

MINUTES

Senate Committee on State Agencies and Governmental Affairs

House Committee on State Agencies and Governmental Affairs

Meeting Jointly

Monday, September 20, 2021

1:00 PM

Room A, MAC

Little Rock, Arkansas

Committee members present: Senators Jason Rapert, Chair; Trent Garner, Vice-Chair; Cecile Bledsoe, Breanne Davis, Jane English, Bart Hester, and Clarke Tucker; Representatives Dwight Tosh, Chair; Justin Gonzales, Vice-Chair; Rick Beck, Bruce Cozart, Gary Deffenbaugh, Jim Dotson, Michelle Gray, Lane Jean, Jack Ladyman, Fredrick J. Love, Austin McCollum, Stephen Meeks, John Payton, Marcus E. Richmond, Nelda Speaks, Jeff Wardlaw, and David Whitaker

Other members present: Senators Jonathan Dismang, Lance Eads, Joyce Elliott, Kim Hammer, Jimmy Hickey, Jr., Missy Irvin, and Mathew Pitsch; Representatives Mary Bentley, Mark Berry, Stan Berry, Craig Christiansen, Joe Cloud, Cameron Cooper, Cindy Crawford, Marsh Davis, Jon Eubanks, Jack Fortner, Denise Garner, Steve Hollowell, Mark Lowery, Roger Lynch, Tippi McCullough, Aaron Pilkington, Keith Slape, and Joy Springer

Representative Tosh called the meeting to order.

Discussion of Draft Congressional Redistricting Legislation

The following bills and maps were discussed: HB1959, sponsored and presented by Representative Speaks; HB1960, sponsored and presented by Representative Ladyman; and HB1961, sponsored and presented by Representative Whitaker. Mr. Matthew Miller, Assistant Director, Legal Services Division, Bureau of Legislative Research (BLR), and Ms. Michelle Davenport, Legislative Attorney, Legal Services Division, BLR, answered questions regarding congressional district population deviation.

Mr. Robert Walker, a Pulaski County resident, spoke against all three bills in regard to splitting voting precincts and suggested combining Pulaski and Jefferson counties in the same voting district. Ms. Sara Dunklin, First Congressional District Chair of the Republican Party of Arkansas, spoke in favor of HB1959 regarding keeping row crop farmers in the First District and the importance of having like topographies together. Ms. Laurie Black, incoming Chairwoman for the Chicot County Republican Party, spoke in support of keeping row crop farmers in the same voting district. Ms. Rebekah Dewitt spoke in favor of any bill that keeps Lincoln County in the First District.

The meeting adjourned at 2:05 p.m.