 that up. So the maps that we submitted -- oh, okay.  
23 So it was voting age. I was just trying to make sure.  
24 I didn't want to say nothing wrong.

1           So we did mostly voting age for the maps that  
2 we drew and then when we came to the demographics,  
3 you're -- you're muted, Senator Lightford. Oh.

4           MS. ESPINOZA: You're still -- you're still  
5 muted, Senator Mayor Leader.

1:34:36

6           SENATOR LIGHTFORD: Okay. Whoa, that's a  
7 lot, Ms. Espinoza. Well, thank you, Blaire, for  
8 answering the question for me. And so, did you guys  
9 take any political boundaries into consideration?

10          MS. ESPINOZA: We did not consider any  
11 current political boundaries. Not at all.

12          SENATOR LIGHTFORD: Okay. And then what  
13 about, like, the communities of interest. Did you try  
14 to keep them whole? Was that, you know, a -- you know,  
15 a contentious portion of how you derived that where you  
16 did?

1:35:00

17          MS. FLOWERS: Most definitely. We wanted to  
18 -- we sought to keep the communities whole to extend  
19 the possibilities.

20          SENATOR LIGHTFORD: To extend the  
21 possibilities?

22          MS. FLOWERS: Yes, to extend the  
23 possibilities of what could happen if we kept the  
24 communities as is.

1 SENATOR LIGHTFORD: Okay.

2 MS. ESPINOZA: It's my -- what we mean, we  
3 sought to keep the communities intact as much as  
4 possible.

1:35:35

5 SENATOR LIGHTFORD: Okay. Okay. All right.  
6 Well, thank you all so much for your participation. I  
7 appreciate Kids First Chicago's effort in -- in  
8 submitting a map and joining us on tonight and just  
9 being a part of the process. So thank you so very  
10 much.

11 MS. ESPINOZA: Thank you and please, if you  
12 have time, attend our town hall and listen to the  
13 students and parents. We really appreciate it.

14 SENATOR LIGHTFORD: Awesome. Thank you for  
15 the invitation. Did Alderman Ramirez return? Okay.  
16 And then Alderman Lee, I just wanted to suggest, she  
17 mentioned that she hadn't saw the maps so I just wanted  
18 to remind the group again that you can go on ilga.gov  
19 and then chime into the Special Committee.

1:36:21

20 I'm going to read it directly to you so that  
21 I make sure I'm -- I'm quite accurate here. But it's  
22 the Senate's Special Committee that you would then go  
23 into Committees and then you're able to click on every  
24 single map that has been submitted to the group. So

1 please do so.

2           So I think at this time we have come to our  
3 last speaker. I don't know that all maps have been  
4 shared with the full body here so I was hoping that  
5 Giovanni, if you could share maps and talks about some  
6 of the demographics, things that we may have missed so  
7 that we're all engaged with what -- what -- what was  
8 submitted to the committee.

1:37:14

9           MR. RANDAZZO: Will do. Thank you.

10          SENATOR LIGHTFORD: Thank you.

11          MR. RANDAZZO: So, the last map that we have  
12 that citywide map that does not have a witness today as  
13 -- was submitted by Rosa Ramirez. It's a 20-district  
14 map. Rather than just go through the -- the  
15 demographic numbers now, I was going to go to sections  
16 of the city so that folks could see that and go through  
17 those numbers.

18                 Starting in the north side, we have the  
19 Fourth District right here, which has a -- a White VAP  
20 of 30.64, a Black VAP of 4.78, an Asian VAP, or Voting  
21 Age Population, of 4.45 and Hispanic VAP of 58.15. The  
22 next district is the eighth, which is this green  
23 district here by the lake. The VAPs for it are 69.8  
24 percent White, 7.62 percent Black, 7.43 percent Asian,

1 and 11.16 Hispanic.

1:38:49

2           Next is this pinkish district that is the  
3 Ninth District, which has a White VAP of 46.63 percent,  
4 Black VAP of 8.56 percent, an Asian VAP of 23.01, and  
5 Hispanic VAP of 18.16. This district right here on the  
6 northwest side of Chicago out to O'Hare is the 10th.  
7 Demographics are 67.75 percent White VAP, 1.52 Black,  
8 6.85 Asian, and 21.45 percent Hispanic.

9           The 11th, which is this tan district along  
10 the lake, the northeastern side of Chicago, is 51.96  
11 percent White VAP, 16.61 percent Black VAP, 10.61  
12 percent Asian, and 16.12 percent Hispanic. And lastly,  
13 the 13th. This is the beige district here kind of  
14 middle of the north side is a 42.94 percent White VAP,  
15 4.11 percent Black VAP, and 9.77 percent Asian VAP, and  
16 a 39.87 percent Hispanic VAP.

1:40:33

17           Again, this is a 20-district map. I think  
18 due to the lateness of the evening, I think Senator  
19 wanted to be done by a certain time, I'm going to --  
20 this will be available on our website, but I do want to  
21 kind of go through some of the numbers.

22           This is the Fifth District right here, which  
23 has -- which is a majority Black district with 51.73  
24 percent VAP. There is the 12th, which is this red

1 district here along the city, Lakeview area, down into  
2 the Gold Coast, which is -- has 78.35 percent White  
3 VAP. It is the 14th District, which is this blue  
4 district here, which has a Hispanic VAP of 59.72.

5           There is the 19th District, which is this  
6 gray district coming from the west side up through  
7 Wicker Park and Goose Island, et cetera, which is --  
8 which is a district that has 53.02 percent Black VAP.  
9 And lastly, on this slide is the 20th, which is  
10 Magnificent Mile, west -- near west side, which is a  
11 68.22 percent White VAP.

1:42:15

12           Districts One and Three, so this is the --  
13 not sure where -- brownish color district is number one  
14 and that is a -- has a Hispanic VAP of 69.27 percent.  
15 The third district, this purple district here that goes  
16 from Millennium Park down to McKinley Park, is a  
17 district that is a majority-minority with 34.73 percent  
18 White VAP, 8.38 percent Black VAP, 30.08 percent Asian,  
19 and 23.74 percent Hispanic.

20           Going to the south side, we'll start with the  
21 aquamarine colored second district, which has a  
22 Hispanic VAP of 65.02. The Sixth District, which is  
23 the orange district here, which has an African American  
24 -- Black VAP of 89.44 percent. The seventh is the pink

1 district along the lake, which has a -- a Black VAP of  
2 62.26. That's the Hyde Park-Kenwood area.

1:43:46

3 Next is the 15th, which is a light blue one  
4 to the south side of Chicago, kind of the 10th Ward,  
5 7th Ward, 9th Ward areas that has a Black VAP of 66.79.  
6 There is the 17th -- I'm sorry, 16th, which is this  
7 lime green map here. That has African -- Black VAP of  
8 93.78 percent.

9 There is the 17th District, which is the --  
10 this olive green district here, which is Archer Heights  
11 and in to Knesset (phonetic), which has a 76.58 percent  
12 Hispanic VAP, and the last district is the 18th  
13 District, which goes from Gage Park down into the 19th  
14 Ward, which has 54.58 percent Black VAP.

15 Again, this is a proposal that was submitted  
16 to tonight via Rosa Ramirez and this is what was  
17 submitted in. So.

18 SENATOR LIGHTFORD: Thank you. Thank you so  
19 much, Giovanni, for sharing that. We did want to make  
20 sure tonight was inclusive of sharing all the maps that  
21 were received and again, I just want to direct you to  
22 the ilga.gov website. Go to the Senate Special  
23 Committee and there you would be able to review and  
24 revisit all of the maps that were submitted on tonight.

1:45:26

1           So as we wrap up, I want to, again, thank all  
2 of you for joining us on tonight especially for taking  
3 your time to share your insights and your expertise.

4 In my opinion, this effort has always been a  
5 community-led effort and your continued dedication will  
6 help us carry us forward, moving forward.

7           And so our next hearing is scheduled for next  
8 Thursday, October 12th at 5:00 p.m. and it will be held  
9 virtually so that we can have as many participants as  
10 possible.

11           Specifically, during that hearing, just  
12 during that hearing, the topic of discussion will be  
13 focusing on examining the best ways to transition to a  
14 fully-elected school board given the concerns that some  
15 have raised about the current structure that's laid out  
16 in the existing law.

1:46:29

17           So we wanted to touch base with you on that.  
18 We also hope to discuss some of the ideas that were  
19 mentioned here today regarding the petitions and the  
20 election process that's governing the transition. So  
21 we also would like to speak to that.

22           So we're looking forward to hearing your  
23 input on those matters at the next committee meeting.  
24 Again, that's held next Thursday, October 12th, 5:00



1 p.m. virtually.

2 As a reminder of those other two websites, if  
3 you want to add some input from now prior to next  
4 Thursday, you can go to the [ilsenateredistricting.com](http://ilsenateredistricting.com)  
5 or you can e-mail us at Chicago, all capital letters,  
6 E-R-S-B, with a capital C to Committee,  
7 [ChicagoERSBCommittee@senatedem.ilga.gov](mailto:ChicagoERSBCommittee@senatedem.ilga.gov).

1:47:28

8 Thank you all so much. I wish you a blessed  
9 night and seeing there being no further business to  
10 come before the Senate Special Committee on the Chicago  
11 Elected Representatives School Board, we are adjourned.  
12 Thank you all so very much.

13 (End of recording.)

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24

1 CERTIFICATION

2 I, Cori Fagan, do hereby certify that the  
3 foregoing transcript of said hearing is a true,  
4 complete and correct report of the entire testimony so  
5 given by said participants present at the taking of  
6 said recording to have appear of record.

7 I further certify that the testimony that was  
8 recorded by audio/visual recording device and  
9 thereafter transcribed into typewriting under my  
10 direction and control.

11 I further certify that I am not counsel for,  
12 nor attorney for any of the parties to the aforesaid  
13 cause, nor am I related to any of the parties to the  
14 aforesaid cause, nor am I interested in any manner in  
15 the said cause or in its outcome.

16

17 IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF: I have hereunto set  
18 my hand and affixed my notarial seal:

19

20

21 Cori Fagan

22 October 20, 2023

23

<b>A</b>	<p><b>address</b> 23:6 63:16</p> <p><b>addressed</b> 71:1</p> <p><b>addressing</b> 25:13 50:17 63:13</p> <p><b>adhere</b> 31:22</p> <p><b>adheres</b> 70:12</p> <p><b>adjourned</b> 81:11</p> <p><b>adjusted</b> 53:3</p> <p><b>adopt</b> 14:16 24:5 49:4</p> <p><b>adopted</b> 15:20</p> <p><b>advantage</b> 69:9</p> <p><b>advantages</b> 67:10</p> <p><b>advisory</b> 35:5 43:24 50:16 53:2 68:16,16</p> <p><b>advocacy</b> 13:24 30:4</p> <p><b>advocate</b> 63:16 63:16 68:14</p> <p><b>advocates</b> 6:22</p> <p><b>affixed</b> 82:18</p> <p><b>afford</b> 51:7</p> <p><b>aforsaid</b> 82:12 82:14</p> <p><b>African</b> 16:9,16 19:24 20:20 21:5 34:3 50:11 78:23 79:7</p> <p><b>afternoon</b> 13:11</p> <p><b>age</b> 14:18 15:6 19:2,3,6,12,17 20:8 26:23 27:9,13 69:8 73:17,17,23 74:1 76:21</p> <p><b>agents</b> 54:12</p> <p><b>agree</b> 53:12 57:2 62:1</p> <p><b>ahead</b> 48:19</p> <p><b>aimed</b> 66:9</p> <p><b>Alder-</b> 42:11</p>	<p><b>Alderman</b> 37:15 48:11 55:19,20 55:21 58:17 75:15,16</p> <p><b>Aldermanic</b> 42:12</p> <p><b>Aldermen</b> 37:7 37:10 38:21 40:14 42:19</p> <p><b>Alderpersons</b> 12:14</p> <p><b>Alders</b> 12:17</p> <p><b>Alderwoman</b> 55:22,23 56:2 56:7 58:18,21 58:24 59:1,5</p> <p><b>aligning</b> 73:8</p> <p><b>aligns</b> 64:8,9</p> <p><b>all's</b> 33:17</p> <p><b>allocating</b> 41:20 41:21</p> <p><b>allocation</b> 41:17</p> <p><b>allow</b> 10:5 26:11 51:10</p> <p><b>allowing</b> 53:11 56:3</p> <p><b>American</b> 13:19 16:9,16 20:20 21:5 78:23</p> <p><b>Americans</b> 19:24 34:3 50:11 58:10</p> <p><b>amount</b> 30:2 37:17 62:21</p> <p><b>ample</b> 57:14</p> <p><b>analyzed</b> 55:14</p> <p><b>Angeles</b> 29:13</p> <p><b>answer</b> 24:13 47:23 73:20</p> <p><b>answered</b> 46:9 51:17 73:10</p> <p><b>answering</b> 73:20 74:8</p> <p><b>anybody</b> 43:3,4</p> <p><b>apart</b> 27:22</p> <p><b>apologies</b> 55:21 59:8,9</p>	<p><b>appear</b> 82:6</p> <p><b>APPEARAN...</b> 2:1 3:1</p> <p><b>appoint</b> 47:3</p> <p><b>appointed</b> 7:19 7:20 23:18,21 29:21 30:17 46:21 47:2 60:18</p> <p><b>appointing</b> 23:14</p> <p><b>appreciate</b> 9:17 21:17 31:14 33:3,19 46:5 51:13 68:7 69:1 72:12 75:7,13</p> <p><b>appreciation</b> 10:9</p> <p><b>approach</b> 38:6</p> <p><b>appropriate</b> 15:10</p> <p><b>approximately</b> 8:2</p> <p><b>April</b> 11:20,21 71:22</p> <p><b>aquamarine</b> 78:21</p> <p><b>Aquino</b> 2:12 5:21 13:13</p> <p><b>Archer</b> 79:10</p> <p><b>area</b> 41:14,23 78:1 79:2</p> <p><b>areas</b> 18:24 58:13 79:5</p> <p><b>argue</b> 61:18</p> <p><b>argument</b> 53:18 62:2</p> <p><b>Armour</b> 56:10</p> <p><b>Ashley</b> 3:17 6:2</p> <p><b>Asian</b> 8:6 16:10 16:16 20:20 21:6,7 27:4,7 27:12 39:4,8 56:12 58:8,10 58:14,20 73:3 76:20,24 77:4</p> <p>77:8,12,15 78:18</p> <p><b>Asian-Americ...</b> 56:17</p> <p><b>Asian-influen...</b> 67:6</p> <p><b>asking</b> 26:5 48:18 70:23</p> <p><b>aspect</b> 21:19 48:9,13</p> <p><b>assembled</b> 34:11</p> <p><b>Assembly</b> 11:9 15:3 17:2,4 27:21 56:5</p> <p><b>Assembly's</b> 15:21</p> <p><b>assistant</b> 51:24</p> <p><b>associated</b> 68:18</p> <p><b>assuming</b> 47:6</p> <p><b>attempts</b> 11:17 71:2</p> <p><b>attend</b> 59:9 64:15,20 65:22 72:2,11 75:12</p> <p><b>attended</b> 68:13</p> <p><b>attention</b> 61:19</p> <p><b>attorney</b> 39:23 82:12</p> <p><b>audio/visual</b> 82:8</p> <p><b>Audit</b> 44:22</p> <p><b>Austin</b> 20:5 36:19 40:3,4 60:14</p> <p><b>automatic</b> 50:14</p> <p><b>available</b> 59:2 77:20</p> <p><b>avoid</b> 30:20</p> <p><b>aware</b> 11:17</p> <p><b>Awesome</b> 75:14</p>
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