

County Durham

Personal Details:

Name: Dr Sam Rushworth

Email: [REDACTED]

Postcode: [REDACTED]

Organisation Name: Labour Parliamentary Candidate (Representative of a local organisation)

Comment text:

Dr Sam Rushworth

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

9th July 2023

Dear Local Government Boundary Commission of England,

As the Labour Parliamentary Candidate for the Bishop Auckland constituency at the next General Election, I am writing to express concern about some of your proposed changes to local government boundaries. I was selected by party members one year ago in July 2022 and since then we have had conversations with nearly 9000 voters. This has given me a really good insight into how people view their communities and common concerns they have. With this knowledge, I would like to offer the following advice:

Firstly, there is big concern in the sub-urban area to the west of Bishop Auckland (particularly Etherley Dean, which views itself as part of the Bishop Auckland town, but also Etherley, Witton Park and Escomb) that becoming part of a giant 3-member rural ward will leave them less well

represented than remaining in a much geographically smaller 2-member ward based on the current West Auckland ward. While I support the overall goal to reduce the number of councillors, it does not make sense to create a 3-member super-ward, and a small 1-member ward, rather than two 2-member wards. Naturally, both of these 2-member wards would need to be larger than they are presently, but this could be achieved by including Toft Hill and the part of West Auckland that is currently split off into the Evenwood ward, within the West Auckland ward boundary, then adding parts of Teesdale to the new Evenwood Ward.

I know from my canvassing that this option is favoured by the public. In just a few hours knocking in doors in Etherley Dean, we found more than one hundred people who were concerned enough by the proposed changes that they took time to discuss them and sign the attached petition in support of Labour's counterproposals.

Secondly, that creating a very large 3-member ward in rural Teesdale creates the risk that more remote parts of the ward get overlooked, as it the population clusters around Barnard Castle. I would favour considering making Barnard Castle town a single member ward, and the remainder of Teesdale a 2-member ward OR have three single-member wards, because this would ensure villages like Gainford, Ingleton, Whorlton and Barningham etc to the south, and Mickleton, Middleton-in-Teesdale, Cotherstone etc to the north, are not neglected.

Thank you for considering this and the views of 107 local voters who signed to show their support for Labour's West Auckland proposal.

Sincerely,

Sam Rushworth
Labour Parliamentary Candidate

Dr Sam Rushworth

+ [REDACTED]

Attached Documents:

- Boundary Changes Petition20230710_07540032_01.pdf
- Boundary Commission Letter SJR.pdf

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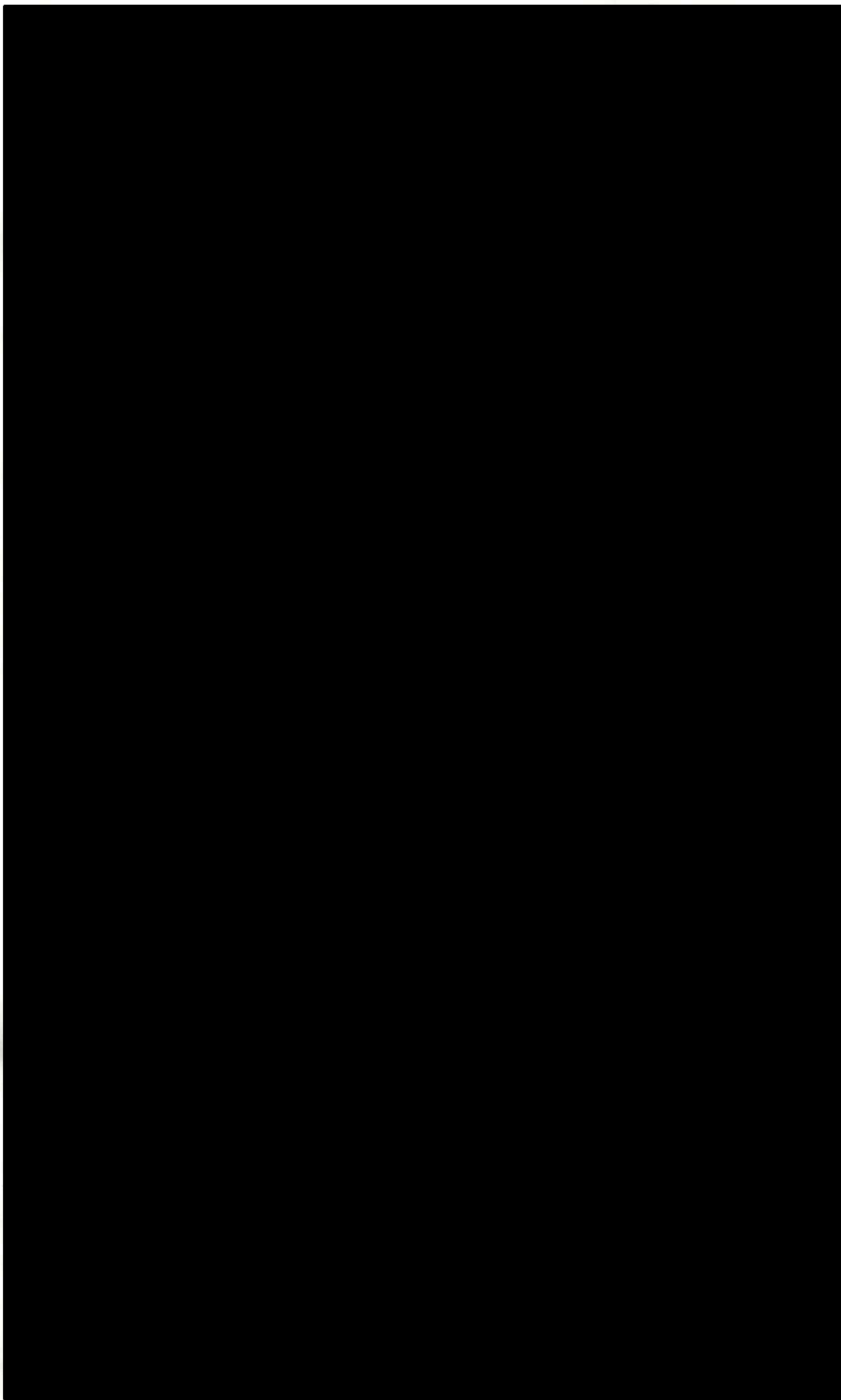
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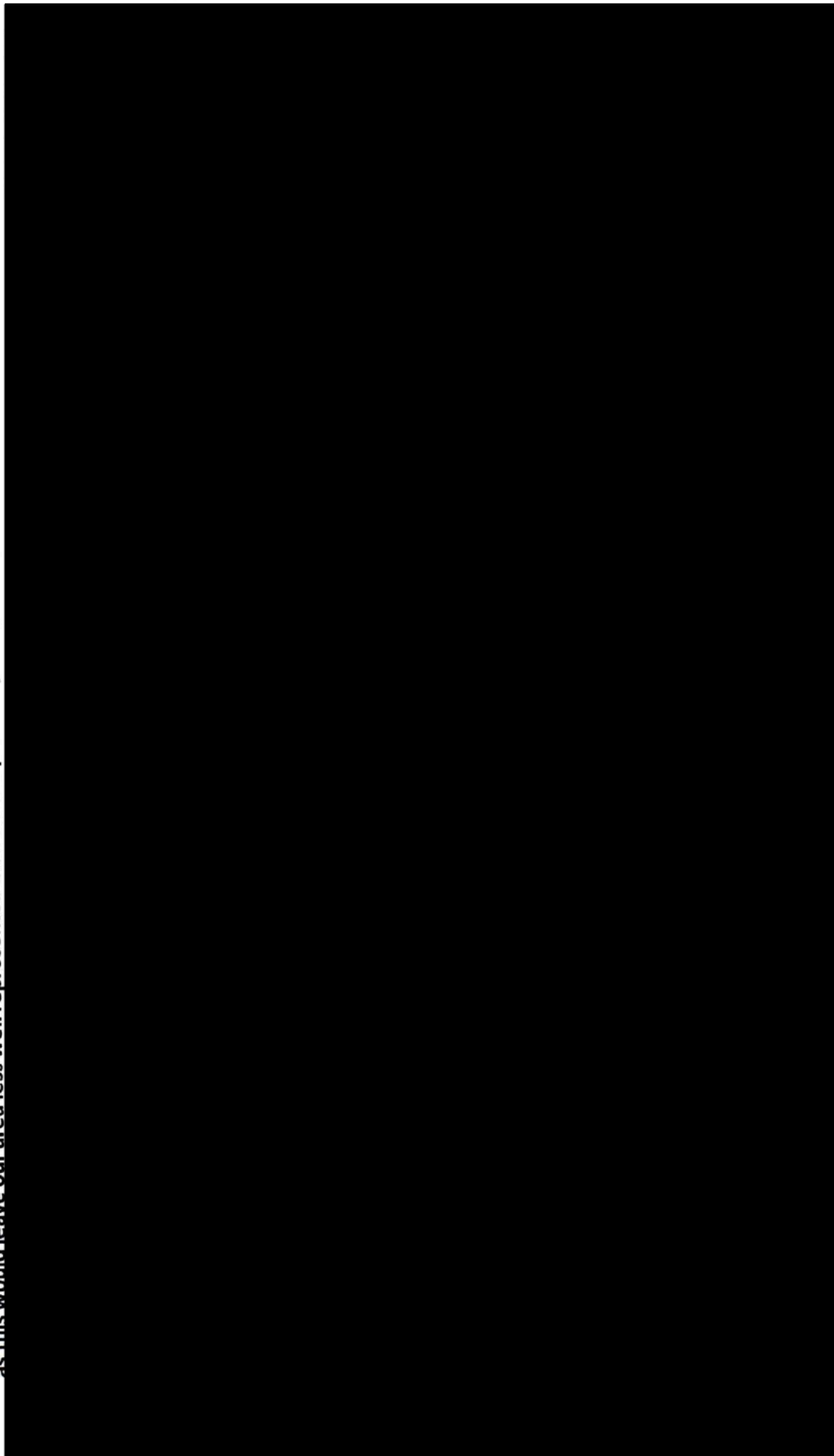
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Labour Parliamentary Candidate

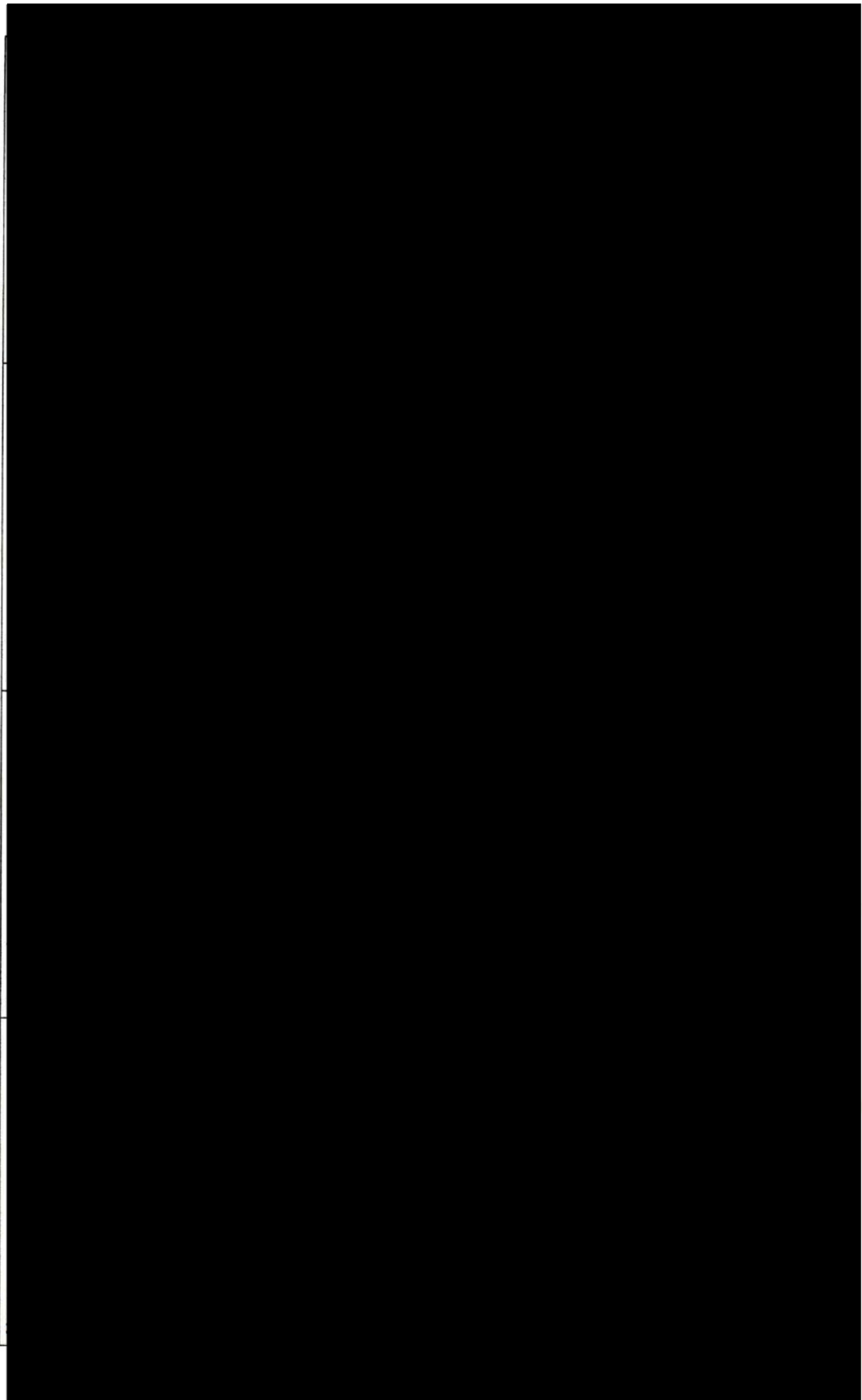
We, the undersigned, do not agree with the Boundary Commission proposal to create a large 3-member ward centred around Evenwood, as this would leave our area less well represented than we are presently. We prefer Labour's proposal to retain a smaller 2-member ward.



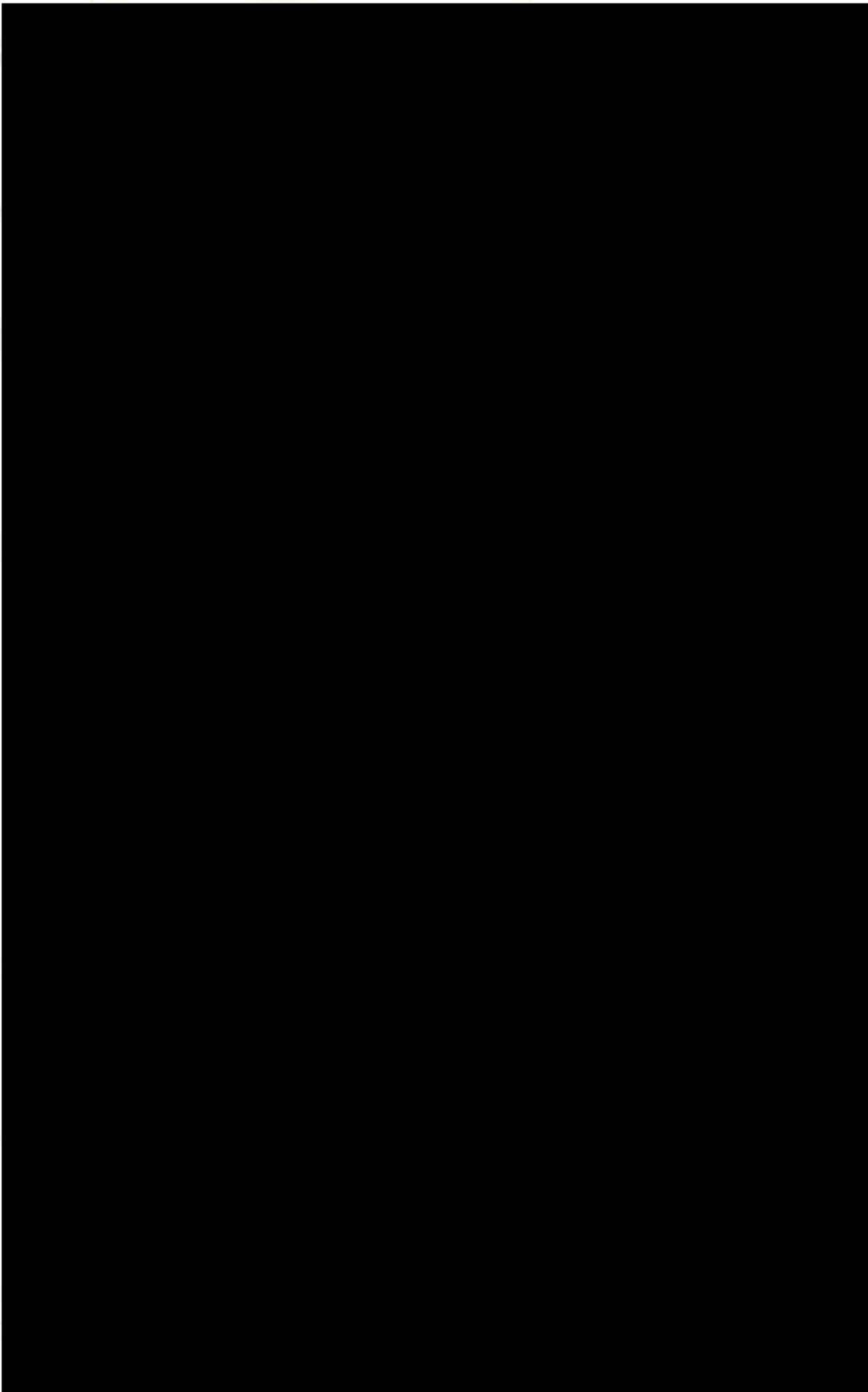
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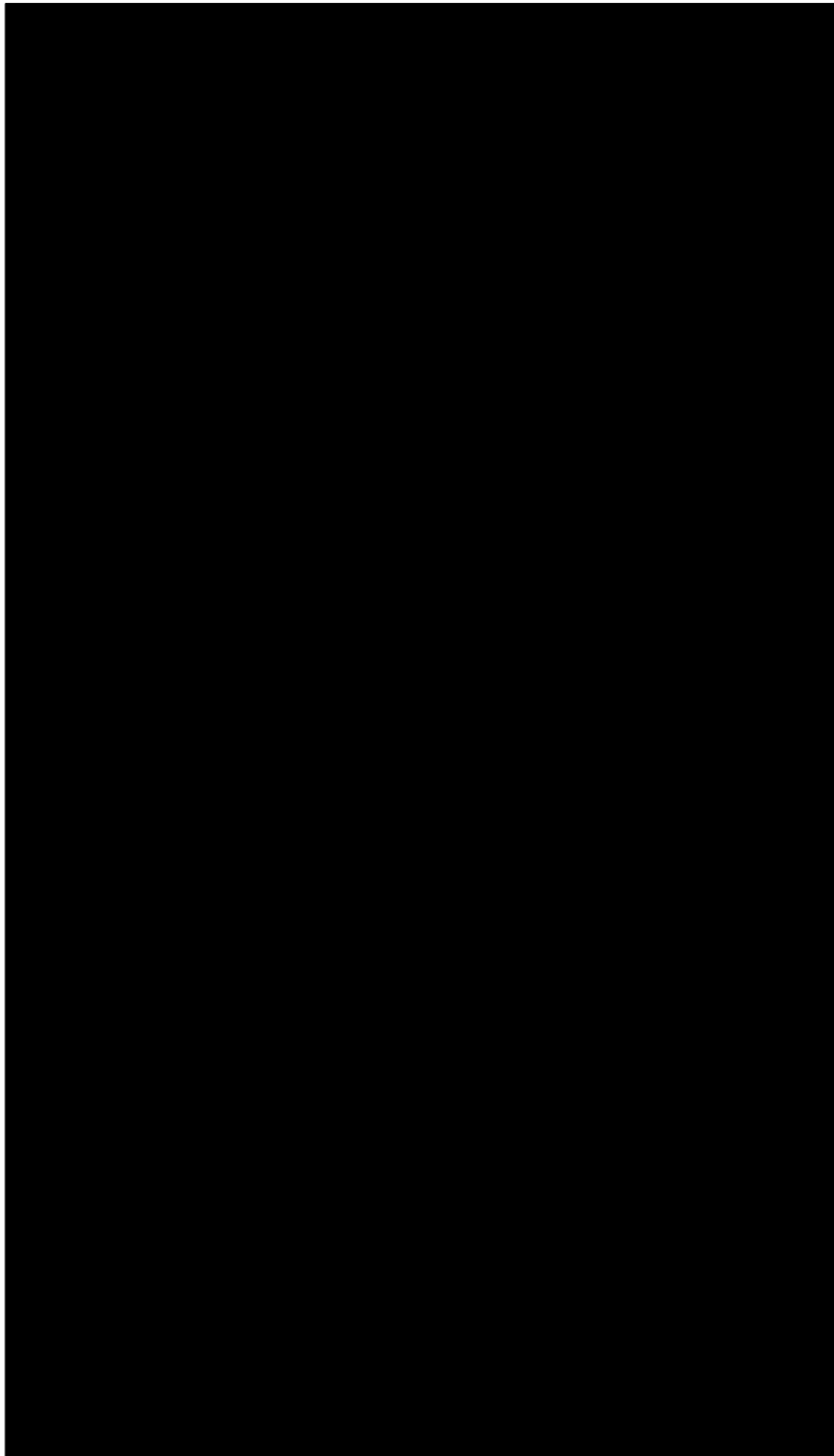
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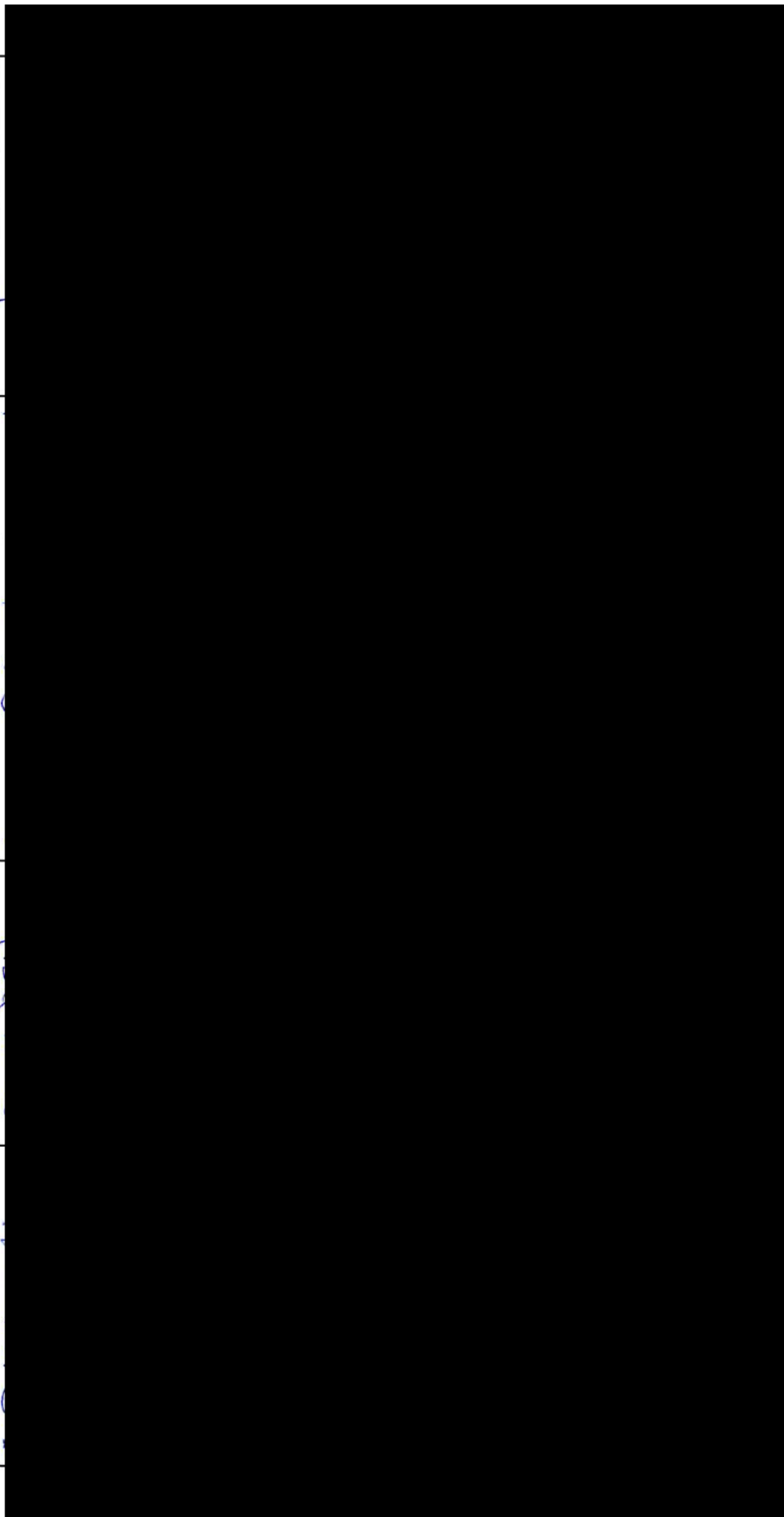


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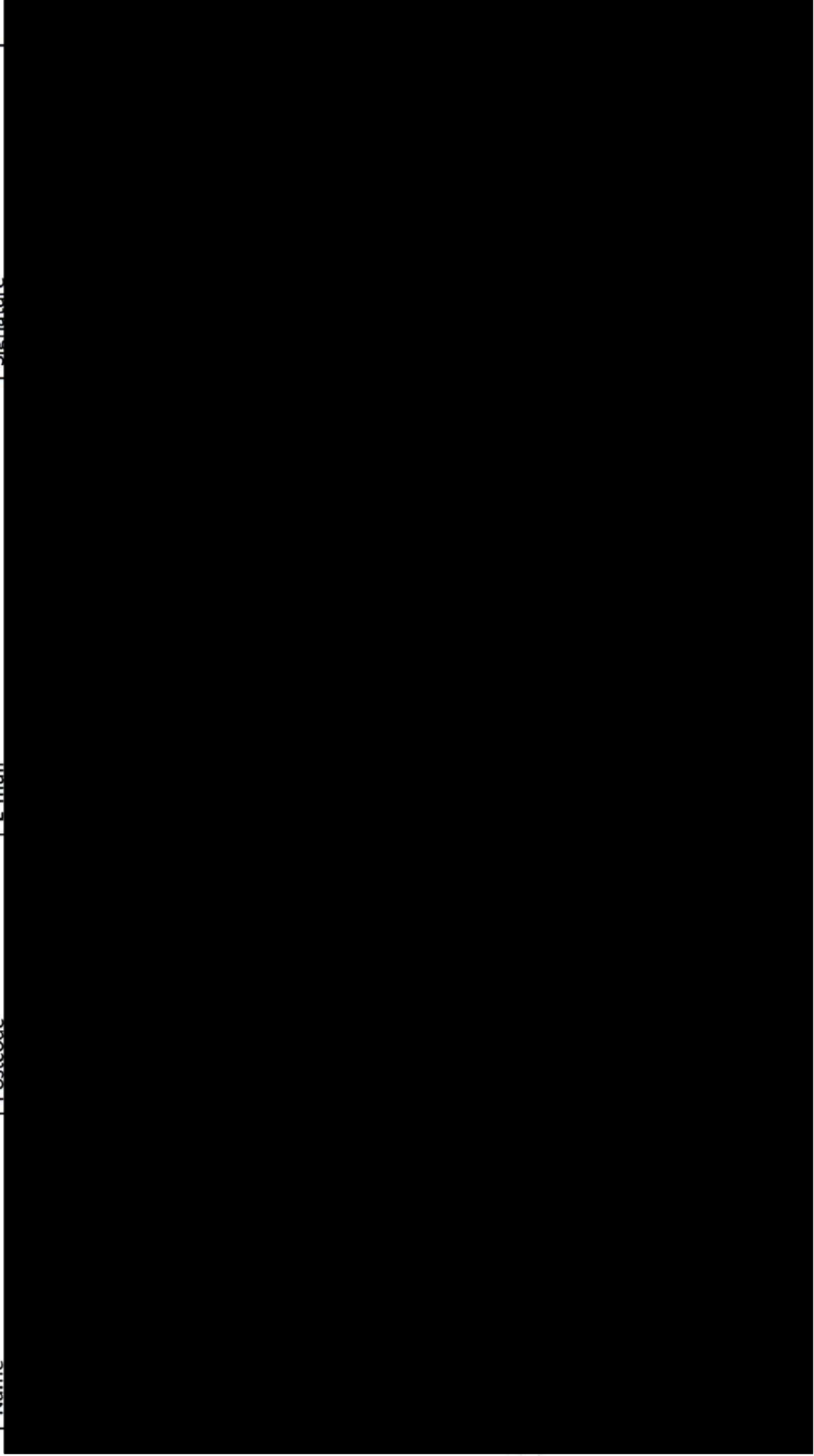
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[Redacted Signature Area]

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