

**Graniteville Redistricting Public Hearing  
Summary of Testimony**

Aiken Technical College  
March 29, 2011 6:30-8:30 p.m. scheduled

The public hearing began at 6:30 p.m. The Redistricting Subcommittee members present were: Senator McConnell, Senator Ford, Senator Hutto, Senator Larry Martin, Senator Cleary, Senator Malloy, and Senator Shoopman. The Senate Redistricting staff persons present were: Charlie Terreni, Debbie Hammond, Paula Benson, and Laurie Traywick. Approximately 31 people attended.

Senator McConnell called the meeting to order with a welcome and a brief overview of the process. He introduced members of the subcommittee and explained that the subcommittee's task, including the need to draw a seventh Congressional District. He told the group that a House subcommittee also was holding public hearings. He said the Senate subcommittee had come to hear about building blocks for future drawing and to have public input to develop criteria.

1. The first speaker was Tony DiStefano. He thanked the subcommittee for the opportunity to be heard. He emphasized that adopting general redistricting principles is important to ensure the ability for opposition and contested seats as well as to provide a level playing field. He said the goal should be to have the lines make sense and give the public a choice. He criticized the existing districts that cross boundaries and confuse the voters. He said because the districts were drawn to favor parties, the opposition was in the primaries, but not in the general election. He advocates that districts need to: (1) be compact; (2) not divide counties cities or towns; (3) not be drawn favoring one party; and (4) be fair and competitive.

2. The second speaker was Billy Boylston representing Congressman Jeff Duncan who could not attend because he was in Washington. Mr. Duncan had gotten to know the voters in the area. They are entrepreneurs, veterans, farmers, and Savannah River employees. Mr. Duncan wants to represent the same district and asked that the subcommittee make as few changes as possible in his district.

3. The third speaker, Ann Willbrand, is a 25-year resident of Aiken, a member of the League of Women Voters, and speaking as a private citizen. She recognizes that elements to be considered include population, compactness, respect for boundaries, politics, and communities of interest. She said, in the area, elections are determined in the primaries, which disenfranchises all who do not vote in the primaries. She encourages partisan parity. As to Congressional Districts, she differed from the previous speaker. She thought the Congressional Districts were too large, too hard to travel, and held little commonality. She recommended that the third district should serve the upstate and the second merged with the first. She thought consolidated economic development favored a midlands based Congressional District. She advocated that Aiken was split should be kept whole in a Congressional District.

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4. Terri Jowers, a resident of Williston, spoke fourth. She grew up in a family that had lived in Barnwell since the 1790s. She had organized for health and favored reforming health care from the bottom up to make it more affordable and increase the quality. Her father Quincy Jowers, aged 82, planted a garden each year to provide for the widows in the area. He taught his children that every day was a good day, but it was a great day when you could do something for someone who could not pay you back. She asked the subcommittee to remember the needy, use logical lines, and be mindful to avoid voter confusion. She spoke in favor of rural interests and said while you may not see much in a small town, what you hear makes up for it. She advocated a rural Congressional District as representative of the community of interest. The principles she recommended to the subcommittee were to be: logical, fair, brave, and visionary.

5. Kathy Hensley was the fifth speaker. She is a retired federal and state employee. She sat on the commission of a Lexington SPD and had served on the election commission. On election day and after, she had heard voters express confusion. She spoke about split precincts and that one precinct has only three households. She advocated better representation by county boundaries. In fairness, communities of interest should be respected.

6. Ben Kinlaw was the sixth speaker. He thanked the subcommittee for holding public hearings. He had spoken previously at Orangeburg. He reminded the subcommittee of Reynolds v. Sims and advocates one Senator per county, saying that each county would not have equal representation until a Senator has a vested interest. He wants to stay in the second Congressional District.

7. Kyle Lacio was the seventh speaker. He encouraged that legislators have to start talking about encouraging the job market. He recommends encouraging good representation, having no voter confusion, and keeping communities together.

Earl R. Coleman did not respond when called.

8. Sonny O. Donovan was the eighth speaker. He feels Aiken is represented by two able congressmen in Joe Wilson and Jeff Duncan. He worked to get Duncan elected and does not want to lose him. He recommends keeping Aiken divided.

9. Charles Jennings was the ninth speaker. He thanked the subcommittee for receiving citizen input. He is from McCormick, a small county that has never been divided. He wants to make sure that McCormick remains whole with one representative in the Senate and one in the House. He asked that McCormick be kept intact.

10. Jane Page Thompson was the tenth speaker. She thanked the subcommittee for coming to Aiken. She asked that the subcommittees of the House and Senate confer and consolidate their meetings to save taxpayer money and constituent time. She feels Aiken is well served by Shane Massey and Greg Ryberg. She is concerned that other Aiken representatives do not show up for delegation meetings. She recommends taking the new seventh Congressional District out of the north and to split Horry County and go to Rock Hill. She thinks Aiken is well represented by two congressmen and that two are needed because of the nuclear facilities.

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11. John Philcox was the eleventh speaker. He thanked the subcommittee for coming to Aiken. He appreciates the integrity of McCormick County and asked that it be kept whole in one district.

Senator McConnell recognized Senators Shane Massey and Danny Verdin who were in attendance. They thanked the subcommittee for coming to Aiken. The meeting was adjourned at 7:14 p.m.