

**Senate Redistricting Public Hearing  
Summary of Testimony  
Rock Hill**

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

The public hearing began at 6:36 pm. The Redistricting Subcommittee members present were: Senator McConnell, Senator L. Martin, Senator Ford, Senator Hutto, Senator Cleary, and Senator Shoopman. Senator Malloy was absent. The Senate Redistricting staff persons present were: Charlie Terreni, Debbie Hammond, Bonnie Anzelmo, and Laurie Traywick.

Senator McConnell introduced members of the subcommittee and explained the redistricting process. He also explained that the ground rules for all of the 10 public hearings would be to ask each speaker to be clear, brief, and civil, so all persons would have the time to present their ideas and concerns clearly and concisely and that all positions would be given respect.

1. Mr. Al Steele and Mr. Dan Mace testified. Mr. Steel spoke first and explained that he, Mr. Mace, and Mr. Brian Wilson have organized a community effort to raise awareness about redistricting. Mr. Steele stated that, because Mr. Wilson was unable to attend the meeting, Mr. Steele and Mr. Mace represented their community group. Mr. Steele explained that the community group realized that the last census had a large impact on Fort Mill and Tega Cay, both of which are in York County. He stated that for approximately 200 years, Fort Mill and Tega Cay were represented by the same House and Senate seats; however, after the last census, the community was divided. Mr. Steele testified that the railroad track in the middle of town is the House district line and approximately 2/3 or 1/3 of the community is represented by different senators. Because of those lines, the last time someone was elected from the Fort Mill/Tega Cay was Becky Meacham in 1992.

Mr. Steele stated that he appreciates the representatives and senators that represent their area and believes they have done wonderful jobs. He testified that their position is strictly about their community and the community's ability to elect someone to represent them and their unique interests in state government. Mr. Steele said that he, Mr. Mace, and Mr. Wilson called a meeting and invited the mayor of Fort Mill, the mayor of Tega Cay, the president of the Fort Mill Chamber of Commerce, the president of the Tega Cay Chamber of Commerce, the chairman of the school board, and the two senators and two representatives that represent the area. Mr. Steele further stated that he, Mr. Mace, and Mr. Wilson explained to the people invited to their meeting that they wanted to see the Fort Mill/Tega Cay community reunited under the same district. Mr. Steele stated that the group does not care whether their community is put with Lancaster or with Rock Hill because they get along with both areas. They simply want to be put back together.

Mr. Steele testified that he, Mr. Mace, and Mr. Wilson drafted a resolution and asked the groups who attended their community meeting to adopt the resolution. Mr. Steele said that all groups have adopted the resolution. Mr. Steele then explained a fact sheet that accompanied the resolution, both of which were given to the members of the subcommittee, to help the subcommittee understand the unique characteristics of the Fort Mill/Tega Cay community.

Fact #1 explains that the community was fractured after the 2000 census, and their group wants the community to be put back together now that the 2010 census has been completed.

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Fact #2 discusses the idea that the Fort Mill/Tega Cay area is one of the fastest growing townships in South Carolina.

He stated that the township is all of the land in York County that is north of the Catawba River, and Lake Wylie splits up from Rock Hill. Mr. Steele stated that the only two ways to cross the Catawba River and Lake Wylie is by I-77 and Highway 21, which run side-by-side. Mr. Steele explained that he lives on Lake Wylie, and he stated that he can see the other side of the district and can ride his jet ski to that area in 15-20 seconds. However, he stated that it takes him 20-25 minutes to get there in his automobile. Mr. Steele stated that the Fort Mill/Tega Cay area is a bedroom community of Charlotte and that they have unique problems that go along with that aspect of their area. Mr. Steele stated that the school district is one of the fastest growing school districts in the state and explained that the student population has doubled since the 2000 census. He also explained that the area has one of the highest school tax millage rates in the state in an effort to maintain good schools, and he believes that the school children deserve a voice in Columbia. Mr. Steele spoke next about the natural boundaries in their area. He stated that the Catawba River is the county line for every county between North Carolina and Columbia, specifically mentioning Fairfield, Kershaw, Chester, Lancaster, and York Counties, and he stated that he is unaware of any school district that the Catawba River crosses. Because of those factors, Mr. Steele believes that the natural boundary of the Catawba River should be considered when the senators are drawing voting districts. Finally, Mr. Steele stated that the area has unique traffic and crime problems being so close to Charlotte. He testified that, for all of the reasons he stated, he believes that Fort Mill and Tega Cay should be kept together.

Mr. Dan Mace then testified. Mr. Mace stated that he grew up in Marion County and graduated from Clemson University. He stated that he is an architect and practiced most of his career in Florence and in the Myrtle Beach area. Mr. Mace testified that he moved to the Fort Mill/Tega Cay area in 2002 and accepted the House and Senate seats upon his arrival in the area. However, he said that Mr. Steele spoke to Mr. Mace about redistricting and the potential to have Fort Mill and Tega Cay put back together, and he said he jumped at the chance to get involved. Mr. Mace explained that he lives in Tega Cay and that Mr. Steele lives in Fort Mill, and it surprised him to learn that those two areas were not considered a community of interest. He explained that both areas are experiencing exponential growth, and he is interested in seeing the unique interests of their communities move forward with unified representation. Mr. Mace agreed that the area has had great representation since 2002, but he stated that he is uncertain about the future. He said that because of that uncertainty, he would appreciate a strong consideration be given to unifying the unique interests of Fort Mill and Tega Cay.

Mr. Mace explained that his, Mr. Steele's, and Mr. Wilson's efforts have received support from the city council of Fort Mill, the city council of Tega Cay, the school board, the Chamber of Commerce of Fort Mill, the Chamber of Commerce of Tega Cay, and numerous civic groups, including the Rotary Club and the Lions Club. Mr. Mace then read the adopted resolution to the subcommittee.

2. Mr. Steve Love spoke next. Mr. Love stated that he lives at 118 Crescent Ridge in York, and he stated that Representative John King, who represents House District 19, is his state representative. Mr. Love testified that he thinks South Carolina has a diverse racial and ethnic population and has almost 30% minority population. However, he believes that those racial and ethnic groups are not adequately represented politically. He testified that he believes that racial

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and ethnic groups may not have a voice when it comes to policy and decision making. He asked the subcommittee to draw diverse lines so that the representatives can understand the complex issues for African-Americans, such as high unemployment, safe public schools, and healthcare.

3. Mr. Marvin Smith testified next. Mr. Smith stated that he is the Chairman of the York County Regional Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Smith said that he was speaking on behalf of the 850 business member firms in Rock Hill, Fort Mill, and Tega Cay. Mr. Smith testified that he appreciated the ideas of Mr. Steele and Mr. Mace who spoke first at the meeting, and Mr. Smith stated that the Chamber of Commerce strongly supported their position. Mr. Smith explained that the Chamber of Commerce supports an equitable redistricting process because he believes such a process will result in more York County based representation in the General Assembly. Mr. Smith pointed out that less than half of the members of the York County delegation reside in York County, and he stated that the Chamber of Commerce believes that York County is due for consideration of greater resident-based representation. Mr. Smith testified that according to the 2010 census, York County is the second fastest growing county in South Carolina, with a growth of 37.3% in the last 10 years. He stated that the census also showed that York County has 226,000 residents, which makes York County the seventh most populated county in South Carolina. Mr. Smith stated that because of the strong business center and the significant contribution of retail sales taxes to state revenue, the Chamber of Commerce believes that York County's business community needs more direct representation in the state legislature. Mr. Smith also stated that there are unique and complex issues that York County faces as a border county, and those issues need to be advanced by representatives who best understand the problems. Mr. Smith explained that the Chamber of Commerce believes that the reasons given for more resident-based representation are consistent with traditional redistricting principles and asked that the subcommittee consider the Chamber of Commerce's position, which is represented by a resolution that was passed by the Chamber of Commerce and which was submitted to the subcommittee.

4. Mr. Dean Faile testified next. Mr. Faile explained that he represents the Lancaster County Chamber of Commerce and resides in Lancaster County. Mr. Faile stated that he is most concerned about Senate District 16 and maintaining that the majority of that district is comprised of Lancaster County. Mr. Faile recognized that York County has a very good argument concerning Fort Mill and Tega Cay. He stated that after looking at the data, he realized that York County will be the largest county with only one Senate district that contains a majority of York County. However, he stated that, if Senate District 16 is not maintained and does not contain a majority of Lancaster County, then Lancaster County will be the largest county in South Carolina without an opportunity to have a resident senator. Mr. Faile stated that Lancaster County is the 17<sup>th</sup> largest county in South Carolina, and he stated that Lancaster County had 62% of the population when Senate District 16 was drawn in 2000. Mr. Faile noted that the percentage population of a county to the senate district was comparable to Orangeburg, which is the 16<sup>th</sup> largest county; Sumter, which is the 15<sup>th</sup> largest county; Oconee, which is the 18<sup>th</sup> largest county; and Greenwood, which is the 19<sup>th</sup> largest county. As such, Mr. Faile stated that he would respectfully ask that Lancaster County continue to have at least a majority of the county's citizens within one senate district. Mr. Faile testified that Lancaster County has 76,652 residents, and he stated that he feels it is a reasonable request to have at least 50,000 or 60,000 of those people contained in one senate district.

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Mr. Faile also stated that the subcommittee should consider communities of interest when drawing senate district lines. He stated that it is hard for him to believe that Fort Mill and Tega Cay are not aligned together, and he stated that he believes that the Catawba River is a natural border. Mr. Faile also stated that it is easy for him to look at Senate District 16 and consider removing the southern border to another district. Mr. Faile pointed out that the southern portion of Senate District 16 is near Senator Sheheen's district, and he stated that, because Senator Sheheen's and Senator Coleman's districts have decreased in population, both areas will need to expand, while Senate District 16 is going to need to shrink. Mr. Faile testified that he believes removing the southern portion from Senate District 16 will accomplish the goals of keeping communities of interest together, as was pointed out by Mr. Steele and Mr. Mace. Mr. Faile stated that, at the very least, he wants Lancaster County split into only two senate districts, with one district having at least 50% of the citizens of the county so that the county has an opportunity to elect someone. Finally, Mr. Faile stated that Senate District 16 has the opportunity to elect Senator Gregory again, and Mr. Faile stated that he believes Senator Gregory has represented the district well in the past. He stated that, in looking at the historical data, the Lancaster County Chamber of Commerce believes that there is a tie between the City of Lancaster and the City of Fort Mill. He stated that Springs Industry created that tie, and he said that the tie continues today if one looks at the economic growth that is helping the area coming out of Charlotte. Mr. Faile stated that Lancaster County is also a bedroom community of Charlotte, which also gives Lancaster a tie with Fort Mill and Tega Cay.

5. Mr. Steve Willis spoke next. Mr. Willis stated that he is the county administrator for Lancaster County. However, he emphasized that his comments were person in nature and were not official comments of the County of Lancaster. Mr. Willis urged the senators to keep Senate District 16 as close as possible to its current configuration. Mr. Willis stated that Lancaster County was the fifth fastest growing county in South Carolina, with a population of 76,652. Mr. Willis noted that the people of Senate District 16 have been ably represented in the past by their senators, and the other portion of Lancaster County has been represented well by Senator Sheheen. Mr. Willis stated that the seat for Senate District 16 is currently vacant and that the election for that seat is on April 12<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Willis asked the senators to consider maintaining communities of interest, and he said that a good indicator of a community of interest is the county line. Mr. Willis pointed out that the residents of a county share a governing body, elected officials, courts, emergency services, public works, and planning commissions. Mr. Willis stated that he wished the state could go back to having one senator from each county, but he recognized that could not be done. Finally, Mr. Willis stated that he would like for the senators to consider protecting incumbents when redrawing the Senate district lines.

6. Mr. Stan Smith testified. Mr. Smith stated that he lives in Fort Mill, in Senate District 16. Mr. Smith stated that people can think about redistricting in the following three ways: 1) county lines and jurisdictions; 2) political affiliations by geography; and 3) rational business and development interests. Mr. Smith stated that he believes that the northern portions of both York and Lancaster Counties should become one senatorial district. Mr. Smith stated that creating that senate seat would allow the people of the area to leverage the infrastructure, technology, and lifestyle assets that already exist in Charlotte. Mr. Smith stated that, from those things, the people in York and Lancaster Counties can recruit business and development because of South Carolina's favorable tax structure and regulatory environment. Mr. Smith further stated that the

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senators should not let party affiliation or traditional administrative jurisdictions drive the shape of any district in South Carolina. He said that the senators should concentrate on economic commonalities for regions within South Carolina to create district lines.

7. Ms. Ann Stevens then spoke. Ms. Stevens stated that she was speaking as a resident of Union County, which is with Chester and Fairfield Counties, in Senate District 17. Ms. Stevens stated that she hopes the new district lines can be drawn to allow Union County to have a resident senator. Ms. Stevens further testified that she would like for all of Union County to be in one Senate district.

8. Mr. Terence Murchison testified next. Mr. Murchison stated that he is a resident of York County and is represented in the State House of Representatives by Representative Thomas Pope. Mr. Murchison further stated that he lives in York County School District Number Two, which is located in Clover, South Carolina. Mr. Murchison stated that the primary purpose of his testimony is to let the senators know that he would like for the Senate redistricting plan to include a seat to which an African-American can be elected. Mr. Murchison explained that he is an executive board member of the western York County branch of the NAACP. He stated that he is a landowner, a taxpayer, and a registered voter. He further stated that he has voted in every election since he graduated college. Mr. Murchison explained that he worked with the Rock Hill school board election structure when he lived in Rock Hill. He stated that his work led to full representation of all races and genders on the Rock Hill School Board. Mr. Murchison explained that two of the school board members are now elected at large, and the remainder of the members are elected from the districts in which they live. Mr. Murchison said he would like for the same restructuring of school board elections to happen in York County School District Two. Mr. Murchison stated that he understands that the senators do not have anything to do with the school district lines, but he said he was using those elections as examples of how to structure elections to get more African-Americans elected to office.

9. Mr. Roy Bird spoke next. Mr. Bird stated that he lives in McConnells, South Carolina, which is in the western portion of York County. Mr. Bird stated that he believes that McConnells is a community of interest of its own. Mr. Bird stated that McConnells has a great deal of history, which is what led him to live in that community. Mr. Bird said the area is rural, and he believes that is one of the reasons that people move to the area. Mr. Bird testified that he is interested in not letting population centers overrun and overrule the people of the area who contribute a great deal to South Carolina. He stated that he does not want the senators to overlook those who farm for a living.

10. Ms. Terry Taylor then testified. Ms. Taylor stated that she is also from McConnells, South Carolina. Ms. Taylor stated that she was surprised to find out that “communities of interest” was part of the criteria the senators were considering when drawing new district lines. Ms. Taylor said she would like the senators to focus on the “one man, one vote” rule. Ms. Taylor stated she believes that the individual must be protected in the redistricting process and that race, ethnicity, and gender should not matter. Ms. Taylor said that she believes that “communities of interest” is an illegitimate issue to consider in redistricting.

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11. Finally, Mr. Don Long testified. Mr. Long stated that he lives in Lake Wylie, South Carolina, which is the fastest growing community in York County. Mr. Long stated that Lake Wylie grew 189% from 2000 to 2010. Mr. Long stated that, along with communities of interest, compactness, and applicable laws and standards, he would like for the senators to consider equitability and fairness when drawing new district lines. Mr. Long stated that a county is a fundamental community of interest because the county establishes the tax base and the tax rate and assesses and collects taxes. Mr. Long also stated that the county establishes recreational facilities and supervises most of the planning and development of the county. Additionally, Mr. Long said that the sheriff's office and the fire departments are run by the county. Mr. Long said that one of the characteristics of York County is its significant growth. Mr. Long further testified that the county is the most compact geographic unit to consider. Mr. Long stated that, in looking at the current senate districts, Greenville County has four resident senators, with 92% of the residents of Greenville County being represented by a resident senator. He further stated that Spartanburg County has three resident senators, with 98% of the residents of Spartanburg County being represented by a resident senator. He explained that Richland County has three resident senators, with 100% of the residents of Richland County being represented by a resident senator. He stated that Horry County has two resident senators, with 94% of the residents of Horry County being represented by a resident senator. He testified that Lexington County has 72% of its citizens being represented by a resident senator, and Orangeburg and Beaufort have almost 100% of their residents being represented by resident senators. Finally, he stated that Florence County has 61% of its residents being represented by a resident senator. He then said that York County only has 55% of its residents being represented by a resident senator. Mr. Long stated that he does not believe that is fair or equitable. He stated that he believes York County should have at least two resident senators. Mr. Long says that he feels Lake Wylie has been very well represented, but he believes that fairness and equitability dictate another resident senator in York County. He stated that the current York County delegation has 11 members. Of those 11 members, there is one resident senator, and there are four resident representatives. He believes that is not fair. He thinks that the population in York County justifies six resident representatives and two resident senators.

Senator McConnell mentioned that Senator Robert W. (Wes) Hayes, Jr., who represents Senate District 15, was present at the meeting and invited Senator Hayes to testify. Senator Hayes said he was at the meeting to observe the testimony and declined the invitation to testify himself. Senator McConnell also mentioned that Former Senator Greg Gregory, who previously represented Senate District 16, was in attendance but had to leave the meeting early. Finally, Senator McConnell asked if there were any other people in the audience who wished to speak. No one responded. Finally, Senator McConnell announced that the subcommittee would be going to Greenville the next evening for those in the audience who were interested in attending other meetings.

The hearing was adjourned at approximately 7:31 p.m.

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