



## **Prepared Remarks Christopher Bruce**

Political Director of the ACLU of Georgia  
Athens Redistricting Town Hall  
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To Chairman Kennedy Chair Rich and Members of the House and Senate Redistricting Committees, thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today.

Good evening. My Name is Christopher Bruce, and I am the political director for the ACLU of Georgia.

The ACLU of Georgia firmly believes that the right to vote is one of the most sacred civil liberties we have as Americans and that fair maps and a fair redistricting process are crucial to ensuring that every vote counts equally.

Today, I want to talk a little bit about the estimated population changes that have occurred in the Greater Athens area over the last 10 years and about the importance of fairness in the redistricting process.

The Greater Athens area, made up of Clarke, Madison, Oconee, and Oglethorpe counties has grown in population and grown more diverse in the last 10 years. The voting age population has increased by over 9% alone.

Looking at demographic growth in the area, the Asian voting age population and the white voting age populations have both grown by nearly 6%. The Hispanic voting age population has grown by almost 16%. The Black voting age population has grown by almost 19%. Overall, the people of color voting age population in the Greater Athens area has grown by just under 18%.

These demographic changes must result in maps that reflect the diversity of the Greater Athens area to ensure that voters of color have the same opportunity to elect candidates of their choice as white voters do.

As we know, Georgia has a history of undermining the influence of voters of color through the redistricting process. To ensure that everyone's sacred right to vote is protected, the maps that the legislature draws up must be fair. Fair maps require making sure that people of color have a voice in this process and that the growing diversity of the Greater Athens area is adequately reflected in the resulting maps that you create.

The decisions made during this redistricting process will impact the lives of countless Georgians for the next ten years or more. This is a tremendous responsibility before the



legislature. It is of the utmost importance that this body work diligently and transparently to ensure that people of color have a voice in this process, because our democracy depends on it.

Thank you all for your time.