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April 21, 2017

Jeff Blease, Steve Hamby, and James Curtis
Irwin County Board of Elections & Registration
207 South Irwin Ave.
Ocilla, GA 31774

Via Fed Ex

Dear Irwin County Board of Elections & Registration:

The American Civil Liberties Union of Georgia (“ACLU”) writes to express grave concern with two recent proposals floated by the Irwin County Board of Elections & Registration (the “Elections Board”), or certain of its members or staff, to close polling places across Irwin County, potentially eliminating polling places located where African American voters are most concentrated. *See Citizens fight to keep voting precincts*, The Ocilla Star, Feb. 15, 2017, at 1; *Elections Board talks possible lawsuits, precincts*, The Ocilla Star, Mar. 8, 2017, at 3 (copies of the articles are attached as Exhibit A).

These measures—which deviate from the recommendations of a December 7, 2016 report issued by the nonpartisan Association of County Commissioners of Georgia, *A Financial and Management Analysis for Irwin County* (“ACCG Report”)—appear to directly target African American voters and would make it significantly more difficult for African American or lower-income voters to cast a ballot, without adequate justification. As such, these proposals potentially violate Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act, 52 U.S.C. § 10301, and the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution as well. They must be rejected.

I. The proposal to eliminate polling places in Ocilla, which is predominantly African-American, is discriminatory and unjustifiable

As we understand it, the first proposal seeks to reduce the number of polling places by 75% (from 8 to 2), which includes the elimination of the polling place in the heart of Ocilla. Ocilla, however, has the highest concentration of African Americans in the county, as illustrated in the map attached as Exhibit B. Moreover:

- 83% of the ballots cast by African Americans on Election Day in the November 2016 elections were cast in Ocilla, while only 22% of the ballots cast by white voters on Election Day were cast in Ocilla, according to public voting records;
- Ocilla’s population is 57% African-American;¹ and
- African Americans disproportionately make up 44% of the registered voters in Ocilla.

¹ See CensusViewer, <http://censusviewer.com/city/GA/Ocilla>.

The only 2 remaining polling places left open would be in or near Irwinville and in a location in or near Holt, located on the east side of Irwin County. Both these areas are disproportionately white. Irwinville, which is the site of the Jefferson Davis Memorial Historic Site, is 96% white,² and white voters make up 95% of its registered voters. The east side of Irwin County is also largely white. *See* Exhibit B.

Thus, under this plan, racial minorities in Irwin County would potentially have to travel *twice* the distance of white voters just to cast a ballot on Election Day. These transportation burdens are further exacerbated by the fact that African Americans and other voters in Ocilla have lower incomes and are far less likely to own vehicles. According to survey estimates from the Census:

- The median income of African Americans in Irwin County (\$22,332) hovers at the poverty line and is *half* the median income of white residents (\$42,619);
- Geographically, the median income of residents living in the Ocilla area (\$19,000 to \$21,000) are *less than half* of those in the outer areas (\$37,000 to \$47,000), *see* Exhibit C; and
- The percentage of Ocilla voters without a vehicle (12-22%) is *ten to twenty times higher* than the percentage of vehicle non-ownership around Irwinville (0-1%), and also significantly higher than the percentage of vehicle non-ownership in east Irwin County (6%), *see* Exhibit D.

And Ocilla voters without vehicles *are completely prevented* from voting on Election Day, since there is no public transportation out of Ocilla at all.

When polling place configurations or closures have such a starkly disproportionate impact on racial minorities, such closures almost certainly constitute a violation of the Voting Rights Act. Several federal courts have struck down these kinds of plans on this basis. *See, e.g., Sanchez v. Cegavske*, --- F. Supp.3d ----, 2016 WL 5936918, at *7-*11 (D. Nevada Oct. 7, 2016) (likely violation of Voting Rights Act where “the distance [one] must travel [to polling location] are a material limitation that bears more heavily on members of [the Native American tribe]” compared to white voters, “especially given their relative difficulty in accessing transportation [and] affording travel”); *Spirit Lake Tribe v. Benson Cnty.*, No. 2:10-cv-095, 2010 WL 4226614, at *3-*4 (D.N.D. Oct. 21, 2010) (closure of polling place on Native American reservation likely violated Voting Rights Act, where Natives have “markedly lower socioeconomic status compared to the white population”); *Operation Push v. Allain*, 674 F. Supp. 1245, 1262-68 (N.D. Miss. 1987) (prohibition on satellite registration offices in disproportionately minority areas violated Voting Rights Act where there were “vast socio-economic disparities between blacks and whites in Mississippi”); *Brown v. Dean*, 555 F. Supp. 502, 504-05 (D.R.I. 1982) (“the use of polling places at locations remote from black communities, or at places calculated to intimidate blacks from entering (when alternatives were available)” violates Voting Rights Act).

² *See* City-Data.com, <http://www.city-data.com/city/Irwinville-Georgia.html>.

To the extent that this proposal was purposely designed, even in part, to target African American voters, it would obviously violate the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments as well. This proposal certainly cannot be defended on the basis of voting demand, since about one-third (33%) of the ballots cast on Election Day were cast in Ocilla (575 ballots out of approx. 1725), according to public voting records. *See Vill. of Arlington Heights v. Metropolitan Housing Development Corp.*, 429 U.S. 252, 267 (1977) (“Substantive departures . . . may be relevant [to a finding of discriminatory intent], particularly if the factors usually considered important by the decisionmaker strongly favor a decision contrary to the one reached.”).

Nor can this proposal be meaningfully defended as a necessary cost-saving measure. It is both telling and troubling that this proposal directly conflicts with the ACCG Report. The ACCG Report, published by a nonpartisan entity for the express purpose of making cost savings recommendations for the county, simply does not recommend closing as many polling places—and definitely does not recommend closing all polling places in Ocilla.³ Rather, the ACCG Report recommends reducing the number of polling places from 8 to 3, leaving one “*in or near Ocilla, Irwinville, and one somewhere in the eastern portion of the county,*” placing “every, or nearly every, voter not more than 7-8 miles distant from a polling station.” ACCG Report at 48 (emphasis added). More importantly, the ACCG Report (page 49) correctly warns that

county officials still have an obligation under the . . . Voting Rights Act of 1965, and under the 14th and 15th Amendments to the U.S. Constitution, to ensure that election practices are non-discriminatory, not denying or limiting a citizen’s right to vote based upon their race or color. Thus, if the county decides to reduce the number of polling stations, it should ensure that voting rights are not abridged by the action.

We are unaware of any analysis that the Elections Board has done to ensure that its proposals do not violate the Voting Rights Act or the Constitution. The Elections Board proposal ignores these recommendations and strikes Ocilla out of the picture with “almost surgical precision,” raising serious questions about the actual purpose of this measure. *North Carolina State Conf. of NAACP v. McCrory*, 831 F.3d 204, 214 (4th Cir. 2016) (targeted nature of voting restrictions “bears the mark of intentional discrimination” based on race).

By targeting Ocilla—which has the highest concentration of African Americans anywhere in Irwin County—out of the 3 polling places that the ACCG Report suggests should be left open, the first proposal has the effect, if not the intent, of making it disproportionately harder for African Americans to exercise their fundamental right to vote. Thus, this measure likely violates Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act and potentially the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution as well. It must be rejected.

II. The proposal to have only a single polling location in all of Irwin County located in Ocilla will unreasonably burden rural voters on the outskirts of Irwin County

The second proposal, as we understand it, takes the recommendation of the ACCG Report to an extreme, and eliminates *all* but one polling place, to be located in Ocilla. *See*

³ The ACLU of Georgia does not endorse the recommendations in the ACCG Report, or suggest that it is in anyway immune from judicial scrutiny, especially since it is not even purposed to provide legal advice.

Exhibit A. This proposal has the potential to impose a serious, undue burden on lower-income voters of all races who reside in the rural edges of Irwin County, because, as we understand it, no public transportation exists in or out of Ocilla. Many lower-income voters may not have vehicles or may otherwise face significant economic barriers in travelling to Ocilla to cast a ballot on Election Day.

According to Census survey estimates, the poverty rate of Irwin County (26.0%) is one-and-a-half times higher than that of Georgia as a whole (18.4%), and the median income (\$34,156) in Irwin County is significantly lower than those of Georgia as a whole (\$49,620). It is a violation of the Fourteenth Amendment to impose such burdens—even if those burdens fall solely on a disadvantaged subset of the population—without a sufficiently compelling justification. *See Anderson v. Celebrezze*, 460 U.S. 780 (1983); *Burdick v. Takushi*, 504 U.S. 428 (1992); *see, e.g., Ohio State Conf. of NAACP v. Husted*, 768 F.3d 524, 544-45 (6th Cir. 2014), *vacated on other grounds*, 2014 WL 10384647 (Oct. 1, 2014) (unconstitutional to eliminate early voting opportunities which primarily affect lower-income voters). And even if there is a sufficiently adequate justification for a voting restriction generally, individual voters who face unreasonable burdens to voting are *still* entitled to relief under the Fourteenth Amendment. *See Frank v. Walker*, 835 F.3d 649, 651 (7th Cir. 2016) (en banc). That is because “[t]he right to vote is personal and is not defeated by the fact that 99% of other people [may be able to vote] easily.” *Id.* (quoting *Frank v. Walker*, 819 F.3d 384, 386 (7th Cir. 2016)).

Even if all the voters on the outskirts of Irwin County can travel to Ocilla without unreasonable difficulty, the elimination of all but one polling place may also dramatically increase the amount of voting congestion on Election Day. This can outright disenfranchise lower-income voters who cannot afford to take time off of work to stand in long lines as easily as their wealthier counterparts, especially if they are from rural areas. Voting congestion increases the frustration of hardworking poll workers and voters alike, leading to more chaos and, ultimately, a *greater* administrative burden on elections officials than having multiple polling places.

If this proposal were to be implemented, it will encourage greater scrutiny from poll watchers, and evidence that voters are disenfranchised or unreasonably burdened as a result of congestion will significantly increase the likelihood of litigation.

* * *

The mere availability of absentee voting-by-mail and advance voting does not justify the closure of polling locations on Election Day under either proposal. Even if these alternatives are equally available to voters of all races, they do not eliminate the *discriminatory* treatment towards African Americans with respect to in-person voting on Election Day. *See* 52 U.S.C. § 10301(b) (violation of section 2 if the political processes are not “equally open to participation by members of a [protected] class”). Furthermore, several federal courts have found that voting by mail is not an adequate substitute for in-person voting:

[Though mail-in voting] represents an important bridge for many who would otherwise have difficulty appearing in person, . . . it is not the equivalent of in-person voting for

those who are able and want to vote in person. Mail-in voting involves a complex procedure that cannot be done at the last minute. It also deprives voters of the help they would normally receive in filling out ballots at the polls Elderly [voters] may also face difficulties getting to their mailboxes . . . , the increased risk of fraud because of people who harvest mail-in ballots from the elderly, [and] with mail-in voting, voters lose the ability to account for last-minute developments, like candidates dropping out of a primary race, or targeted mailers and other information disseminated right before an election.

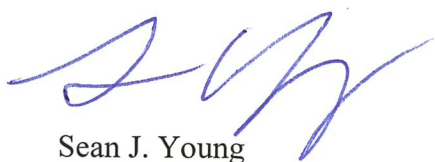
Veasey v. Abbott, 830 F.3d 216, 255-56 (5th Cir. 2016) (en banc); *see also Ohio NAACP*, 768 F.3d at 542 (“associated costs and more complex mechanics of voting by mail” do not make voting by mail a “suitable alternative for many voters,” especially “African Americans, lower-income individuals, and the homeless”); *League of Women Voters of N.C. v. N.C.*, 769 F.3d 224, 243 (4th Cir. 2014) (rejecting argument that restrictions on voting mitigated by the option of voting by mail).

Nor does advance voting provide an adequate alternative for the many voters who do not vote before Election Day, because late-breaking events or new information may cause them to change their mind. Media attention and campaign activity also increases in the days leading up to Election Day, galvanizing voters just before that date. Forcing African American voters in Ocilla to rely on advance voting, a separate but potentially unequal procedure, while allowing white voters the luxury of voting on Election Day in a nearby precinct, is both discriminatory and unjustifiable. It will also cause confusion, leading many voters in Ocilla to believe that a polling place in Ocilla will be open on Election Day since it was also available during the advance voting period.

Furthermore, as discussed above, many lower-income voters from the rural parts of Irwin County may not be able to get to Ocilla to take advantage of advance voting without unreasonable effort. The advance voting period is almost entirely limited to weekday business hours, Ga. Code § 21-2-385(d), but “[l]ower-income individuals face difficulties in voting during the day because they are more likely to work in hourly-wage jobs with little flexibility.” *See, e.g., Ohio NAACP*, 768 F.3d at 556. The only other available time for advance voting is on the second Saturday prior to the election, Ga. Code § 21-2-385(d), which for general elections always falls on the annual Ocilla Sweet Potato Festival, when traffic is especially congested and the only advance voting site in Ocilla may be virtually inaccessible. Thus, Election Day hours, which extend from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. beyond regular business hours, Ga. Code § 21-2-403, may be the only time such voters can cast a ballot, so it is especially important that polling sites be reasonably accessible that day.

The ACLU is happy to speak with you further to discuss these concerns, as well as other ways in which we can work together to ensure that voters in Irwin County can have equal and reasonable access to the franchise.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S. Young', is positioned above the typed name.

Sean J. Young
Legal Director
ACLU of Georgia

Irwin County High School will have a new principal next school year.

Current Principal Kerry Billingsley has planned for months to be promoted to assistant superintendent to take the place of the retiring Dr. Emethel Mizell. The Irwin County Board of Education officially offered to hire Scott Haskins as the new principal at its regular meeting Monday night.

Haskins is the principal of the North-east Campus of Tift County High School, which is the separate campus housing Tift's ninth grade.

The BOE held a called meeting Feb. 6, almost all of which was spent in a closed-door executive session interviewing the final three candidates for the principal's job. The three candidates were Haskins, Jodie Knight, and Dr. Eric Holland. Knight works in Lee County after several years as a coach and assistant principal in Irwin. Holland is the assistant principal and head basketball coach at Tift County High School.

After the interviews, Knight was the first choice of the BOE. Superintendent Dr. Thad Clayton said Knight was very popular in Irwin County and had a good reputation, but he refused the job. Clayton said that after prayer and consideration Knight decided accepting the job was not in the best interest of his family.

Haskins verbally accepted the job offer Feb. 8. Clayton said he is in talks with the superintendent of Tift County schools to allow Haskins to come to Irwin early to get him comfortable in the new system.

Clayton said there was a strong pool of candidates for principal. No local candidates applied for the principal's job.

Billingsley, who is also the former Irwin County Middle School principal, (Continued on Page 8)

Citizens fight to keep voting precincts

Many residents of Ocilla and Irwinville do not want to see their voting precincts closed, and they expressed their feelings at a meeting last week.

The Irwin County Board of Elections and Registration held a meeting Thursday at the Irwin County Courthouse to hear from the public on options to consolidate voting precincts. Last month, the Board announced a plan to close all the eight precincts except Mystic and Holt. The idea behind the plan was to close Ocilla, since Ocilla voters have 16 days of early voting within the city limits, and leaving Mystic and Holt open would minimize the length of travel as no one would need to drive more than 15 miles.

About 50 people attended the meeting Thursday, and most of them represented Ocilla and Irwinville, the two largest population centers in the county. None of those who spoke seemed pleased with the prospect of their precinct closing.

A complication arose with Mystic since the announcement, however, as Mystic Baptist Church, the home of the Mystic voting precinct, said it did not want to be part of the plan due to the heavy traffic the plan might cause at the church. Registrar Cindi Dunlap said the county is looking at an alternative site in Mystic, but she did not name it.

Speakers such as former poll worker Tuffy Hudson and Ocilla City Councilwoman Patrice Williams wanted the Board to reconsider closing Ocilla. Ruth Burch said the majority of voters are in the city, so the voting precinct should remain there.

The distance of travel was often cited as a difficulty caused by closing precincts, especially for the elderly. The Board pointed out that voters have 45 (Continued on Page 8)



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* Voting precincts

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days of early voting, including mailing in ballots. A man said he would not depend on the mail service to deliver a ballot to him or to deliver his completed ballot to the county. Dunlap admitted there are some problems with the mail delivery, but she noted that last year, elections officials sent multiple ballots or hand delivered them when someone had trouble receiving one through the mail.

Kay Braziel of Irwinville spoke about the recent improvements at the Irwinville Community Building, which is the site of the voting precinct. She said the area was spacious and could handle a big crowd and would soon be handicap accessible. She said people who do not like to drive would not vote if the current plan is passed.

Elections Board Chairman Steve Hamby said, "We have not made any decisions."

The Elections Board is unanimous, so the decision on the voting precincts rests with the Board, not the Irwin County commissioners. The commissioners appoint the members of the Board, however.

Dunlap explained that the elections staff looked at closing all but three voting precincts, but then looked at a plan to close all but Mystic and Holt. She said Irwinville is not handicap accessible, which is a requirement, and requires the county to rent portable voting machines if Irwinville is used as a precinct. She said if Mystic, Ocilla and Holt were left open, the county would have three precincts within 1 mile of each other. She said there are no perfect solutions or answers.

The Board hopes to save the county money by consolidating precincts. Dunlap said the state will probably switch to new voting machines soon, too, which would likely increase the cost of maintaining eight precincts. She said keeping eight precincts is not viable. She said the people



People, including County Chairman Joey Whitley, await the beginning of a meeting of the Irwin County Board of Elections and Registration last week.

needed to come together to find a solution for the whole county, not individual community solutions.

"We all like convenience," she said. "We can't afford that."

Board member James Curtis broke away from the rest of the three-member Board and said he was not in support of closing Irwin's largest precinct, Ocilla. He said he favored keeping three precincts open.

"Ocilla needs to stay," he said, and his statement was echoed by a chorus of "Amen" from the crowd.

Samuel Cobb said the people pay for the county, so the people should decide.

Ocilla City Councilman Reginald Miller said that he would not support closing the precinct in Ocilla, even if he had to go to federal court.

Although Ocilla voters would have 16 days of early voting in the city, Amanda Murrell said the city, Amanda Murrell said most people want to vote on the day of the election. She said a lot of voters do not feel comfortable early voting. Dunlap said the early voting process is improved with a new system in place, and she said many people said it was fast and they would never go

back.

Jerry Wiggins asked if anyone had figured how much consolidation would save. Dunlap said that with two precincts, the county should save at least \$4,310 per election. On a presidential election year, the county will hold at least three elections and more will be held if there are run-offs or special elections.

Susan Paulk was the only person from the crowd to directly speak in support of the Elections Board. She said that none of the board members wanted to hurt anyone. She said the public should trust them to make a decision for the best of the county. She said there were no perfect decisions, but Hudson then said there was a perfect decision: if the Board let the public vote on the issue.

Paulk said she did not believe the voters had all the information. For instance, she said early voting is awesome, and she said she had elderly family members who mail in ballots.

Maurice Lake said that if Ocilla is closed, the government will close more aspects of the city.

Walter Hudson said people drive to Ocilla to buy legs and pay taxes. He said there should

be one voting precinct, Ocilla. He said consolidating to one would be better financially than consolidating to three.

Hamby said that counties with far more registered voters have consolidated to one precinct. He said Irwin keeps too many polls open.

"I love being in a small town," Hamby said. "But folks, we've got small money."

Dr. Neal McIntyre said he was adamantly against the idea of two precincts, and he said one precinct was an "absurd idea." He said that a recent report by the Association County Commissioners of Georgia specified that the county should maintain a minimum of three precincts, and listed Ocilla, Irwinville and

McIntyre said the county officials were doing everything in their power not to follow the ACCG's suggestions. The ACCG report did not actually specify what the county should do or make recommendations, but it did give the three precinct plan as an option for the county leaders to consider.

McIntyre said that research has consistently shown that consolidation causes vote counts to suffer and voter turnout to re-

duce. He said the problems disproportionately affect minority populations.

He said that a county-owned facility would be ideal, and he suggested the Jefferson Davis Memorial Historic Site museum near Irwinville as a handicap-accessible, county-maintained option for voting.

"They're going to raise our taxes but take our vote away from us," McIntyre said.

He said that county officials "don't know what a budget is and can't follow a budget." He noted a large increase in the elections budget from 2015 to 2016. "We're questioning Pennies but throwing away \$100 bills," he said.

He said the county was setting itself up for federal lawsuits by closing Ocilla or Irwinville. Walter Hudson later commented that Bacon County closed all but one precinct without any lawsuits.

Dunlap disputed some of McIntyre's assertions, and she gave reasons for the increases, including that 2016 was an election year. 2016 was also her first full year, and she purchased new equipment and started doing some things that were legally required that were previously not done. She said the county was looking at some very serious infractions, and she said she is very diligent to go through the elections budget with a "fine-toothed comb."

Hamby also defended the job Dunlap does as registrar, and Curtis later spoke about the good job the elections staff does.

Marty Bushin, a poll worker at the Fletcher voting precinct,

talked about the unusually high voter turnout at her precinct. In November, seven precincts had less than 50 percent of their voters show up on election day, including a county-low 24.6 percent in Ocilla. More than 69 percent of Fletcher voters voted on election day. Bushin said many Fletcher voters pass by the precinct on their way to work on election day and are reminded to vote. She later talked about trying to somehow split the west side between the Fletcher, Irwinville and Mystic precincts.

Jackie Smith said keeping Ocilla open was critical for the community and critical for people without transportation.

Curtis said that he thought three precincts could cost only about \$800 more per election. He said that the west side of the county needs to get together and decide what the people there want to do about the west side.

Board member Jeff Blessae said none of the Board members have made a decision, but the two-precinct plan was a place to start.

Hamby said that whatever decision the Board makes, it will not be made in secret. The Board meets at 4:45 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month at the Irwin County Courthouse Annex. Before voting to change the precincts, the Board must advertise the fact that it will vote on the subject at least 10 days in advance in *The Ocilla Star*. During those 10 days, citizens can make objections in writing to the county. They can also ask to be on the agenda of the next meeting.

* Principal

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will move to the board office in June or July. He will concentrate on student achievement and instructional practices, areas in

which Clayton said he has an excellent progress. Clayton thinks Billingsley will do well for the whole system in a new role.

Elections Board talks possible lawsuits, precincts

After the threat of lawsuits, the Irwin County Board of Elections and Registration is waiting on legal advice before making a decision on closing voting precincts.

State officials recommended the Board get the recommendation of the county attorney after several threats of lawsuits were made in calls to the office of State Rep. Clay Pirkle, the office of State Sen. Tyler Harper and other state offices. At a meeting of the Board Thursday, the three members decided to seek legal advice either from County Attorney Warren Mixon or another attorney if he does not have time.

Registrar Cindi Dunlap said she talked to state officials and she cannot find anything that would legally stand in the way of the consolidation plans.

The Board also discussed where the members are leaning in regard to con-

solidation. Each favors a different plan.

Jeff Blease favors one precinct, which would be Ocilla. Steve Hamby favors two precincts, which would be Mystic and Holt, although he said he would be OK with one precinct. James Curtis favors three precincts, Irwinville, Ocilla and Holt, but he also said he would be OK with one, too.

Hamby said the Mamie and Osierfield precincts cannot stay where they are due to new rules about the distance of voting machines from entrances, because the sites are too small.

Curtis said he favored three precincts because he thought Irwinville would best serve the west side of the county. He also said he thought it would withstand any legal challenge.

Mystic Baptist Church, the current Mystic precinct, does not want to host a precinct if the traffic increases because

of the two-precinct plan. The Board members talked about other Mystic locations, such as Grace Christian Academy's former site, but it would require work by the county. Curtis said that although Irwinville's site is not yet compliant with disability requirements, the people in Irwinville are willing to put in the work to make it compliant themselves.

Blease asked how many people lived close enough to their precinct that they would not need to travel. He said the only reason they want to consolidate is to save money, and one precinct is the most savings.

Dunlap said that with two precincts, people in Ocilla would only drive 5 miles while with one precinct, people on the outer edge of the county will travel more than 14 miles.

Curtis said that on election day,

Ocilla has the largest group of voters. Dunlap said the people in Ocilla are in Ocilla during advance voting, which is held in the city limits, while people on the county line are not in Ocilla during that time. She said one precinct would make her job easy, but she was looking out for everyone.

"If you're passionate about your vote, it won't matter," said Blease.

Curtis said some like to vote on election day. Hamby said that in November, 2/3 of Ocilla voted early. Curtis again said Ocilla was the largest group of voters on election day.

Curtis and Blease said disenfranchising someone somewhere was unavoidable. Hamby said they were talking sentiment.

"We can't do this based on sentiment and emotion," he said.

Dunlap asked Curtis where he would

draw the line at with three precincts. The two-precinct plan she favors divides the county in half along Highway 129. She said with three precincts, some people will have to vote in either Ocilla or Irwinville based on what side of the road they live on.

Curtis said he thought Dunlap could work that out. He said he did not believe it would be a difficult problem.

"It's called compromise and we all have to do it," said Blease.

Dunlap determined that each additional precinct over one would cost the county about \$800 per election.

Hamby asked Dunlap to find out how Wilcox County handles its voting precincts.

The Board also met in executive session to discuss personnel.

Gun fired, elderly man charged

An 80-year-old Ocilla man was charged with aggravated assault last week after a woman al-

time, Rogers moved to the porch area. She stood in the doorway holding the knife and demanding



EXHIBIT B

Irwin County, Georgia White and Non-White Voting-Age Population

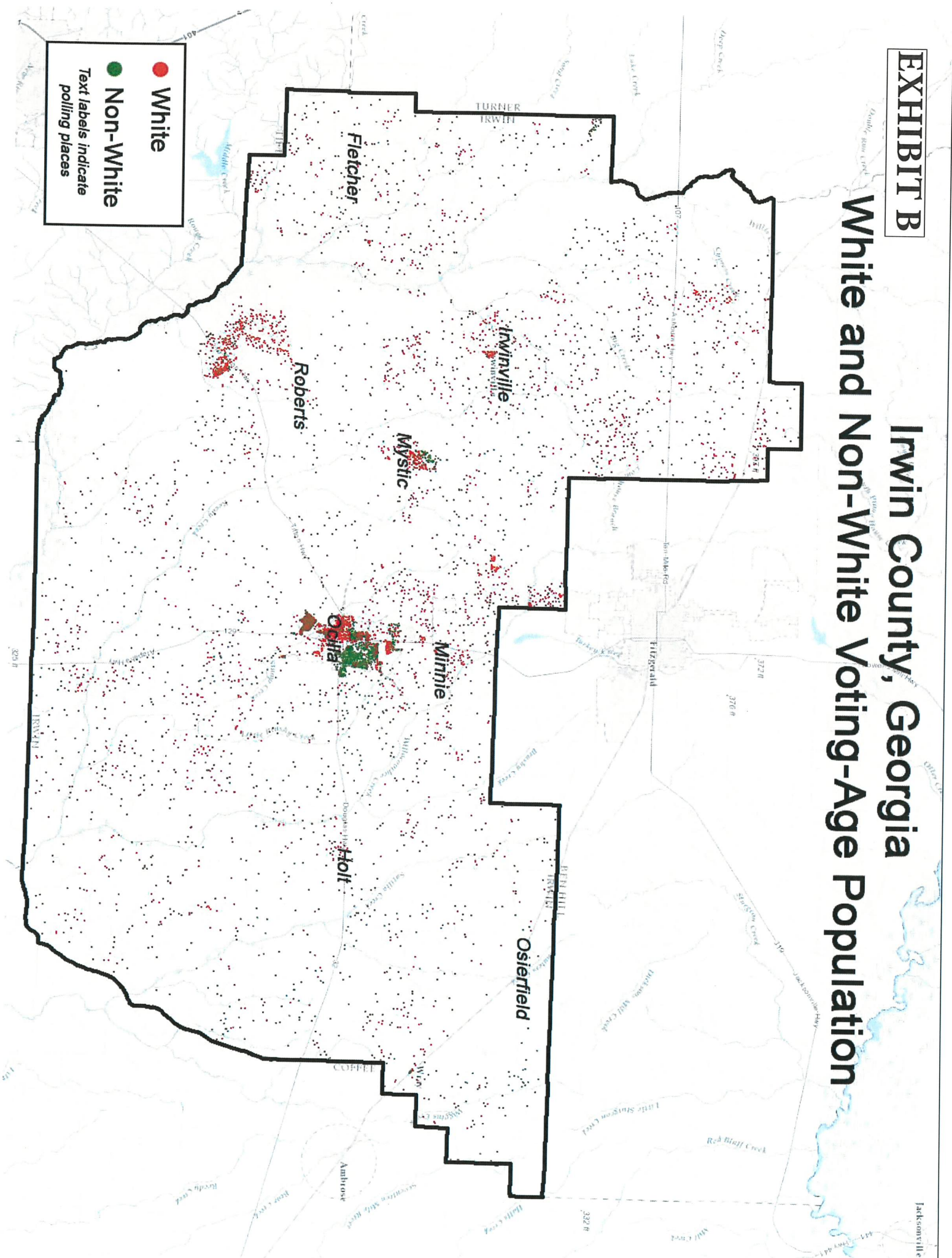


EXHIBIT C

Irwin County, Georgia Median Household Income

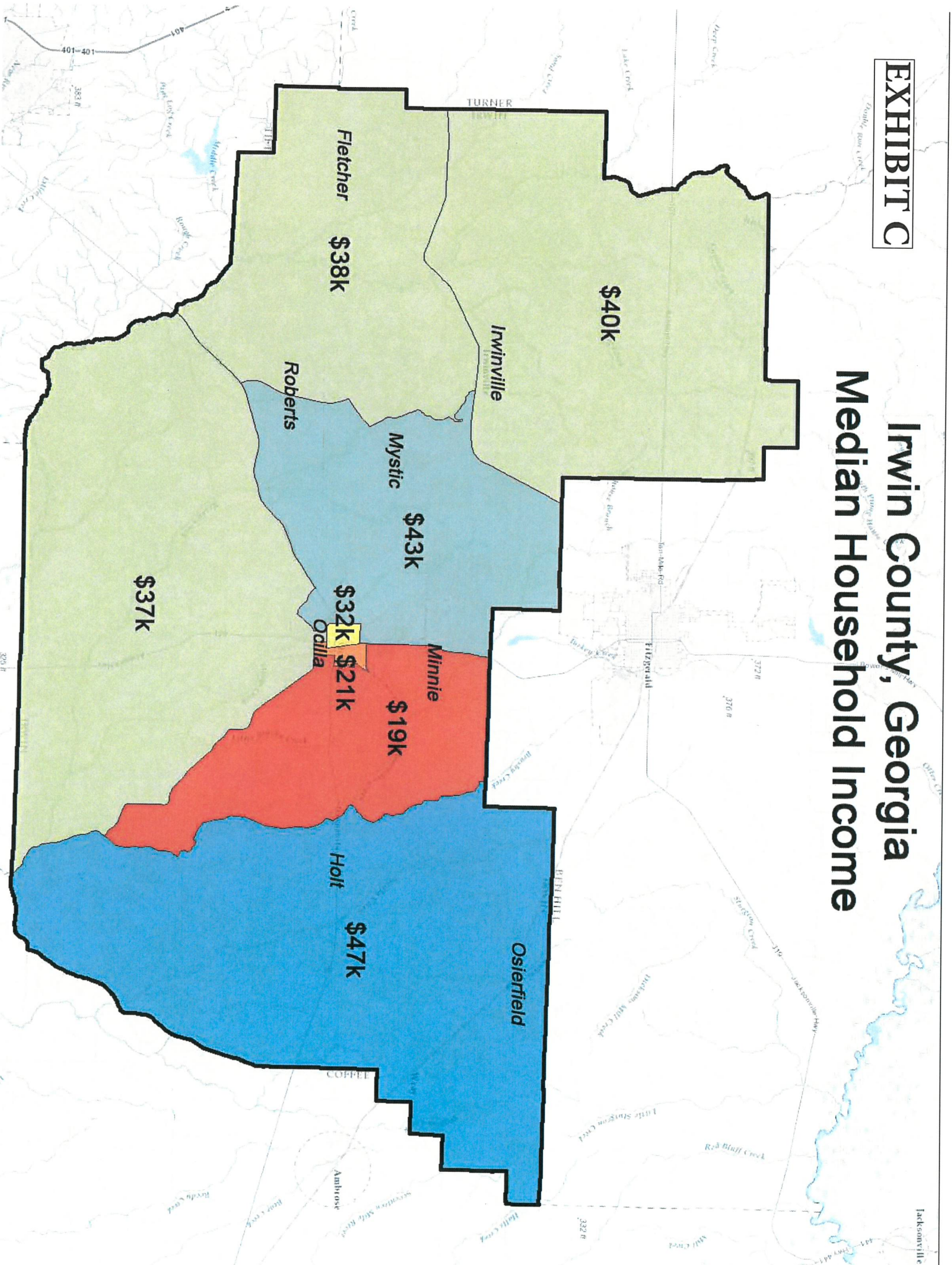


EXHIBIT D

Irwin County, Georgia

Percentage of Households without a Vehicle

