



Prepared Remarks
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Brunswick Redistricting Town Hall
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Chairman Rich, Chairman Kennedy, and members of the Joint Committee. My name is Vasu Abhiraman, I am a proud Georgia native who serves as Senior Policy Counsel for the ACLU of Georgia. The ACLU of Georgia is a non-partisan organization dedicated to protecting the civil liberties of each and every Georgian. The right to vote is one of the most sacred civil liberties we have as Americans. Voting should be easy for every citizen and each vote should count the same--one person, one vote--and fair maps are necessary to ensuring that every vote counts equally.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES

The face of Georgia is changing, and the Greater Brunswick area, including Glynn, Brantley, and McIntosh counties, is no exception. Preliminary indicates that between 2010 and 2019, while the white voting age population grew by 6%, the Black voting age population grew by 12%, the Hispanic voting age population grew by 5%, and the Asian voting age population in the area grew by 74%. The voting age population of color overall grew by 12%. The new maps that are drawn in this redistricting cycle must take our state's diversity into account and ensure that Georgia voters of color have as much of a chance to elect candidates of choice as any other Georgian.

TRANSPARENCY & PUBLIC INPUT

Fair maps also require that legislators conduct the redistricting process transparently, with public input meaningfully taken into account. Legislators must show their work when drafting maps, and show it every step of the way, conducting public hearings *after* the Census Bureau releases the data used to draft maps. Members of the joint committee should hold meetings in all ten judicial districts in Georgia to circulate any proposed maps to the public, explain the criteria used to draw maps, and sincerely consider feedback. Transparency also means that all meetings concerning redistricting and map drawing are done publicly with ample notice and opportunity provided for Georgians of all stripes to access the meetings.

These are a few of the standards that this committee should adopt to ensure that the redistricting process is open, democratic, and representative of the interests of all Georgians--leading to fair maps for all.

Thank you for your consideration.