

Summary of Redistricting Testimony in Tennessee

September-October 2021

Purpose:

The League of Women Voters of Tennessee, CivicTN, the Tennessee Conference of the NAACP, along with other civic organizations organized a series of public hearings in East, Middle and West Tennessee. The three hearings were held in Chattanooga, Clarksville, and Memphis. Their purpose was to collect public comments that will be submitted to the Tennessee House Redistricting Committee and the Tennessee Senate Ad Hoc Redistricting Committee to help inform their work in the fall of 2021. By sharing the insights of individual Tennesseans residing in communities throughout the state, this document is intended to enrich the decision-making process of these legislative committees.

Complete records of the three hearing are accessible here.

West Tennessee Hearing: <https://fb.watch/8UXeek8oT6/>

East Tennessee Hearing: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1iCon5IQgbA>

Middle Tennessee Hearing: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jbu7-oR-ztk>

Additional sponsoring organizations for these hearings were Free Hearts, Hamilton County Voter Coalition, League of Women Voters of Chattanooga, League of Women Voters of Memphis-Shelby County, Shelby County Voter Alliance, Tennessee Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Coalition, and the Tennessee Black Caucus of State Legislators.

General Themes:

A number of consistent themes emerged from the hearings. Participants called for:

- Increased transparency in the decision-making process for both the state redistricting committees and for county redistricting commissions;
- Multiple opportunities for public comments *prior* to the release of draft maps;
- Publication of the draft maps online; and
- Meaningful opportunities for the public to evaluate the draft maps *prior* to the final vote by the Tennessee legislature.

Many individuals, such as **Kermit Moore of the Memphis A. Philip Randolph Institute**, spoke of their strong belief that a non-partisan redistricting process conducted by a separate commission outside of the legislature would increase public trust. In the words of **Barbara Ibarra, resident of Smyrna** “the redistricting process should further enable the voting process and therefore must be done with integrity, honesty, and most importantly, accomplished without any intent to give any political party an advantage over any other political party.”

The diversity and intensity of the public comments made at these hearings highlights the need for both the Tennessee House and Senate Redistricting Committees to provide substantial opportunities for public review of the drafted maps prior to their final approval by the legislature.

Dr. Sekou Franklin, Tennessee Conference of the NAACP, noted at each of the hearings, “It's important to view redistricting as fundamental to the Voting Rights Act. If you look at Voting Rights Act cases that have taken place since 1965, a significant portion of those voting rights cases have been about redistricting. Here in Tennessee, we've had local redistricting fights that have stretched from Crockett County, all the way to Hardeman County. So, redistricting is fundamental to the Voting Rights Act. It's also fundamental to the affirmation of the 14th Amendment Equal Protection Clause and the 15th Amendment. Having said this, community participation and involvement is fundamental to the redistricting process.”

Congressional Districts:

Sharon Alexander, resident of Chattanooga, described **Congressional District 3** as forming an hourglass with the top portion along the Kentucky border and the southern portion along the Georgia border. Ms. Alexander believes that Hamilton County residents have far more in common with residents in nearby counties along the southern part of the state than with those counties along the Kentucky border.

Thessala White, Vice-President of Hamilton County NAACP, stated that **Congressional District 3 and District 4** are clearly politically gerrymandered. This has limited the number of competitive races on the ballot for many Tennesseans. As a leader of youth, she is concerned about the impact of partisan gerrymandering on future generations.

Alfreda Cook, Anderson County-Oak Ridge NAACP, raised the issue of the gerrymandered **Congressional District 2 and District 3**. She identified the many ways that Oak Ridge and Knoxville share identities including the identification by the US Census Bureau as a Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area. Oak Ridge and Knoxville are separated by less than 25 miles while the current District 3 includes Chattanooga which is 108 miles away. Ms. Cook believes that Oak Ridge and Knoxville would benefit from a unified congressional representation.

Sandra McCrea, resident of Hamilton County, identified the hourglass shape of **Congressional District 3** as “one of the most absurdly shaped districts in all of TN”. It runs from the GA border to the KY border. The 6 counties in the north end of the hourglass have nothing in common with the 5 counties in the southern end of the hourglass “beyond the fact that they are TN counties.” The 5 counties in the north end of the hourglass should be placed in a district composed of counties sharing their common regional and economic interests, such as Knox County. Chattanooga is the 4th largest city in TN and commands an economic district that includes Hamilton, Bledsoe, Bradley, Marion, McMinn, Meigs, Polk, Rhea, and Sequatchie Counties. Many people who live in these counties work in Hamilton County and many who live in Hamilton County work in one of these other counties. Further, these counties share news coverage in the form of TV stations and newspapers. They are also part of the Southern Division of the US District Court for the Eastern District of Tennessee.

Given the community of regional and economic interests shared by Bledsoe, Bradley, Hamilton, Marion, McMinn, Meigs, Polk, Rhea, and Sequatchie counties, these counties should make up the 3rd Congressional District. Furthermore, each of these counties has experienced a population increase in the last 10 years, making it all the more necessary to remove from the district those counties in the north end of the hourglass to avoid district malapportionment.

Kyle Carrasco, resident of Cleveland, Bradley County, believes that **Congressional District 4** should be redrawn. In its current formation it connects portions of Middle Tennessee as far west as Murfreesboro to portions of East Tennessee as far east as Bradley County. These are very distinct populations including everything from MTSU students to rural residents in East Tennessee and connects communities in two different times zones.

Paco Havard, President of Maury County Chapter of the TN Conference of NAACP, raised concerns that Maury County is currently split between **Congressional Districts 4 and 7**. This has a direct impact on the flow of federal dollars. He is also concerned about the impact of the county split on the state redistricting level.

Dr. Christa Martin, Vice Mayor of Columbia, stated that the “pie slice” of **Congressional Districts 4 and 7** has had a lasting negative effect since the last redistricting alignment after the 2010 census.

Congressman Jim Cooper, Congressional District 5 stated that people in Davidson County want to keep all of Nashville-Davidson County within the same Congressional district. Given the population growth in Davidson County, it is almost equivalent to the population standard for the 2022 congressional districts. He emphasized that it is important to respect minority rights and if Davidson County is separated into different Congressional districts, it will stifle minority voices in the future.

Patricia Post, resident of Davidson County, values Davidson county’s metropolitan government, educational opportunities, diversified economy, cultural richness, natural environment, and increasingly diverse population. “My educational, vocational, and cultural experiences and interests span East, West, North, and South Nashville. I treasure the parks, greenways, lakes, and streams that border our community’s residential areas, enabling myriad flora and fauna to thrive here. I believe that clean air and water are essential to our community’s wellbeing. These advantages are largely the results of public and private efforts to maintain Nashville-Davidson County’s economic stability, reduce its endemic racial and socioeconomic inequities, and protect its natural resources from rampant development. Although these efforts have not fully succeeded, they demonstrate a fairly cohesive set of community values and needs that distinguish this county and the Fifth Congressional district from others in Middle Tennessee. For the most part, elected officials representing this community do, in fact, represent our wide-ranging interests and values.” She believes that **Congressional District 5** should include an undivided Nashville metropolitan area.

Sheryl Gwinn, President of Nashville Chapter of the TN Conference of NAACP, emphasized that Nashville should remain whole in **Congressional District 5**.

Tennessee Senator Brenda Gilmore emphasized the importance of maintaining a whole Davidson County in **Congressional District 5** and the importance of giving minority communities a fair shot at representation in the redistricting process for the state legislature. She noted that when diverse communities are represented, residents can see the results in solutions to the problems that impact their daily life.

Curtis Baysinger, MD, resident of Davidson County, opposes any potential change of **Congressional District 5** that would split Davidson County. He stated that dividing the county will only weaken the local economy and the economy of Tennessee as a whole.

Jimmie Garland, President of Clarksville Chapter of the TN Conference of NAACP, believes that the needs of the northern Tennessee counties call for separate representation from those in the southern part of the state. Currently **Congressional District 7** stretches from the Kentucky border to the Alabama border and loops in Franklin.

Harrell Carter, President of Jackson/Madison County Chapter of the TN Conference of NAACP, believes that rural residents deserve rural representatives. Currently **Congressional District 8** is represented by a congressman from Shelby County. Rural west Tennessee would benefit from a totally rural make-up. African Americans residing in 20 rural west Tennessee counties do not get fair representation.

Jackie Shrago, resident of Davidson County, suggested consideration of what **Congressional District 8** could look like if Nashville/Davidson County and Memphis were pulled out as separate districts.

Venita Doggett, resident in Congressional District 8, is concerned that the current congressional district includes rural west Tennessee counties as very diverse parts of Shelby County. “Our district is one of the likely oddest placements in the entire state. It is slightly north of Methodist Hospital, the neighborhood is just outside, just barely outside of the municipal line of Memphis. And it has nothing in common with the decision to make it part of Tennessee district eight as a congressional district. It's not rural West Tennessee, and it leaves me as a citizen, very little hope that my representative actually takes my concerns into consideration.”

Willie Spencer, Executive Committee member of the Bolivar, Hardeman County NAACP. Hardeman County has a history as a flashpoint for African American representation in redistricting. He believes that Hardeman County has a much closer affinity of interest to the nearby rural counties of the **Congressional District 8** rather than its current inclusion in the **Congressional District 7**.

State Legislative Districts and County-level Districts

Gloria Sweet-Love, President of Tennessee Conference of NAACP, highlighted the importance of public input into the process, stating “It is so important that redistricting is done correctly. We want to make sure that at the end of this redistricting, we truly have one vote, one person. We want to make sure there's no prison gerrymandering, we want to make sure that all people have their voting rights are protected during this process.”

Tennessee Senator Raumesh Akbari, District 29, serves as Vice-Chair of the TN Senate Ad Hoc Redistricting Committee. She spoke about the legislative process and the role of the minority caucus to put forward alternative maps through amendments to the redistricting bills. She urged hearing participants to bring forward their ideas, stating “We find ourselves in a legislature that is unbalanced and that it does not reflect the true political divide of the state. And because of that a lot of interests of community members are ignored.”

Cyrus Jones, TN Affiliate for Lawyer’s Comm. Participatory Redistricting Committee, noted the dramatic increase in population of 27% in Rutherford County. Murfreesboro, Smyrna, and Lavergne will require new district lines drawn. Mr. Jones is concerned that when the new district lines are drawn that the map avoids the current splits of these communities. Smyrna is currently split into District 13 and 14. Murfreesboro is split into four different house districts and MTSU is directly impacted by these splits. He noted that, from his studies, he has learned of the important redistricting principles of “preservation of counties and political subdivisions like cities, school districts, towns, and preserving communities of interest.”

Tim Bath, resident of Rutherford County, asked about the possibilities of consolidating the current 4 Tennessee House districts that cover Rutherford County.

Agnes Gray, Tennessee Participatory Redistricting Project, spoke about the importance of transparency. “We think it is important for members within each of the communities, with the different districts, to know specifically how the map drawing are going to impact their communities and how their interests and their concerns are going to be met in terms of this process.”

Timothy Hughes, Crowd Academy, offered the support of his organization to help others who want to learn more about the redistricting process. His organization can also assist with access to mapping tools that facilitate local redistricting conversations.

Keeda Haynes, Free Hearts, raised concerns about prison gerrymandering. Davidson, Trousdale, and Hickman Counties have increased their populations because of the prisons in their counties. Ms. Haynes would like to see two different maps drawn — one that includes prison populations and one without.

Braxton Coleman, resident of Rutherford County, raised concerns about prison gerrymandering and their distortion on fair representation in the impacted counties. According to his research, the entire population growth for Bledsoe County can be accounted for by inmate population. Trousdale County saw a 47% population growth because of their prison.

Karen Reynolds, City Council Ward 9 of Clarksville, stated that the local Clarksville maps that were currently being drawn would retain incumbents and that this decade’s demographic changes should alter the political boundaries for the city of Clarksville and Montgomery County.

Dr. Sekou Franklin, Tennessee Conference of NAACP, stated that the significant growth of the Latino population in Davidson County merits awareness of the need to recognize their minority status in the redistricting process.

Fitzgerald Mann, resident of Brownsville, Haywood County NAACP, called for open, fair and transparent redistricting process with plans that comply with the Voting Rights Act (VRA). He feels that Haywood County should not be grouped with Memphis in the new boundaries .

Dr. Everlena Holmes, founder of the Hamilton County Voter Coalition—The coalition's volunteer members have been regularly attending meetings of the county commission and through their tenacity have pushed successfully for increased public access to redistricting information in advance of the commission vote for final approval. They have also testified at each of the county commissions about their community's needs and the importance of seeing the new maps that have been drafted.

Commissioner Katherlyn Geter, Hamilton County District 5, expressed frustration that the redistricting plan as it is now moving forward would intentionally dilute the voting power of black and brown citizens in the community. The commission is replacing 9 county districts with 11 districts. Ms. Geter believes, among other issues, that the proposed plan will separate elementary and middle schools from their high school feeder pattern. This would be especially disruptive to representation in District 4 and 5. She urged Hamilton County residents to share their frustrations with the commissioners about the proposed maps and to slow the process down so that there is an extra week for public comments.

Audrey Ramsey, resident of Chattanooga, spoke about the redistricting of Hamilton County as it expands from its current 9 districts to 11 districts. She expressed concerns that in the process African Americans would lose their current level of representation in the county which would result in African Americans in Chattanooga seeing increased inequities in the quality of schools and services in their communities.

Betty Maddox Battle, resident of District 5 in Chattanooga, raised concerns that the redistricting in Hamilton County will negatively impact the African American residents and reduce their voting power.

Marie Mott, resident of Chattanooga, believes that new district lines will minimize the voting power of African Americans and continue a pattern from 2010 that will result in disproportionately adverse impacts on African Americans in Hamilton County and minimize their representation in the state legislature.

Sharon Alexander, resident of Chattanooga- TN Senate District 10 stated that her representation is diluted because of the way that the maps are drawn. She lives in the most southwest section of the county. Senate District 10 snakes around from the southwest corner of the county, clings to the eastern edge of the county and includes the most rural northeast corner of Bradley County. These two areas are very different and deserve separate representation.

Erik Atkins, Co-Chair of United Group of Chattanooga, observed that the troubled racial history of Chattanooga, as symbolized by the case of Brown v. Chattanooga, has created suspicions in the African American community that the creation of new county districts, school zones, and polling places will harm their community and create unneeded minority vote dilution.

Dennis Clark, Equity Alliance, stated that this redistricting process in Hamilton County is not partisan. It is institutional racism.” While he appreciates the opportunity for public hearings to talk about redistricting, he believes the only solution is to challenge these decisions through the court system.

Timothy Lee, resident of Ooltewah, urged Tennessee to start fresh and draw new maps that follow non-partisan redistricting commission guidelines for balanced, inclusive representation. “We will only become better and achieve our best results if all those that live here participate and can speak up for fair opportunity for each individual that lives here.”

Rev. Ann Pierre-Jones, resident of Hamilton County stated that most people don’t understand the direct impact of the census and of redistricting on their lives. She expressed frustration that the Chair of the Hamilton County Commission had rejected Rev. Pierre-Jones’ request to have the GIS (Geographic Information Systems) mapper for the county do presentations directly to community groups prior to the final vote on the maps by the commissioners.

Dr. John A. Butler, East Tennessee vice president for the NAACP emphasized the importance of having a fair and transparent process. He reminded speakers of the importance of community of interest and compliance with the Voting Rights Act (VRA).

Denzel Caldwell, electoral justice researcher at Highlander Research and Education Center, calls on the legislature to publish all the submitted maps online and allow ample time (two weeks) for public review. Mr. Caldwell also called for groups who submit maps to be clearly identified as a way of ensuring that undue influence on the redistricting process is avoided. These steps will restore public confidence in the redistricting process.

Brady Watson, resident of Knoxville, stated that the current population of Knoxville of 190,000 merits a single state senate district. Knoxville is currently divided into three senate districts that are connected to the more rural parts of the county. He stated that Knoxville would be better represented with undivided representation.

Sandra Foster, resident of District 2, Knoxville is concerned that the redistricting will move a number of voters and split neighborhoods. She does not believe that data was available in a timely fashion to allow for a thorough study to determine a need for change.

Denise Ondrejcak, resident of Williamson County, House District 61, Senate District 23, called for strong oversight for transparency to ensure compliance with the Voting Rights Act (VRA) and stated her preference for a process independent of the state legislature that would ensure bipartisan representation in counties that have seen shifts in economic growth, population, and political demographics.

Trinity Henderson, student at MTSU, Murfreesboro, urged that college campuses have united representation in state legislative districts. MTSU campus is currently split.

Rosa Ponce, resident of Clarksville and volunteer with Workers' Dignity—Latinos are an increasing portion of Tennessee citizens with a 39% growth rate since 2010. A number of cities and towns have seen significant increases in Latino population. For example, 23% of Shelbyville's population is Latino. The Voting Rights Act (VRA)protects non-English speakers. Ms. Ponce urges the state, in accordance with the Voting Rights Act (VRA), to provide voting instructions and materials in Spanish for Latino citizens.

Ruby Powell-Dennis, resident in Cordova, stated that her community will be gravely impacted by the census data. Her homeowners' association subdivision of 900 homes is racially, socially, and economically diverse, but functions together as a community. She is concerned that her community will be split and that minority, Democratic voters will be packed into one district and the rest of Cordova included in a district with wealthier suburbs — Collierville, Eads, Germantown. She asks that House District 97 and Senate District 31 not be split and remain part of Cordova.

Kendra Lee, resident of Shelby County, stated that the current House District 94 is clearly gerrymandered. The district is awkwardly shaped. It connects Haywood and McNairy Counties together with a narrow southerly strip of Hardeman County which sits between them. Half of Madison County is linked together with Hardeman County in House District 73. Ms. Lee believes that this is a “classic case of gerrymandering” designed to dilute the African American vote of Hardeman County.

Eris Newton, resident in House District 91, is concerned that the redistricting process will split apart cohesive communities such as Orange Mound and Binghamton in Shelby County. She is also concerned by rumors that Memphis may lose a state representative because of population shifts.

Dr. Steven Mulroy, resident in House District 83, pointed out that the percentage of Democratic voters in the state, as reflected in the 38% of Tennessee who voted for Joe Biden in 2020, are not adequately represented in the percentage of elected representatives in the state. He believes that this current round of redistricting will only expand this level of gerrymandering. Dr. Mulroy stated that “We are the only nation in the industrialized world that allows the politicians to draw their own lines. Everybody else uses non-partisan commissions.”

Dr. Sekou Franklin, resident of Davidson County, would like the legislative redistricting committees to post all proposed redistricting maps online on their website so that Tennesseans could compare all of the options before any one is adopted. He also noted that with a growing Hispanic population, the state should put more effort into multi-lingual access to this information.

Ian Randolph, member of NAACP Political Action Committee and member of Shelby County Voter Alliance, and affiliate of CivicTN, feels that the interests of Shelby County have not been well represented by the supermajority in the state legislature. He raised concerns that

Shelby County will lose a representative during this redistricting cycle. The only way to get fair representation for Shelby County and West Tennessee would be to have a non-partisan commission.

Mildred L. Taylor, resident of West Tennessee, stated that in 2010, West Tennessee lost two Democratic house seats and there is potential of losing more this year because of the population decrease in West Tennessee. Ms. Taylor stated that if the lines were drawn differently in Hardeman County, it could be a Democratic district.

Amber Sherman, resident of House District 93, felt that today's hearing did not reach its goal because it was not publicized sufficiently and was located too far from the areas most impacted by redistricting changes. She wants more opportunities for younger people to attend hearings and for the maps to be available for public viewing.

Tiffany Boyd, resident of Dyersburg and Chairman of the Dyer County NAACP, spoke of the long history of voter discrimination in West Tennessee. She asked that there be a two week notice for public redistricting hearings that would be accessible to her community as well as a two-week period for Tennesseans to see the draft maps before the legislature approves them.

Tanya Beard, Lauderdale County NAACP, is concerned about transparency and compliance with the Voting Rights Act (VRA) for the African Americans who comprise approximately a third of the population of Lauderdale County. She is also very concerned about prison gerrymandering that dilutes the vote. West Tennessee is especially impacted by prison gerrymandering with 2 facilities in Lauderdale County, 2 in Hardeman, 1 in Lake, and 1 in Shelby County. She called on state legislatures to address this issue for Congressional and State redistricting lines.

Byron Elam, President of Jackson-Madison County NAACP, emphasized the importance of transparency and openness in the process and the need for far more hearings in more counties to bring this process closer to the people who will be impacted by the results of redistricting.

Rosemary Winters, TNDP District 33, emphasized the need for transparency and openness in the process with opportunities for the public to be heard including online access to virtual meetings. She urged that these opportunities be extended beyond the Memphis area to include all of West Tennessee.

Speakers At Regional Redistricting Hearings

The following list of speakers either spoke in person at the regional redistricting hearings or submitted testimony electronically that they requested to be included in the record.

Middle Tennessee Hearing, Clarksville

September 27, 2021

Agnes Gray, representative from TN Participatory Redistricting Project
Barbara Ibarra, resident of Smyrna
Braxton Coleman, resident of Rutherford County
Congressman Jim Cooper, U.S. House of Representatives
Curtis Baysinger,MD, resident of Davidson County
Cyrus Jones, TN Affiliate for Lawyers' Committee Participatory Redistricting Committee
Debby Gould, President of League of Women Voters of TN
Denise Ondrejcak, resident of Williamson County, TN Senate District 23, TN House District 61
Dr. Christa Martin, Vice Mayor of Columbia, TN
Dr. Sekou Franklin, TN Conf. of NAACP
Gloria Sweet-Love, President of TN Conf. of NAACP
Harrell Carter, President of Jackson/Madison County Chapter of the TN Conf. of NAACP
Jackie Shrago, resident of Davidson County
Jimmie Garland, President of Clarksville Chapter of the TN Conf. of NAACP
Karen Reynolds, City Council of Clarksville, TN Ward 9
Keeda Haynes, Free Hearts
Matia Powell, Executive Director, CivicTN
Paco Havard, President of Maury County Chapter of the TN Conf. of NAACP
Patricia Post, resident of Davidson County
Representative Antonio Parkinson, TN District 98, TN House Redistricting Committee
Senator Brenda Gilmore, TN Senate District 19
Sheryl Gwinn, President of Nashville Chapter of the TN Conf. of NAACP
Tim Bath, resident of Rutherford County
Timothy Hughes, TN CROWD Fellow
Trinity Henderson, resident of Rutherford County
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West Tennessee Hearing, Memphis

October 12, 2021

Amber Sherman, resident of Shelby County, House District 93
Byron Elam, President of Jackson-Madison County Chapter of the TN Conf. of NAACP
Councilwoman Rosemary Winters, TNDP District 33
Dr. Sekou Franklin, TN Conf. of NAACP
Eris Newton, resident in House District 91
Fitzgerald Mann, resident of Brownsville, 1st V.P.- Haywood County Chapter of the TN Conf. of NAACP
Gloria Sweet-Love, President of TN Conf. of NAACP

Redistricting Testimony

Fall 2021

Ian Randolph, member of NAACP Political Action Committee, member of Shelby County Voter Alliance, affiliated with CivicTN

Kendra Lee, resident of Shelby County

Kermit Moore, Memphis A. Philip Randolph Institute

Mildred L. Taylor, resident of West TN

Ruby Powell-Dennis, resident of Cordova

Senator Raumesh Akbari, TN Senator District 29

Steve Mulroy, resident of Memphis, House District 83

Tanya Beard, member of Lauderdale County Chapter of the TN Conf. of NAACP

Tiffany Boyd, resident of Dyersburg, Chairman of the Dyer County Chapter of the TN Conf. of NAACP

Venita Doggett, resident in Congressional District 8

Willie Spencer, Exec. Committee of Bolivar-Hardeman County Chapter of TN Conf. of NAACP

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East Tennessee Hearing, Chattanooga

October 19, 2021

Alfreda Cook, Anderson County-Oak Ridge Chapter of the TN Conf. of NAACP

Archie Reeves, resident of Hamilton County

Audrey Ramsey, resident of Chattanooga

Denzel Caldwell, electoral justice researcher and educator, Highlander Research & Education Center

Betty Maddox Battle, resident of Chattanooga, District 5

Brady Watson, resident of Knoxville

Commissioner Katherlyn Geter, Hamilton County District 5

Dennis Clark, Regional Director of Chattanooga and Knoxville Equity Alliance

Dr. Everlena Holmes, founder of the Hamilton County Voter Coalition

Dr. Sekou Franklin, TN Conf. of NAACP

Dr. Steve Caudle, Pastor of Greater Secondary Missionary Baptist Church

Erik Atkins, Co-Chair of United Group of Chattanooga

Kyle Carrasco, resident of Cleveland, Bradley County

Marie Mott, resident of Chattanooga

Representative Yusuf Hakeem, TN House of Representatives, District 28

Rev. Ann Pierre-Jones, president of Hamilton County Chapter of TN Conf. of NAACP

Rev. Dr. John Butler, Vice President East TN NAACP

Rosa Ponce, resident of Clarksville, volunteer with Workers' Dignity

Sandra McCrea, resident of Hamilton County

Sandra Foster, resident of District 2, Knoxville

Sharon Alexander, resident of Chattanooga, TN Senate District 10

Theresa Turner, resident of Hamilton County

Thessala White, Vice President of Hamilton County Chapter of TN Conf. of NAACP

Timothy Lee, resident of Ooltewah, Hamilton County

Trinity Henderson, student at MTSU in Murfreesboro

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