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Subject: Spencer Jones' Redistricting Testimony

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I bring you greetings Mr/Madam Chair.

My name is Spencer Jones and I am a third year , Urban Studies and Public Policy major at Dillard University in New Orleans. Although I am originally from Arkansas, I've grown to have a true and genuine love for the state of Louisiana. While having a love for Louisiana, I have , more importantly, grown to be very civically engaged here. First and foremost, I am an active voter here, I have interned with the Urban League of Louisiana, I work with the Louisiana NAACP Youth and College Division , and I also represent Dillard University as a White House HBCU Scholar by the White House and the US Department of Education. As a young, passionate, civically engaged student in Louisiana, I urge you today to draw fair and equitable district lines across our state as these decisions will impact me for the next 10 years. Now and in the next few years, my peers and I will be deciding what we want to study, where we want to live, and the kind of work that we want to do. Quite frankly, I have plans to build roots in the state of Louisiana because of the rich potential that this state exudes . However, that rich potential can not be attained with unfair and unequal district maps.

For instance, There is no reason for New Orleans to be packed into the same district as Baton Rouge. To fairly represent the State of Louisiana, there must be additional Majority Minority congressional districts added. New Orleans is a historically and majority Black city with additional "minority" representation from Vietnamese, Honduran, and Middle Eastern communities. Surrounding parishes are showing similar increases in minority representation, making it imperative for the Greater New Orleans area and surrounding parishes to be in their own congressional district, separate from Baton Rouge.

Now, why have us college students shown in great numbers today ? Our voices are necessary during the redistricting process as it will impact us well into our adulthood. Redistricting is a glimpse into the future and into the past. It shows us the inequities of times before, and the priorities of legislators and communities moving forward. So I ask you ... What will be your priority ? Will you prioritize the futures of young people by drawing fair and equitable maps? Will you prioritize the people of the state of Louisiana?

Thank you so much for your time .