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HEARING ON CONGRESSIONAL

REDISTRICTING BILL EXCERPT

Wednesday, October 19, 2011

THE SPEAKER: Can we just have the Subcommittee Chair give the Committee report and a background on the bill and then you can ask -- start with the questions from there. That would be --

The Subcommittee Chair of the Rules Committee in charge of redistricting, Madam Speaker, pro tem.

SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker and members of the House of Delegates, as a distinct honor permission to use the delegates name.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIR: At the request of the speaker and with the blessings of Delegate Hattie Harrison (phonetic), the Chair of the Rules Committee for the purpose of presiding Monday at the Joint Hearing with the Senate Redistricting and Reapportionment Committee and yesterday at the House Rules Committee on the congressional redistricting plan was voted on.

Before going any further with my comments I would like to thank the chair of the Governor's Redistricting Advisory Committee, Jeanne Hitchcock, of whom are very own speaker was one of the members, Secretary of State, John McDonough, Joe

Brice (phonetic) from the Governor's Office, the Office of Planning, the Office of the Department of Legislative Services.

I would also like to thank Jeremy Baker for all his hard work as well.

I'd like to thank all named persons for all the support they gave to me and many of you that made it possible that this plan is on the floor today.

I would also like to thank the members from both parties for your participation in the process, whether it was the submission of an alternative redistricting plan to the Governor's plan or your comments at the hearing and lively debate before the Rules Committee yesterday.

I would also like to thank the members of the Rules Committee for their time and participation at both meetings.

The Committee voted yesterday to support the Governor's redistricting plan, that the plan is substantially similar to the plan that was submitted on October 4th that was recommended by the Governor's Redistricting Advisory Committee.

The Governor's Redistricting Advisory Committee visited 12 localities around the state listening, reading hours of testimony, and alternative plans from Marylanders from all walks of life. I was glad I was able to attend about half of them to really hear from our citizens.

Many changes to the current map are a direct result of testimony the Advisory Committee heard. The Governor's map addresses the changing demographics and shifting populations found throughout Maryland. This map strikes a reasonable balance between the Washington metro area and the Baltimore metro area along with a central Maryland district shared between them that reflects this growing population. It also keeps the non-eastern shore counties together and connects more of rural Maryland.

By using the 2002 redistricting map as a starting place the Governor's map keeps Marylanders with consistent representation. Over 70 percent of Marylanders keep their current member of Congress.

The maps preserves our two majority minority districts, the 4th and 7th Congressional Districts. They are both

within the top 15 most African American congressional

districts in the country.

The 5th Congressional District maintaining a significant

minority population and accurately reflects the growing

diversity of southern Maryland.

With preserving District 4 and 7 as a majority African

American district we met the top three goals of the

Legislative Black Caucus.

Finally the State retained a nationally recognized

expert on the Voting Rights Act who reviewed this plan. I,

along with several others from the House and Senate had an

opportunity to meet this expert on Monday. He has advised

the Office of the Attorney General, who has in turn advised

us that this plan complies with the letter and the spirit of

the Voting Rights Act.

With that said, Mr. Speaker, I'm requesting a favorable

consideration of Senate Bill 1, the Congressional Districting

Plan of 2012.

Thank you.

[Whereupon, the excerpt concluded.]

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