

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

TOTAL NUMBER OF COMMENTS: 284

DATE: 10/21/2021 12:57:59 PM

Name: Amy O'Callaghan
Stakeholder Type: Private individual
Email: Whitead3@gmail.com
Type of comment: General comment about the conduct of the Commission
Topic(s) of interest: Political neutrality

COMMENTS:

Disappointed to hear we were unable to compromise. I remain hopeful that an informed, data-centric 3rd party will succeed in building fair electoral maps to advance the important work of supporting democracy and civic engagement.

DATE: 10/22/2021 10:20:34 AM

Name: Joshua Powers
Stakeholder Type: Private individual
Email: jpowersbaseball@gmail.com
Type of comment: General comment about the conduct of the Commission

COMMENTS:

Good afternoon,
Back in 2020 when this Redistricting Amendment was on the ballot, the authors swore up and down that it would never come to our thoroughly conservative Virginia Supreme Court to have to decide on Congressional and Assembly district lines. In fact, that's exactly what is happening this week after the Redistricting Commission nearly got bamboozled into adopting the National Republican Redistricting Trust's wishlist whole cloth, and subsequently realized they have no hope of coming to a compromise. This is extremely disappointing, and will cause any further redistricting "fairness" efforts to be viewed with extreme skepticism. I want you to know that lobbying groups like

DATE: 10/22/2021 10:59:06 AM

Name: irene Schubert
Stakeholder Type: Organization volunteer
Organization: Indivisible Below the Beltway
Email: hapsburgqueen@gmail.com
Locality: Mount Vernon
Type of comment: General comment about the conduct of the Commission

COMMENTS:

What on earth is happening?? No more meetings?

DATE: 11/1/2021 2:43:31 PM

Name: Anna Mackiewicz
Stakeholder Type: Private individual
Email: annanewandwritten@gmail.com
Type of comment: Comment on a map
Topic(s) of interest: Political neutrality

COMMENTS:

The proposed congressional map meant to be a compromise between the two parties is basically a carbon copy of the map proposed by Tom Davis, the former chair of the National Republican Congressional Committee.

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
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Any map that looks similar to a map proposed by a Republican Party leader who was responsible for electing more Republicans to the House of Representatives cannot in good faith be considered a compromise -- and it is certainly not fair to voters.

I'm writing because I believe this map should NOT be used as the starting point for Virginia's future congressional map. The commission needs to go back to the drawing board.

DATE: 11/2/2021 1:37:22 PM

Name: Sherry satin
Stakeholder Type: Private individual
Email: sherryoldacre@gmail.com
Type of comment: General comment about the conduct of the Commission
Topic(s) of interest: Political neutrality

COMMENTS:

Voters in Virginia deserve a congressional map that fairly represents the state and the voting trends of the past decade. A fair map in hVirginia does not mean creating districts that will result in an equal number of Democratic and Republican representatives -- like what Republicans on the commission are demanding.

Despite egregious Republican gerrymandering after the 2010 Census, Democrats now hold 7 out of 11 congressional districts, including districts that were drawn to prevent them from winning in the first place. A fair map would recognize that a majority of voters have supported Democratic candidates for Congress in recent elections and the district lines should not be manipulated to erase that.

Since 2009, Democrats have won every single statewide election. And from the House of Delegates to Congress to President Biden's 10-point victory, there is strong evidence that voters are choosing Democratic candidates more and more often. Virginia is increasingly becoming a Democratic state -- and the Congressional map should reflect that.

The commission should use these testimonies to inform a fair map -- voters made a definitive statement last year when we voted for this commission. We want public input to be the basis for our maps!

Please, do what is fair and right.

DATE: 11/2/2021 1:43:17 PM

Name: Jeannemarie Devolites Davis
Stakeholder Type: Private individual
Email: jeannemarieddavis@gmail.com
Type of comment: General comment about the conduct of the Commission

COMMENTS:

Please find attached a letter of comment from former Congressman Tom Davis, in regard to the Congressional redistricting map that he submitted to the Redistricting Commission.

If you would kindly forward the letter to the Commission members, he would be grateful.

Please let me know if you need anything further.

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0?ui=2&ik=79018b49ad&attid=0.7.0.1&permmsgid=msg-f:1715220160839746498&th=17cdafa60e7103c2&view=att&disp=safe&realattid=17ca821bf9be0609c7c1>

DATE: 11/2/2021 1:45:58 PM

Name: No Name Given
Stakeholder Type: Private individual
Email: katmom46@gmail.com
Type of comment: General comment about the conduct of the Commission
Topic(s) of interest: Political neutrality

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DATE: 11/2/2021 1:52:44 PM

Name: Jack Hermansen
Stakeholder Type: Private individual
Email: jack.hermansen@gmail.com
Type of comment: General comment about the conduct of the Commission
Topic(s) of interest: Political neutrality

COMMENTS:

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DATE: 11/2/2021 1:59:08 PM

Name: No Name Given
Stakeholder Type: Private individual
Email: drebusj@verizon.net
Type of comment: General comment about the conduct of the Commission
Topic(s) of interest: Political neutrality

COMMENTS:

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DATE: 11/8/2021 5:39:43 PM
Name: Erin
Stakeholder Type: Organization staff
Organization: VCET
Email: erin@engageva.org
Type of comment: Aggregated comments from memberd

COMMENTS:

Comment on the proposed plan 478(Virginia Counts Coalition Map).

Many of the issues that are prominent in our current district map are resolved here. Specifically, these issues with district 5 and 7 making little to no sense as to why they were drawn in such an erratic scheme. The districts in northern Virginia are slightly bigger representing the population increase. Overall, this map is one of the more accommodating options.

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My name is Jorge Figueredo and I am the executive director of Edu-Futuro, a non-profit that employs a two generational programmatic approach to breaking the cycle of poverty through educational empowerment in the immigrant community. The maps proposed by the Virginia Coalition on Immigrant Rights (VACIR), the Virginia Latino Leaders Council (VLLC) and the Virginia Counts Coalition (VCC) were based on extensive feedback by immigrant communities across the Commonwealth, including communities that we at Edu-Futuro directly serve. All three of these maps uplift the interests of the communities we serve, communities that have been historically underrepresented and underserved, so that these communities can successfully vote on candidates and referenda of their choice. It is my hope that the Supreme Court of Virginia will take into account the immigrant support for the maps submitted by VACIR, VLLC, and VCC as it redraws district lines in the commonwealth.

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Frying Pan district belongs in the same district as Herndon-Monroe Park & Ride. The silver line corridor is a community of interest and Frying Pan District/Hattontown is part and parcel of it.

I support the maps drawn by VLLC (Virginia Latino Leaders Council), VCC (Virginia Counts Coalition), and VACIR (Virginia Coalition for Immigrant Rights). These maps protect the voting power of immigrant communities and reflect the silver line corridor as a community of interest.

DATE: 11/11/2021 1:24:13 PM
Name: Jyot Singh
Stakeholder Type: Organization staff
Organization: Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund (SALDEF)

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

Email: jyot.singh@saldef.org
Type of comment: Comment on a map
Topic(s) of interest: Communities of interest

COMMENTS:

I write to submit a letter from SALDEF's Executive Director, Kiran Gill, addressed to the VRC on behalf of Asian American and Pacific Islander Virginians in support of the unity maps submitted by the Virginia Counts Coalition: I submit this letter on behalf of the Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund (SALDEF). We thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the proposed maps and issues the Commission should take into consideration. Specifically, we share our concern about the way the maps could impact AAPIs, other communities of color, immigrant communities, and other communities of interest. Any maps issued by the Commission should not sacrifice the integrity of communities of interest, as defined by identical bills SB717/HB1255 passed into Virginia law in 2020 as well as the federal Voting Rights Act, in favor of compactness or other political consideration.

SALDEF is a national Sikh American media, policy, and education organization based in Washington, DC. Founded in 1996, SALDEF's mission is to empower Sikh Americans by building dialogue, deepening understanding, promoting civic and political participation, and upholding social justice and religious freedom for all Americans.

Given our longstanding presence in the DC/Maryland/Virginia area, and deep relationships with our fellow local advocacy organizations, SALDEF is strongly positioned to advocate for South Asian and broader AAPI communities of interest in Virginia in the redistricting process. In fact, it is on those terms that we engaged with a coalition of advocacy organizations and constituents across Virginia to produce a unity map, submitted for your consideration. It is our hope that you draw insights from the coalition's work and outreach into diverse communities to prevent the dilution of and division of communities of interest in Virginia, thereby undoing much of the progress those communities have made since the most recent redistricting process in 2011.

Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in Virginia

Per the 2020 U.S. Census, seven percent of all Virginia residents identify as AAPI, with heavy concentration in northeast Virginia. The population of NoVA continues to grow much faster than the population of the rest of the commonwealth, and AAPI residents are a key pillar in that trend.

Three counties have AAPI populations of at least ten percent. Fairfax and Loudoun counties exceed 20% AAPI. Arlington is around 11% AAPI; between the 2010 and 2020 Censuses, self-identifying Asians were the largest growing group in Arlington County.

Prince William and Henrico counties both have AAPI populations around 9% of their total population. Montgomery, York, and Albemarle counties have at least 5% AAPI residents. Among independent cities, very high concentrations of AAPI residents occur in Fairfax (17%), Manassas Park (10.8%), and Falls Church (10.1%). These localities are areas of focus for SALDEF's activities in Virginia, not just because they are among the largest in the state. These counties tend to elect the representatives who have begun to create an AAPI imprint in the Virginia Assembly - including the very recently formed Asian American and Pacific Islander Caucus.

Empowering these representatives is critical to the elusive dream of moving Asian Americans in Virginia beyond the 'underrepresented' label.

Proportional representation has never been attained by Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in Virginia. Per our partners at APIAVote, Asian American voters now constitute 7.8% of the Virginian electorate. For truly proportional representation, approximately 11 members of the General Assembly should identify as AAPI across the two houses. Today, the number stands at less than half of that. This state of play persists despite the 112% growth rate the AAPI community has posted in Virginia since 2000, and is a persistent area of concern for SALDEF and for our AAPI partners. Compounding the lack of representation is the lack of language access for AAPI Virginian voters: per APIAVote, 76% of Asian Americans in Virginia speak a language other than English at home, and 38% of that group speak English less than "very well." SALDEF is one of many signatories to a separate letter to the Commission highlighting the English-only redistricting website, lack of interpretation

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
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services for languages beyond Spanish, and systemic minimization of the testimony of Virginians using translators. These problems are not new for

the AAPI community, and it is disappointing that we continue to be overlooked.

The phenomenon of AAPI voters being ignored despite their increasing electoral influence extends beyond language access services and includes the national political apparatus, both parties and media. The AAPI vote surged across the country in 2020, with a 47% increase in voting among our communities from 2016 compared to an overall average increase of just 12%, per Targetsmart.

5 This spike in engagement came despite more than half

of AAPI registered voters in Virginia reporting little to no engagement from either political party in APIAVote’s 2018 Asian American Voter Survey. This pattern repeated itself in the 2021

Virginia gubernatorial race: major polls by respected outlets like the Washington Post grouped

5 <https://insights.targetsmart.com/the-unprecedented-impact-of-the-aapi-vote-on-the-2020-election.html>

4 <https://www.apivote.org/sites/default/files/2020-02/Virginia-2020.pdf>

It would be problematic to simply group South, East, and

Southeast Asian voters into one AAPI group, but that state of play would actually represent a major improvement over how AAPI voters are treated in the present day by political and media stakeholders across the political spectrum. Given the historical barriers outlined here, which themselves represent the very tip of an iceberg of erasure, SALDEF places even greater importance on a fair and transparent redistricting process that protects and promotes the communities of interest that define the country’s fastest growing ethnic voting bloc, and indeed all other communities of interest in Virginia.

Principles That Should Guide the Process Per the Princeton Gerrymandering Project, redistricting in Virginia must be conducted in accordance with the federal requirements of one person, one vote, and it must be compliant with the Voting Rights Act.

In addition, Article II section 6 of Virginia’s state constitution requires

that state legislative and congressional districts be compact and contiguous. Furthermore, the two houses of the Virginia Legislature passed two bills (SB7178 and HB12559) into law in 2020 that include state-level Voting Rights Act language, protections for communities of interest, and

an explicit prohibition on partisan gerrymandering when considering a map on a state-wide basis as the Commission is doing. Finally, the two bills end prison gerrymandering in Virginia by requiring prisoners be counted at their last-known residence and not their location of incarceration.

From the perspective of the Virginian AAPI community, the most critical aspects of the Commission’s mandate revolve around the preservation of communities of interest. In Article II, Section 6 of the Constitution of Virginia, this is articulated: “Districts shall provide, where

9 <https://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?ses=201&typ=bil&val=hb1255&ses=201&typ=bil&val=hb1255>

8 <https://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?ses=201&typ=bil&val=sb717&ses=201&typ=bil&val=sb717>

7 <https://gerrymander.princeton.edu/reforms/VA>

6

<https://www.nbcnews.com/think/politics-policy/virginia-election-2021-asian-voters-impact-results-rcna4348> practicable, opportunities for racial and ethnic communities to elect candidates of their choice.”

10

The Virginia code expands further: section 24.2-304.04(3) states that “no district shall be drawn that results in a denial or abridgement of the rights of any racial or language minority group to participate in the political process.”

11 Unfortunately, our analysis of most of the proposed maps

considered by the Commission suggests the current redistricting process is poised to achieve the opposite of many of these mandates.

Concerns with Maps Being Considered

It is indisputable that as NoVA’s population grows, powered by communities like ours, southwest Virginia’s population continues to shrink, particularly west of Montgomery County.

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION

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The present-day Virginia district map is imperfect, but does respect the differences inherent to the different regions of the commonwealth. In a fair and data-driven redistricting process that prioritizes communities of interest, we should therefore see maps that acknowledge and accommodate the vast differences between east and west Virginia in carving new districts that have similarly sized populations as the districts in the existing map.

We are instead seeing deliberate contortion of the Commission's mandates in order to artificially preserve parity between the two political parties' voting bases, in brazen defiance of the shifting demographics of Virginia.

13 Article II of the Virginia state constitution states that each electoral district shall be composed of contiguous and compact territory. However, in many of the maps over which the Commission deadlocked before conceding failure and sending control of the redistricting process to the Supreme Court of Virginia, the notion of compactness was used to reorient many districts from primarily north-south orientation to east-west orientation. As 13 <https://vpm.org/news/articles/26358/citizen-redistricting-map-in-virginia-drafted-with-help-from-gop> 12

https://roanoke.com/news/state-and-regional/virginia-is-growing-more-diverse-population-growth-reserved-for-urban-and-suburban-areas/article_4c7d281d-a951-5244-829c-98db828d4fd7.html

11 <https://virginiaredistricting.org/2021/Data/Public%20Hearings/082321materials.pdf>

10 <https://law.lis.virginia.gov/constitution/article2/section6/> outlined earlier, an east-west orientation in new districts allows for the dilution and cracking of AAPI communities' vote by mixing them with regions of Virginia that are vastly different ethnically and economically. Urban areas like greater Richmond and Falls Church must be kept intact and drawn into districts that are culturally similar, but several late-stage proposals by the Republican half of the Commission pointedly carved these regions into multiple districts and diluted AAPI voting power in each by mixing in heavily rural, heavily white areas of Virginia.

These districts maintained the appearance of compactness but with a fundamental shift away from the Commission's mandate to draw each district "in accordance with the requirements of federal and state laws that address racial and ethnic fairness" in Article II, Section 6 of the

Constitution. To shift the electoral map of Virginia in this fashion is to effectively punish AAPI voters for their increased civic engagement. SALDEF considers this outcome to be unacceptable. However, while the Commission attempted to conduct its work, we aligned ourselves with a coalition that seeks the same thing we do: fair representation for all Virginians.

Recommendations

We encourage the Commission to preserve the current north-south orientation of the present-day electoral maps in Virginia in all new maps produced based on the 2020 U.S. Census. As the eastern and western halves of Virginia continue to diverge in their development and demographics, the importance of allowing those communities to vote alongside people like them only gains more weight. The Commission should draw on the work of the Virginia Counts Coalition to honor its mandates to preserve AAPI voting power. The VCC unity map incorporates input from SALDEF, AAPI advocacy organizations, Latinx advocacy organizations, and Black American advocacy organizations, as well as legal and academic support. The unity maps produced by the coalition play by the same rules as the Commission. Districts are compact, contiguous, and compliant with both population size requirements and federal and state statutes mandating fairness and preservation of communities of interest. Communities of interest have weighed in directly, and the result is a map where districts are based on accurate racial/ethnic delineations, language enclaves, and locality lines. VCC's Congressional districts unity map is available [here](#). It is SALDEF's hope that the VCC unity map is carefully considered. Virginia has changed enormously in the past ten years. The new electoral maps must fairly and accurately reflect those changes. Thank you for your attention to this matter and your consideration of AAPI voting power as you draw new district lines that will impact Virginian civics for a decade. Should you have any

further questions please feel free to contact me at kiran@saldef.org, or my colleagues Navdeep Singh at navdeep.singh@saldef.org and Jyot Singh at jyot.singh@saldef.org.

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

Sincerely,
Kiran Kaur Gill
Executive Director

DATE: 11/11/2021 1:25:49 PM

Name: Ken Chasin
Stakeholder Type: Private individual
Email: kenchasin1@gmail.com
Type of comment: Comment on a community in which I do not live
Topic(s) of interest: Political neutrality

COMMENTS:

Introduction

Guiding Principle for Redrawing Virginia Election Maps

The overriding principle for redrawing Virginia’s election maps should be that it is “data driven” not partisan driven. Key demographic factors such as ethnicity, race, industry, occupation and educational levels of residents should be the driving forces in shaping any new state election maps.

Redistricting Criteria for Congressional Districts

Overview

Any new Virginia congressional district map needing to be drawn should be guided by the following criteria:

1. Incorporate the concept of communities of interest/communities of place
2. Congressional district land areas must be contiguous and be of approximate equal population
3. Allow for racial fairness
4. Don’t give a partisan edge
5. Preserve existing geographic boundaries of cities/towns and counties wherever possible
6. The land area chosen for each new congressional district map should be reflective of key demographics.

Communities of Interest/Communities of Place

The Virginia Redistricting Commission has established that one of the criteria for redrawing any Virginia election map is that the map represents a “community of interest” or “community of place”. The National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) has also established this criterion for every state in the United States. Communities of interest share similar historical, cultural, or economic interests.

However, they should not be defined by political affiliation.

Contiguous Space and Equal Populations

Per past U.S. Supreme Court rulings, each congressional district’s land area must be contiguous and each district within the same state must be of approximate equal population. In the case of Virginia, this implies that each district’s population must be within a 5% +/- range of one-eleventh of Virginia’s current population (currently at 784,201). At the present time, the following Virginia congressional districts do NOT fall within a 5% +/- range of 784,201: VA-01, VA-02, VA-05, VA-09, VA-10.

Racial fairness

The redrawn congressional district maps should not intend to or have the effect of diluting the power of minority voters or their ability to elect candidates of their choice.

No Political Party / Candidate Advantages

The newly redrawn Virginia congressional district maps must not give a partisan edge or advantage to any one political party, candidate or incumbent.

2 Author: Ken Chasin November 8, 2021

VIRGINIA CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT REDISTRICTING STRATEGY PROPOSAL

Preserve Existing Geographic Boundaries

Newly redrawn Virginia congressional district maps should avoid splitting existing city, town, or county boundaries as much as possible.

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
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Reflective of Key Demographics

Any newly drawn congressional district maps must take into consideration percentage breakdowns of the following demographics:

- a) Race/Ethnicity % Distribution (White, Black, Hispanic, Asian, etc.)
- b) Industries and Occupations
- c) Urban versus Rural population distribution
- d) Education (Enrollment/Level of Educational Achievement)
- e) Median Household Income

Rationale/Criteria for Redrawing a Congressional District Map

The overriding rationale for redrawing the map for any particular Virginia congressional district is to have its demographic attributes fall within a 95 % to 105% range of the averages for the abovementioned key demographic attributes for all of the state’s congressional districts.

DATE: 11/11/2021 1:27:16 PM

Stakeholder Type: Private individual

Type of comment: Comment on a community in which I do not live

COMMENTS:

Comment on the proposed plan 478(Virginia Counts Coalition Map). Many of the issues that are prominent in our current district map are resolved here. Specifically, these issues with district 5 and 7 making little to no sense as to why they were drawn in such an erratic scheme. The districts in northern Virginia are slightly bigger representing the population increase.

Overall, this map is one of the more accommodating options.

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Name: n/a

Stakeholder Type: Private individual

Type of comment: Comment on the community in which I live

Topic(s) of interest: Political neutrality

COMMENTS:

Compared to how the map is currently divided, this map is a step in the right direction.

Charlottesville no longer being part of district 5 and each community of interest gets a fair amount of representation. Also the expansion of district 11 makes much more sense and accurately accommodates the communities up north

DATE: 11/11/2021 1:36:24 PM

Stakeholder Type: Organization staff

Type of comment: General comment about the conduct of the Commission

COMMENTS:

Dear Commissioners,

Virginians’ fundamental right to participate in the redrawing of district lines cannot be conditioned on their ability to communicate in English or their disability status. The undersigned call upon the members of the Virginia Redistricting Commission (“Commission”) to end

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
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English-only community engagement practices and actions that impair the equal opportunities of limited-English proficient (LEP) and disabled Virginians from participating in the redistricting process. The lack of language-sensitive and accessible communications and accommodations limits the ability of the Commission to be fully transparent and inclusive of the voices of communities impacted by the redistricting process. As the Commission engages in a critical phase of its work, nearing the end of the redistricting process, we strongly urge it to quickly improve the ability of LEP and disabled Virginians and communities to understand and comment on the work of the Commission.

Specifically, we have identified the following concerns and offer recommendations that the Commission may consider to improve accessibility.

1) Maintenance of an English-only, Inaccessible Statewide Redistricting website

The Virginia redistricting website, www.virginiaredistricting.org, is one of the most important resources for community engagement--many residents rely upon this forum for information about public hearings, creating and sharing proposed maps, and understanding their rights and opportunities to champion their communities of interest. The website is an important part of the Commission's communications strategy and tool in fulfilling its statutory obligation to ensure ". . . meetings and hearings. . . [are] adequately advertised and planned to ensure the public is able to attend and participate fully." Further, by maintaining an inaccessible website, the Commission is not upholding its obligations to ensure that "[m]eetings and hearings shall be advertised in multiple languages as practicable and appropriate." Advocates have raised concerns about the Commission's plans to conduct outreach to ensure that LEP persons and persons with disabilities are able to fully participate and be aware of the Commission's meetings. Similarly, advocates raised concerns about the accessibility of the website and the advertising of Commission meetings in March, which the Commission has only taken limited action to rectify.

Unfortunately, the only attempt at language inclusion on the website demonstrates the failure of the Commission to implement basic translations to connect LEP Virginians with existing language access resources. The website advertises the availability of individuals to request a link to listen to a Spanish interpretation via email. However, the information about the availability is posted in English only: "Public Meetings Now Being Translated in Spanish LIVE! Email varedistricting2021@gmail.com to receive a link to listen to in Spanish!"

The undersigned ask that the Commission take immediate steps to ensure the accessibility of the website for disabled Virginians. We further ask that the Commission, at minimum, make the website available in the languages listed below (see infra "Recommendations"). We note that Google translations are not comprehensible and linguistically sensitive, and as such are not sufficient.

2) Barriers to interpretation services at public hearings

The Commission's decision to announce the availability of Spanish-language interpretation only at the beginning of public hearings in English prevents Spanish-dominant Virginians from receiving meaningful notification of this existing service. But Spanish is not the only language requiring interpretation. There are other language-minority communities in Virginia with high LEP rates, including, for example, Korean, Vietnamese, and Arabic-speaking communities. Moreover, some Virginians with disabilities are also excluded from participation unless American Sign Language interpretation is available.

As referenced above, individuals who require assistance, whether because of language barriers or disability, face needless impediments in requesting services so they may meaningfully participate in the Commission's meetings. The undersigned ask that the Commission immediately make available interpreters in the languages listed below (see infra "Recommendations") as well as American Sign Language. We also ask that these services be advertised in-language and in an accessible manner prior to public hearings and meetings as well as the beginning of public hearings and meetings.

3) Unequal time for the voices of LEP Virginians

LEP Virginians' voices are as valuable to the redistricting process as English-dominant Virginians' voices, yet the Commission has been treating them unequally. The undersigned have

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

observed that the Commission only gives one additional minute to testifying Virginians using translators. This prevents equal airtime to these community members and undermines the ability of the Commission to fairly evaluate the concerns, ideas, and other contributions of all Virginians. Further, the use of allotted time limits for both testimony and translation appears to run counter to the Commission’s own rules to provide each speaker with a maximum of three minutes of time to testify.

6 LEP Virginians are not allowed to utilize the full time they are allocated unlike their English proficient peers because they are required to squeeze in time for translations into those same three minutes.

Disturbingly, the Commission provided in an email that: “Time limits will be at the discretion of the commissioner presiding over the hearing.” This runs counter to the Commission’s own rules and violates the principle of equal time for all persons providing testimony.

The Commission has been meeting since January 2021 and only began to offer live interpretation in October 2021. This means that non-English speakers were effectively barred 6 Virginia Redistricting Commission, Virginia Redistricting Commission Public Participation Guidelines, July 17, 2021, available at <https://virginiaredistricting.org/2021/PublicParticipationGuidelines.pdf>.

3
from participating in the Commission’s public meetings or providing live testimony for ten months, an unacceptable delay.

The Commission must uphold its duties to established and growing LEP communities in Virginia during the redistricting process. Even before expanded designations occur pursuant to Section 203 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 based on 2020 census data, Korean, Spanish, and Vietnamese dominant Virginians in Fairfax County have enjoyed some in-language voting services

7
. Further, many languages not covered by the Voting Rights Act are widely used throughout the Commonwealth, such as Arabic and Amharic. Similarly, Spanish-dominant Virginians educated in Puerto Rico have a right to in-language voting services pursuant to Section 4(e) of the Voting Rights Act. The fact that these same Virginians encounter the Commission’s English-only website and unreasonable time limits on presenting testimony highlights the Commission’s particular failings to LEP Virginians. These deficiencies are also antithetical to the Commonwealth’s own commitments to LEP residents. Further, the Commission’s public outreach has fallen plainly short of its statutory mandate: namely, that “[m]eetings and hearings shall be advertised in multiple languages as practicable and appropriate.” It is abundantly practicable and appropriate for this Commission to advertise its meetings and hearings in multiple languages.

We call upon the Commission to prioritize addressing LEP Virginians’ unequal burden in accessing the redistricting process.

Recommendations

The Commission has been aware of the need to provide language accessible services since it was constituted. The operating statute encourages the Commission to adopt language inclusive practices.

8 Advocates, including signatories to this letter, brought language access needs to the Commission’s attention in January 2021 and continued to raise concerns with the Commission.

9
Before the Commission concludes its work and presents a plan to the General Assembly, it must take immediate action to remedy the lack of active outreach to and inclusion of the voices and perspectives of LEP Virginians. There are a number of best practices the Commission can engage in to be inclusive of LEP Virginians and other communities of interest.

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

Many of these practices are already implemented by other agencies throughout the Commonwealth and by other states utilizing redistricting commissions.

9 Corbett, supra.

8 Va. Code §§ 30-391 to -400.

7 Under current designations, Fairfax County is a covered jurisdiction under Section 203 of the Voting Rights Act for Spanish and Vietnamese.

4

We recommend, at a minimum:

- All materials and communications should be translated into, at least, the most spoken languages in the Commonwealth: Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese, Chinese (includes Mandarin and Cantonese), Hindi, Arabic, Farsi, and Amharic.

10

- The website should be accessible and translated into multiple languages, through the use of a human reviewed translation service. We caution against the use of technology based translation services, such as Google Translate, as they often do not accurately translate material.

- The Commission should use the live multilingual translation feature during all virtual meetings for the entirety of the meeting.

11

- The Commission should immediately begin advertising its meetings and hearings through posts on its website, social media, and engagement with ethnic press in multiple languages.

- The Commission promotes the ability to request translation services in language rather than requiring the request to be made in English. The advertisement should be placed on the website in available languages.

- As part of the process to sign up to speak at a hearing, the Commission should offer an option to indicate at that time if they need language assistance and what the assistance would be. This would allow the Commission to provide targeted assistance to public speakers. The interpretation should be available throughout the meeting and not solely during the speaker's testimony.

- When holding hearings in areas with large language access needs, the Commission should be prepared to offer language assistance in the languages spoken in the area.

- Time utilized for translation and interpretation should not be counted against the time allocated to an individual to provide testimony.

The undersigned remain available to discuss these issues further and provide their expertise with language minority and disability communities.

Sincerely,

DATE: 11/11/2021 1:37:07 PM

Name: Jim Fox

Stakeholder Type: Private individual

Email: coachjimfox@cox.net

Type of comment: General comment about the conduct of the Commission

COMMENTS:

Thank you for your public service and your interest in redistricting. I thought you might be interested in the updated "Guide to Fair Maps," written for citizens, commissioners and legislators. This Guide covers issues such as: Why Fair Maps are so important to preserve our representative democracy; A straightforward test for gerrymandering; and A procedure to eradicate gerrymandering while achieving other desired redistricting criteria.

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION

PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED

November 19, 2021

<https://preprints.apsanet.org/engage/apsa/article-details/614c754539ef6a9cf8274171> (more than 1950 views and 1600 downloads on the American Political Science Assoc. Preprints Page.)

DATE: 10/15/2021 3:30:49 PM

Name: Edward Strickler

Stakeholder Type: Private individual

Email: edwardnvirginia@hotmail.com

Type of comment: General comment about the conduct of the Commission

COMMENTS:

Dear Redistricting Commission:

Once again we the people see politically partisan arrogance infecting and corrupting your public service which - by Virginia Code! - MUST NOT BE politically partisan! We the people authorized and required you - by law! - to avoid the arrogant political partisanship that we are seeing in plain view. Why are you allowing this corruption or your sworn purpose? Why are you not requiring one another to meet the standards authorized and required by law, and by we the people?

As reported widely we see the partisan ignorance and arrogance of metro area northern Virginia legislators dictating their political preferences to rural Virginians, including Southside Virginians (where I am a resident and voter):

"I want to be the bad guy, and everyone can yell at me online for being too partisan, but I just don't feel like wasting time and beating around the bush," Simon said

<https://cardinalnews.org/2021/10/14/how-the-5th-6th-and-9th-might-change/>

Sen. George Barker of Fairfax, voiced a similar concern, noting that the 5th district pushes significantly into another increasingly Democratic Richmond suburb, Chesterfield County. Large parts of neighboring Henrico and Chesterfield are currently part of the 7th District, which is represented by Democratic Rep. Abigail Spanberger.

<https://www.virginiamercury.com/2021/10/14/virginia-redistricting-commission-consultants-told-to-compromise-on-congressional-maps/>

We the people require you

- first, to follow the law
- next, to follow your own guidance (districts that are contiguous, avoiding unnecessary divisions of jurisdictions, preserving as much as possible areas with shared social, cultural and economic interests (NOT political identities of interests!));
- then, to be respectful and humble in your public service, not arrogant, ignorant, and mean-spirited. A common sense approach that acknowledges that the lines you draw will never be perfect but must be morally consonant with the law, with your own guidance, and with mutual respect.

This is the common sense that many Virginians' still have that we require of you.

We see this represented in statements like this:

"If we want to have compact, logical districts, something's got to give," Harrell, who is from South Boston, argued.

"And we can't let a couple people saying we shouldn't be on one side of a mountain or the other. That's fairly irrelevant in terms of these federal maps because we are so far away from one another in sparsely populated parts of the state."

<https://www.wvtf.org/news/2021-10-14/draft-congressional-maps-include-big-changes-for-central-and-western-virginia>

Exactly so! Much of rural Virginia is sparsely populated, where we are far apart. And what else are we far apart from? Far apart from a hospital for emergency care, a specialty clinic for our medical needs and needs of our children. Metro Virginians do not have to travel an hour or more, perhaps two hours, to get to speciality care that they need. Far apart from reaching public transportation that can take us to the hospital or clinic. Far apart from lifelong learning centers to help our children and neighbors and others to acquire and sustain and build skills to be successful. Far away from the growing centers of 21st century jobs, with 21st century technologies (faster more reliable Broadband, 5G networks, etc), research universities and centers, etc. There are physical distances across rural Virginia; and other dis-tances - dis-advantages, dis-enfranchisement, dis-parities - when compared to most

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION

PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED

November 19, 2021

metro Virginia areas and to the Virginia population overall. And in some rural areas/regions of Virginia there are other 'distances/disparities'.

For example, which counties of Virginia have the largest proportions of Black-identified residents? : Southside, Middle Peninsula/Northern Neck, and Eastern Shore. Not northern Virginia.

<https://www.indexmundi.com/facts/united-states/quick-facts/virginia/black-population-percentage#map> Racial equity, therefore, requires that these rural areas/regions remain intact.

As the proposed two maps (Republican and Democratic) appear to do.

Perhaps Commissioners would benefit from a recent publication at Professor Sabato's website:

<https://centerforpolitics.org/crystalball/articles/how-democrats-are-losing-the-war-for-counties/>

How Democrats Are Losing the War for Counties – Sabato's Crystal Ball

Louis Jacobson is a Senior Columnist for Sabato's Crystal Ball. He is also the senior correspondent at the fact-checking website PolitiFact and is senior author of the Almanac of American Politics 2022. He was senior author of the Almanac's 2016, 2018, and 2020 editions and a contributing writer for the 2000 and 2004 editions.

centerforpolitics.org

As Democratic voters are concentrating more and more in metro areas, nationally, more and more counties are increasingly not voting for Democratic candidates. BUT this trend is different in Virginia:

"In Virginia, Gore won 31 counties (or independent city equivalents under Virginia's system) while Biden won 46. Virginia is among the three states - along with California and Colorado - where more counties are voting for Democratic candidates."

So, it is puzzling why Democratic partisanship on the Commission speaks so ignorantly and toxically about the relationships of rural areas/counties to metro areas. As I've noted, many metro area commenters in public forums spoke toxically of adjacent rural communities, referring to them as inferior intellectually, behaviorally and morally. These comments should be flagged by the Commission as they should also flag comments that constructed 'communities of interest' as political identifies, affiliations, and interests, which the law guiding the Commission's work DOES NOT ALLOW!

The toxic partisan representations of rural Virginia areas by many metro Virginia commenters - and apparently some Commissioners - is willfully and arrogantly ignorant of ACTUAL EXISTING mutual interests across metro and rural jurisdictions in such essential matters of human life and thriving, social assets and governance, at water systems: clean safe drinking water in metro areas IS NOT POSSIBLE without adjacent rural areas! -

<http://www.virginiaplaces.org/watersheds/drinkwater.html>

waste systems: how many Virginia metro areas keep their waste in city limits? or do they instead - and for many decades already! - DUMP IN RURAL AREAS? -<http://www.virginiaplaces.org/waste/landfill.html>

and energy systems: - where are the utility-scale solar production sites, where are the utility-scale wind production sites, and where is nuclear production, in Virginia: in city limits? in suburban counties? Go ahead, you can answer honestly: NO! NOT in metro areas! Instead in RURAL AREAS! (<http://www.virginiaplaces.org/energy/solar.html>) .

WHERE ALSO, FOR MANY DECADES, metro areas who benefited from decades of mountaintop removal, strip and pit mines, ash mountains, toxic pools, etc got their energy and left their waste. And called it a rural area problem, related to the intellectual, behavioral, and moral deficiencies of rural people, who were/are so inferior to metro area self-idealizations that they must be declared 'not like us' (as if a different - and inferior - species).

So, why are metro area Virginians representing rural area Virginians so ignorantly, arrogantly, and toxically!?

Apparently, in the redistricting process, purely for politically partisan power mongering! WHICH IS NOT ALLOWED UNDER VIRGINIA LAW!

DO SOMETHING ABOUT THIS, please!

Thank you,

Edward Strickler

DATE: 10/15/2021 9:17:49 AM

Name: Laura West

Stakeholder Type: Private individual

Email: yacks95014@icloud.com

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

Type of comment: General comment about the conduct of the Commission
Topic(s) of interest: Princeton Gerrymandering Project

COMMENTS:

Hello! Pls consider using the Princeton Gerrymandering Project's input as you work to finalize your maps. Project staff think you're close and they provide a strategy for finalizing both HOD and Senate maps. See here or attached file: https://909e3273-9fa0-41a6-8951-74ae885ec0e2.filesusr.com/ugd/13f61a_842596f6dec94010ae614966621809cf.pdf
Thank you for your consideration, and thank you for your very hard work as members of the first Redistricting Committee.
Regards, Laura West

DATE: 10/15/2021 9:14:09 AM
Name: Pete Costigan
Stakeholder Type: Private individual
Email: ph.costigan@hotmail.com
Type of comment: Comment on a map
Map: Map #181 B5 Statewide HOD (10-20-21)

COMMENTS:

Madam Co-chair:
When I spoke at the Oct 6th virtual meeting on the central region (Mr. Kumar chaired that meeting), I and several others, referencing HOD map B5, proposed taking Greene County out of HOD district 69 with Rockingham and Page counties and including it in HOD district 81 with Albemarle County. I also proposed that the northeast corner of Augusta County be included in HOD district 69 in place of Greene County and taken out of HOD district 81 where it was previously with Albemarle County.
As I listened to the Commission's meeting this morning, I note that HOD map B7 was added to the maps page yesterday, Oct 7. Map B7 makes the changes above that I and others proposed on the 6th.
I know or assume that many commissioners have not yet reviewed this map or may not even know it exists. However, since it is the most current, I wonder if, in the interests of time, it makes sense to use it as a starting point for your discussions rather than HOD B5. Thank you. Pete Costigan.

DATE: 10/15/2021 9:10:29 AM
Name: Christopher Murphy
Stakeholder Type: Private individual
Email: chris@murphysbooks.net
Type of comment: General comment about the conduct of the Commission
Topic(s) of interest: Fairest

COMMENTS:

I saw the issues being had on the Redistricting Commission, and I was wondering if the commission had considered a variation on the "I cut, you choose" solution to deal with conflicting interests. The variation is, "I cut, you freeze" where the map is drawn by one party, and the other party locks one district, then the party that just locked the district redraws the map minus the locked district and the other party locks the next district, and so on...
This variation has been computer modeled and compared to other systems and it seems to get the "fairest" results. There may be strategies for also getting minority majority districts.
You may want to reach out to Ariel D. Procaccia and Wesley Pegden on the subject.

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION

PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED

November 19, 2021

Wesley Pegden, an associate professor of mathematical sciences at Carnegie Mellon University, appeared as an expert witness in the gerrymandering case in Pennsylvania. Ariel D. Procaccia is an associate professor of computer science at Carnegie Mellon University.

Here is an opinion piece on the concept...

https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/theres-another-way-to-solve-gerrymandering-its-as-simple-as-cake/2018/02/15/69e47508-0531-11e8-94e8-e8b8600ade23_story.html

DATE: 10/15/2021 9:09:21 AM

Name: Edward Strickler

Stakeholder Type: Private individual

Email: edwardnvirginia@hotmail.com

Type of comment: General comment about the conduct of the Commission

Topic(s) of interest: Communities of interest

Community of interest description: • 'contiguous'. Many or most Virginia metro areas are contiguous with one of more rural areas. BUT metro area commenters frequently discussed their adjacent rural communities as foreigners, almost as if a different species, who were (implicitly or explici

COMMENTS:

Dear Commissioners:

Keep working.

That is your sworn public service. Quitters - who are not quitting because of their own or family illness or crisis - are quitting on the public - all of us in the Commonwealth - that they claim to 'serve', contrary to their oath and commitment to serve faithfully. As I believe one of the Commissioners said in yesterday's meeting there is a moral dimension to your work: that moral dimension involves not to quit your public service until a higher authority (the Constitution, the Virginia Supreme Court, etc) tells you to quit or you reach the conclusion that you can reach. It is incorrect to claim - as many 'progressive' media appear to be doing - that your morass is due to 'conservative' partisanship and racist thinking. There has been that, sad to say, but, I believe also, sad to say, because of 'progressives' pushing their own racist thinking and tribalist partisanship, frequently cloaked in prejudicial constructions of 'communities of interest'.

I tried this week to step in with comments that might help by re-focusing your lens on equity among metro and rural areas that are part of any 'community of SHARED interests, shared benefits and burdens of Constitutional governance! I heard too many times metro area commenters unwilling to consider SHARED interests other than shared politically partisan interests. Shame on them. But also shame on the Commission for not calling it out. You will need to answer for allowing commenters to abuse the meaning given by Virginia Code, and in common morality, of 'communities of interest'. Commenters transgressed the specific definition cited at your Commission's website (

<https://www.virginiaredistricting.org/2021/Data/Ref/2021%20Redistricting%20Guidelines%20and%20Criteria%208-19-2021.pdf>). 'Communities of interests' must be

- 'contiguous'. Many or most Virginia metro areas are contiguous with one of more rural areas. BUT metro area commenters frequently discussed their adjacent rural communities as foreigners, almost as if a different species, who were (implicitly or explicitly) inferior intellectually, behaviorally and morally, and thereby, to the metro area commenters, incompatible, or unworthy of association. Quite a display of 'progressive' tribalist high dudgeon 'drag' ("Whatever you proclaim as your identity here in the material realm is also your drag", RuPaul).
- 'avoiding unnecessary divisions of those subdivisions' (common sense & common morality for good government)
- 'geographically defined group of people living in an area who share similar social, cultural, and economic interests shall be maintained to the extent possible'. Many Virginia metro areas - as described below - are dependent upon water resources, waste streams, food and agricultural production, and energy production that are in adjacent/contiguous rural areas, and most metro areas depend on labor markets coming in from rural areas (especially to do lots of the dirty dangerous work). YET I did not hear metro area commenters discuss these ESSENTIAL 'social, cultural and economic interests'! It was as if 'progressives' had taken a holiday from their

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

'progressive' ideals about diversity, equity and inclusiveness! And, rather, for the purposes of redistricting, become possessed by anti-ecological, anti-scientific, anti-working class, anti-'green' tribal spirits ... for the sake of political partisanship ... which of course, Virginia Code says they must not be:

“For purposes of this subdivision, a ‘community of interest’ means a neighborhood or any geographically defined group of people living in an area who share similar social, cultural, and economic interests. A ‘community of interest’ does not include a community based upon political affiliation or relationship with a political party, elected official, or candidate for office.” Va. Code Ann. § 24.2-304.04(5).” [emphasis added]

The good people of the Commonwealth - by a sound majority - informed you what to do. The Code of Virginia was/is a sufficient guide. And you had/have the high privilege of serving the public in this important matter. You failed, for a time. But Keep Working.

Thank you,
Edward Strickler

DATE: 10/15/2021 9:02:05 AM

Name: Christina Biebesheimer
Stakeholder Type: Private individual
Email: cbieb@verizon.net
Type of comment: General comment about the conduct of the Commission
Topic(s) of interest: fairly, objectively drawn maps

COMMENTS:

Dear Committee members,
For heaven sakes get your act together and agree on a process by which to decide on Virginia's new electoral districts. It is an embarrassment that you have failed to produce a new map in the timeframe given you. The voters of this Commonwealth made it very clear that we want fairly, objectively drawn maps. If your partisan make-up means you cannot do that, then hire an objective, professional, neutral firm that can do it and GET IT DONE. Don't disgrace yourselves by giving up and handing this over to the courts.

Sincerely,
Christina Biebesheimer
cbieb@verizon.net

DATE: 10/15/2021 9:00:51 AM

Name: Michael FitzGeorge
Stakeholder Type: Private individual
Email: mfitzgeorge@comcast.net
Type of comment: General comment about the conduct of the Commission
Topic(s) of interest: incumbents

COMMENTS:

The impasse that the commission seems to have reached is the very, partisan, issue that I believe I and other voters hoped would be addressed by this commission.
Partisan considerations of whichever party representatives are affected needs to be immaterial to the redistricting. I happen to vote Democrat, but I want to be in a position to consider a candidate from the Republicans, but that isn't going to happen when candidates have to be partisan adherents instead of serving the needs of constituents. Please give us districts which are compact and make sense to voters rather than the incumbents who hope to be elected.

Voting doesn't work if the people being elected have no fear that their actions can be judged by the people they affect.

Michael FitzGeorge

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

DATE: 10/15/2021 8:58:49 AM

Name: Sidney Johnson
Stakeholder Type: Private individual
Email: sidneyjohnson3@verizon.net
Type of comment: General comment about the conduct of the Commission
Topic(s) of interest: Voting rights and political participation

COMMENTS:

Dear Members of the Commission,
Your first mistake was hiring two sets of lawyers, each aligned with one of the major parties. The next one was to have 2 different organizations, one oriented to Democrats and one to Republicans, design two different state district maps that you cannot now reconcile because you are looking out only for the interests of the parties. You should follow the example your own competition for the students of Virginia's universities who, in 2011, took up the challenge to produce fair maps using appropriate software. You can google the results; there are several entries. You will find that the students could not always comply with all of the requirements, compactness, contiguity, communities of interest, and roughly equal populations in addition to complying with the Voting Rights Act and county boundaries, but they did show what could be done by ignoring partisan interests. The designs were not perfect, but they showed what could be done.
The distribution of the population has changed since 2011, but the principles of design have not. You can use that software, updated as necessary, to make a third draft, ignoring the interests of the parties, as the students did in one of their competitions. It is particularly important to honor the spirit of the Voting Rights Act. Putting African-American voters in one district so that you can have more than one district dominated by those of European descent (as Speaker Howell tried to do on Martin Luther King Day several years ago) does not honor that spirit. Please take this last chance to justify the faith of those who voted in favor of redistricting and earn the respect of those who did not.
Yours sincerely,
Sidney Johnson

DATE: 10/15/2021 8:45:03 AM

Name: Pamela Evans
Stakeholder Type: Private individual
Email: pamela.evans@reevanslaw.com
Type of comment: General comment about the conduct of the Commission

COMMENTS:

Fair redistricting is overwhelmingly desired by Virginians. Those blocking the process need to remember they represent the VOTERS, not their own political interests! We are paying attention.
Pamela Evans

DATE: 10/10/2021 10:17:40 PM

Name: Chris DeRosa
Stakeholder Type: Private individual
Email: chris7307@gmail.com
Type of comment: General comment about the conduct of the Commission
Topic(s) of interest: Taxpayer funds

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION

PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED

November 19, 2021

COMMENTS:

As a Virginia taxpayer who has been watching every meeting and hearing of the Commission, and who has taken great interest and had such high hopes for fair maps, I am very concerned about the hundreds of thousands (or millions?) of dollars that have been paid to lawyers, map drawers and communications "experts". Thus far, all their efforts have led to a disappointing failure. Where can I find an accounting of the funds that have been disbursed to these entities?

DATE: 10/8/2021 10:52:44 AM

Name: Michaela Daniel
Stakeholder Type: Organization staff
Organization: Representable
Email: msdaniel@princeton.edu
Type of comment: General comment about the conduct of the Commission
Topic(s) of interest: Communities of interest

COMMENTS:

My name is Michaela Daniel and I am the Director of Outreach and Partnerships for Representable. Today, I am submitting to you all 162 Community of Interest submissions to Representable.org from the state of Virginia. These maps were collected, in large part, through the outreach efforts of OneVirginia2021, the National Black Nonpartisan Redistricting Organization, and the League of Women Voters Virginia.

Representable is a free website which allows anyone to map their Community of Interest (COI) and send it to the commission in multiple formats. Our tool was built in partnership with the Princeton Gerrymandering Project, whose report card you are familiar with. We recommend that you use these submissions to create maps that respect the interests and concerns of the COIs. We have attached a report which outlines how district plans can be analyzed through the lens of Communities of Interest.

I have attached the submissions as a GeoJSON file. However, you can go to our website right now and see all submitted Communities of Interest on one state page. Here is the link to the page, which is available to the public: representable.org/map/va

DATE: 10/8/2021 10:51:23 AM

Name: Helen L. Brewer
Stakeholder Type: Organization staff
Organization: Princeton Gerrymandering Project
Email: hlbrewer@princeton.edu
Locality: n/a
Type of comment: General comment about the conduct of the Commission
Topic(s) of interest: Political neutrality

COMMENTS:

On behalf of the Princeton Gerrymandering Project, I wanted to provide the Virginia Redistricting Commission with the attached memorandum, which includes an updated analysis of some of the Commission's recent House of Delegates and State Senate draft maps. The memo also discusses potential routes to compromise as you continue working to develop final consensus maps. You can also find the memorandum at this link (https://909e3273-9fa0-41a6-8951-74ae885ec0e2.filesusr.com/ugd/13f61a_842596f6dec94010ae614966621809cf.pdf). We appreciate your attention to our previous comments on your earlier draft maps and your continued commitment to a public, transparent mapmaking process as you have developed subsequent drafts. Please feel free to reach out to myself or any member of our team here at PGP if you have any questions about our analysis. Have a great night!

DATE: 10/8/2021 10:22:00 AM

Name: Frank Tooper

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

Stakeholder Type: Private individual
Email: fet38052@verizon.net
Type of comment: General comment about the conduct of the Commission
Topic(s) of interest: Efforts being put forth on the maps

COMMENTS:

If the Washington Post oped is correct, and the Commission won't produce a single agreed-on map, then shame on all participants (lawyers and Commissioners).
If you won't do the task, then please refund all expenses wasted on this folly.
As my teenage grandson put it, "What a bunch of losers". I guess that sums it up.

DATE: 10/7/2021 11:02:32 PM
Name: Chris DeRosa
Stakeholder Type: Private individual
Email: chris7307@gmail.com
Type of comment: General comment about the conduct of the Commission

COMMENTS:

There is no sign up link for those who would like to make a comment at the Oct 8 or 9 Commission meeting.

DATE: 10/5/2021 6:31:12 PM
Name: Bill Millhouser
Stakeholder Type: Private individual
Email: bmillhouser2010@cox.net
Type of comment: General comment about the conduct of the Commission

COMMENTS:

The public needs to see one map for each chamber --- NO to two maps or a partial maps!!!

DATE: 10/5/2021 6:28:04 PM
Name: Linda Boatman
Stakeholder Type: Private individual
Email: lsbpainter@gmail.com
Type of comment: General comment about the conduct of the Commission
Topic(s) of interest: Political neutrality

COMMENTS:

Please consider if we are putting two maps out, can we Please start with the HOD maps: the Republican drawn maps and the Democrat drawn maps.

DATE: 10/5/2021 11:18:05 AM
Name: Elaine Braverman
Stakeholder Type: Private individual
Organization: Age Group
Email: elaine_braverman@msn.com
Type of comment: Technology issue
Topic(s) of interest: public input

COMMENTS:

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

For the second time, public comments I submitted are not listed in the Public Comments section. If this has happened twice to one individual, how many other comments have gone by the wayside? It seems quite late in the process to continue to have this problem.

DATE: 9-22-21

Name: C. Todd Gilbert House Republican Leader

Stakeholder Type: Elected official

Email: DelTGilbert@house.virginia.gov

COMMENTS:

VIA EMAIL Dear Commissioners: I have continued to observe the meetings of the Virginia Redistricting Commission. It appears that some members of the Commission are preparing to vote on maps or parts of maps, or specific changes to maps. I have the following observations. The "Election Results" information provided by the Commission is incomplete/inaccurate, and is therefore insufficient for the Commission to comply with its map-drawing criteria. While the data includes those voters who voted at their precincts, it does not include the voters (absentee or in person) who had their votes counted at the "central absentee" precinct. In addition to being uncounted, these votes had different candidate preferences and may have had different racial makeups than the non-central absentee precincts, which means the Commission's results (which exclude these voters) are inaccurate. This discrepancy is most obvious in the 2020 election, which we gather is being discarded from the analysis. However, it is also statistically significant in the other listed years. In the immediately preceding statewide election, the 2018 Senate race, the Commission precinct data tallied an overall voter total of 2,984,202, while the State Board of Elections website totaled 3,351,757. Omitting the central absentee (and write in voters) results in the Commission removing 367,555 SBE voters from its analysis. The Commission's removal of these voters also changes the percentages received by the candidates. Using the Commission figures, Tim Kaine received 56.1% of the total vote, while Corey Stewart received 42.0%, for a difference of 14.1%. Using the State Board figures, Kaine received 57.0% of the vote to 41.0% for Stewart, for a difference of 16%. To underline the impact of omitting the central absentee voters, the Redistricting Commission vote totals would appear to show that Mark Obenshain won the 2013 Attorney General's race by a total of 1,032,348 to 1,018,431. (The State Board figures have the final figures at 1,103,777 Herring to 1,103,612 Obenshain.) Omitting these voters is not legally harmless, as it renders any district-by-district historical election comparisons inaccurate. The removal of central absentee voters directly impacts the Commission's racially polarized voting (RPV) analysis, which depends on comparisons of district-by-district election results. It is not clear if or how the results from the central absentee precincts were used in Professor Palmer's presentation/data, but if these central absentee voters were excluded from his numbers, that would render his analysis inaccurate. Omitting these central absentee voters also directly impacts any Commission analysis to determine whether a proposed map meets the "political neutrality" criteria. Criteria #8 states that "A map of districts shall not, when considered on a statewide basis, unduly favor or disfavor any political party." Comparing a map with statewide results requires the Commission to have district-by-district results for comparison, as otherwise it omits voters and does not include them in the "statewide basis" required by the criteria. This analysis simply cannot be performed accurately without including the central absentee voters. While there might be various methods for including these voters, it is clear that they must be included if a Commission map is to meet the redistricting criteria. Sincerely, C. Todd Gilbert House Republican Leader

DATE: 9/28/2021 3:40:03 PM

Name: Ken Chasin

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

Stakeholder Type: Private individual
Email: kenchasin1@gmail.com
Locality: 5th District
Type of comment: General comment about the conduct of the Commission
Topic(s) of interest: Population equality, Political neutrality

COMMENTS:

Virginia's fifth congressional district is Virginia's largest U.S. congressional district with an area of 10,181.03 square miles (26,368.7 km²) and is larger in area than six US states (Vermont, New Jersey, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Delaware, and New Hampshire). The 5th District contains counties located in the Piedmont and Blue Ridge Region stretching vertically across the state from the Virginia-North Carolina Border going 250 miles up to Fauquier County in Northern Virginia, West of Washington DC. The population of the district as of 2019 was 735,766. This equates to 72 residents per square mile. Its voter distribution is 64.7% rural and 35.3% urban. This voter distribution over represents the rural vote which almost invariably votes conservative or Republican. This congressional district must and needs to be redrawn to reduce its square miles and result in a most equitable voter distribution among rural and urban voters.

DATE: 9/28/2021 3:46:40 PM
Name: Edwin C. Taylor Jr.
Stakeholder Type: Private individual
Email: joycenedtaylor@aol.com
Type of comment: General comment about the conduct of the Commission
Topic(s) of interest: Politicians on commission

COMMENTS:

Morning Ladies and Gentlemen: Please kick all the politicians off the committee. Their only interest is keeping their Damn PARTY in power, not what is in the best interest of the COMMONWEALTH and PEOPLE. Tell the politicians that they have lost my vote and other people's votes for their actions. We the PEOPLE are slowly, but surely not voting for any candidates who have served more than two terms. Thanks, from a disgruntled citizen and voter.

DATE: 9/28/2021 5:14:16 PM
Name: Jerry Teplitz
Stakeholder Type: Private individual
Email: Jerry@teplitz.com
Type of comment: General comment about the conduct of the Commission
Topic(s) of interest: Political neutrality

COMMENTS:

You need to create maps that are more nonpartisan than the Democratic and Republic leaning maps. That's what the voter's wanted in passing the referendum!

DATE: 9/24/2021 11:11:28 AM
Name: Fran Larkins
Stakeholder Type: Private individual
Email: franlarkins40@gmail.com
REGION: NA

COMMENT:

What happened below to maps 100-103?

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

DATE SENT: 9/20/2021 3:37:00 PM
EMAIL: angelalynn54@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: The Final Draw

COMMENT:

Dear Redistricting Committee Members

Back in 2015 I ran for the House of Delegate with ending Gerrymandering as part of my platform. I was advised to drop the gerrymandering issue because few voters knew about it or understood it and besides it had been a political tool that wasn't going to go away.

I worked for 1Va2021 as a public speaker educating the public and advocated for a nonpartisan independent commission so we could bring trust and confidence back to our electoral process.

So here you are now holding the map drawing tools to be as nonpartisan and independent of political or power brokers as possible.

I applaud your efforts and feel that the last lap maybe the finish of many years of work for a good outcome. That outcome can be nothing short of having delivered the most unbiased , nonpartisan expert finish.

We ask that the final maps give certain considerations to the populations that have been robbed of a voice and a fair vote of the cities in the Western part of the Commonwealth and not be swayed by your own political views but keep in mind we are capable of handing over the final draw to the most unbiased professional vote and leave the dust of broken promises and half truths in the past by keeping politics bridled by delivering the product the people voted for in fair, compact and contiguous political districts.

If possible forget the district has a political leaning today and that may change tomorrow.

We ask your diligence to bring a map that doesn't look at the scoreboard but the blindness of a just outcome with the most unbiased source.

You are almost there.

Thank you

Angela Lynn

DATE SENT: 9/20/2021 1:21:00 PM
EMAIL: jsmith@dls.virginia.gov
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Fwd_ Message from _RNP2BCD30_

COMMENT:

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Claire Waters <cwaters@dls.virginia.gov>

Date: Mon, Sep 20, 2021 at 12:58 PM

Subject: Fwd: Message from "RNP2BCD30"

To: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>

Hi Julie,

Here are public comments that were sent via snail mail. They can go in general comments.

Thanks!

Claire L. Waters, SHRM-CP

Human Resources Officer

Division of Legislative Services

Pocahontas Building

900 E. Main Street, 11th floor

Richmond, VA 23219

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

(804) 698-1889
cwaters@dls.virginia.gov
----- Forwarded message -----
From: <RICOH6001@dls.virginia.gov>
Date: Mon, Sep 20, 2021 at 12:56 PM
Subject: Message from "RNP2BCD30"
To: Claire <cwaters@dls.virginia.gov>
This E-mail was sent from "RNP2BCD30" (Aficio MP 6001).
Scan Date: 09.20.2021 12:10:53 (-0400)
Queries to: RICOH6001@dls.virginia.gov

DATE SENT: 9/18/2021 1:00:00 PM
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Fwd_ public letter to Commissioners

COMMENT:
----- Forwarded message -----
From: Mark Sickles <marksickles@gmail.com>
Date: Fri, Sep 17, 2021 at 11:02 AM
Subject: public letter to Commissioners
To: Meg Lamb <mlamb@dls.virginia.gov>
Cc: Andrew Millin <andrew@marksickles.com>
Ms Lamb,
I am putting this public letter into the U.S. Mail, but please pass along to the appropriate individuals and commissioners as needed. I understand important work is underway today and possibly over the weekend. I thank you for your service.
Mark Sickles
(703) 608-2837
--
Meg Lamb
Manager, General Laws, Administration & Elections
Senior Attorney, Privileges & Elections
Division of Legislative Services
900 East Main Street
Pocahontas Building, 8th Floor
Richmond, VA 23219
(804) 698-1822

DATE SENT: 9/18/2021 12:55:00 PM
NAME: Name: Charles W Nuttycombe, III
EMAIL: Email: charles@canalysis.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Subject: Map Proposals

COMMENT:
Comment: Here are links to compact maps I have drawn that are VRA compliant, have communities of interest together, and promote competition. In my view, the commission's maps outside of Northern Virginia are horrendous for the most part, and I also still have issues with some parts in Northern Virginia. Please consider

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

these maps. State Senate: <https://davesredistricting.org/maps#viewmap::dea5c1df-4ece-4cdc-a55f-ab96c03599b6>
House of Delegates: <https://davesredistricting.org/maps#viewmap::8d6a1048-8083-44ab-b804-e6e2d6d2ca5e>

DATE SENT: 9/15/2021 4:59:00 PM
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Letter from citizen

COMMENT:

Thanks!
Virginia Redistricting Support Staff
Division of Legislative Services
On Wed, Sep 15, 2021 at 4:40 PM Liz White <liz.white@onevirginia2021.org> wrote:
I think this was meant for the Commission and wanted to pass it along.
Liz
Liz White, Executive Director
OneVirginia2021 Foundation
804-305-8050
she/her/hers
Sent from my iPhone

DATE SENT: 9/15/2021 5:47:00 AM
NAME: Name: Richard G Zimmermann
EMAIL: Email: richardzimmermann@verizon.net
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Subject: What I'm most looking for in new maps

COMMENT:

Comment: I want to see each of 11 congressional districts with 9 nested delegate districts, the 100th delegate district straddling two big congressionals with the 'surplus' to populate it. Compact whole 'COMMUNITIES of interest' = PEOPLE in neighborhood school zones and PEOPLE in the same economic SMA localities for delegate, senate and congressional districts. - Congressional House districts and House of Delegates districts have always had the SAME individual voters. Qualifications for the US House are the same as for the "most numerous" state house, see US Const. Art. I Sec. 2. Represent 'We the people' living today, not the Articles delegates 'of places'. Their 'places' of sovereignty in US constitutional history were replaced by the sovereign 'people', when the Continental Congress adjourned itself sine die 1789, later unpleasantnesses notwithstanding. - Some senate DISTRICTS might straddle congressional districts, but the people are the community of interest, not the places. If each senate district averages 2.5 delegate districts (math), then every CD has 2-3 nested senate and 9 nested delegate districts. If senate district 'straddlers' are not in dense population 'hubs', perhaps two-thirds of Virginians will have the same delegate, state senator, and US representative as their elementary school zone neighbor, for the public good.

DATE SENT: 9/14/2021 10:30:00 PM
NAME: Name: Mike Joseph
EMAIL: Email: mjoseph@tni.net
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Subject: New Purple Map Category

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

COMMENT:

Comment: Dear Commissioners, I see that a new map "category" has been generated. This is suppose to represent the districts defined as competitive based on incorporating the election results of the 2020 Presidential Election. I believe that this iteration may be interesting to the curious, but does not necessarily reflect local issues of communities of interest. Introducing the election results of the 2020 presidential election reflects the national issues and dilutes the important state and local issues that are unique interests of local communities. The unique local community interests are up staged by national interests in a presidential election year. Also using this type of data makes it tempting to draw new districts into political districts without consideration to the other variables the voters wants. Using this data to draw the new district lines should not be considered and given zero weighting.

DATE SENT: 9/14/2021 5:19:00 PM
NAME: Name: S. Jones
EMAIL: Email: sdjones23117@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

SUBJECT: Subject: Do not consider addresses of incumbents!

COMMENT:

Comment: Good morning, I agree with the many other comments mentioning that incumbent addresses should NOT be considered in the redistricting process. This shouldn't be about protecting incumbents! This should be about fair representation of all Virginians! Thank you!

DATE SENT: 9/14/2021 11:55:00 AM
NAME: Name: Charlie Thomas
EMAIL: Email: chasthos1@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

SUBJECT: Subject: Please Do Not Consider Incumbents' Addresses

COMMENT:

Comment: Good afternoon! I completely agree with the "Incumbents Do Not Matter" comment. Virginia voters matter, not sitting politicians. Consideration of incumbents' addresses politicizes and corrupts the redrawing process. Worse, it undermines voters' trust in the new Virginia Redistricting Commission. Thank you for your consideration.

DATE SENT: 9/14/2021 8:52:00 AM
NAME: Name: Chris Buchheit
EMAIL: Email: buchheitcjc@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

SUBJECT: Subject: Incumbents do not matter

COMMENT:

Comment: Good morning! I feel the need to remind the Commission once more that we did not vote this amendment into the Commonwealth's constitution to protect incumbents. We voted this amendment in to properly represent all Virginians. We do not care whether incumbents are unhappy with being placed in the same districts - this just goes to show how gerrymandered Virginia has been for years. Respectfully, do not draw or

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

approve the maps with incumbent addresses in mind - the *only* thing the Commission should keep in mind is how to best represent Virginians. Very Respectfully, Chris Buchheit

DATE SENT: 9/13/2021 10:59:00 PM
NAME: Name: Rev. Stan Farthing
EMAIL: Email: stanfarnew@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

SUBJECT: Subject: district accessibility

COMMENT:
Comment: Dear commissioners: Thanks for your hard work so far! I saw the draft map for Northern Virginia, and I think it makes a LOT more sense than the current map. I have previously submitted a comment suggesting that no precinct should be divided; that a municipality should not be divided unless its population is greater than the recommended population for a district; and that a district should not be divided among media markets unless the population of the media market is not enough to equal the recommended population for the district. I realized, however, that I forgot a criterion that I had previously been thinking about. One should be able to travel to all parts of the district on the public roads of the Commonwealth without having to enter another district. Again, thanks for your work, and for the apparent care that you are taking in doing it. Stan F

DATE SENT: 9/13/2021 10:04:00 PM
NAME: Name: JACK SCHEIBLE
EMAIL: Email: jack.scheible@verizon.net
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

SUBJECT: Subject: A1 NOVA HOD (9/2/21)

COMMENT:
Comment: The combined populations of Arlington (238,643) , Alexandria (159,467), Fairfax (1,150,309), and Fairfax City (24,146) is 1,572,565. And that is, indeed, just over 18% of the Commonwealth's population, so 18 HOD seats is appropriate. However, the sum of the HOD populations in the "A1 NOVA HOD data tables COR.xlsx" is only 1,467,788. That's only 17%, so should be 17 seats, not 18. Please explain the population discrepancy.

DATE SENT: 9/13/2021 5:54:00 PM
NAME: Name: Anand Edward Beh
EMAIL: Email: anandebh@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

SUBJECT: Subject: Re-draw Clean Maps for a Stable and Healthy Society

COMMENT:
Comment: The commission must start from a blank map, rather than continuing with the old one. Beginning from a clean slate is an essential element in the success of this commission, for Virginia, for our society. The erosion of political institutions is a continuing threat to the state of Virginia and the United States as a whole. Here is the opportunity for Virginia to set a new precedent and re-invigorate an aspect of our democracy. To this end, the commission must begin by drawing new districts. We cannot proceed in good health from the decrepit, ill-intentioned districts of old. Done right, a completely new map is in the best interests of our society and

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

democracy. Engaged citizens are watching this matter intently. This commission has the ability to do what is right by creating fairly-drawn districts. Don't let the people of Virginia down. The good of society is more important than personal gain. Strive to do your very best, and work for excellence, at all times.

DATE SENT: 9/12/2021 11:46:00 PM
NAME: Chris DeRosa
EMAIL: chris7307@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

SUBJECT: Subject: Incumbent Addresses & Legislators' maps

COMMENT:
Comment: The initial draft maps produced by the map-drawers for the Northern Virginia region are, at first and second glances, such a major improvement over the current maps for the House and Senate. The map drawers have done an exceptional job keeping cities together and respecting county boundaries as much as possible. While they may not be perfect, they are a huge step in the right direction for Virginia. The citizens of Virginia have loudly and clearly stated that they/we do not want incumbent addresses considered during the map-drawing process. As I have stated previously, I was extremely disappointed and upset that Mr. Strasma used incumbent address information in his second set of maps. Thank you to the Co-chairs for reigning in the map-drawers and Commissioners by establishing strict protocols. I hope that the Commission votes to direct the mapdrawers to ignore incumbent addresses as they draw the maps which they will present to Virginia on the 20th of September. Finally, I agree that yes, individual Commissioners may provide comments and even submit maps (of COIs and/or districts) AS CITIZENS. If so, those comments and maps should be submitted via the CITIZEN portals provided on the website, and those Commissioners should be allowed to speak for 2-3 minutes (the same amount of time allotted to "ordinary" citizens). I strongly urge the Commission and the co-chairs to limit or reserve the "official" map portal to/ for the draft maps drawn by the hired map-drawers. Thank you for your efforts - and please continue the pledge to allow full sunshine in this redistricting process.

DATE SENT: 9/12/2021 9:40:22 PM
FROM: From: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Name: Paul Berry
EMAIL: Email: pberry.vlab@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

SUBJECT: Subject: Latino representation at risk

COMMENT:
Comment: The maps that have been reviewed thus far by both the Republican and Democratic consultants demonstrate a serious risk to the Latino community in the Commonwealth. In the strongest possible terms, I encourage the commission to alter any final result to bring greater equity to bear. Specifically, the current maps draw the only two elected Latinos *in the entire Commonwealth* out of their districts. While some may argue that doing so still creates majority-minority Latino districts, there is *no guarantee* that Latinos will win in those districts. Indeed, it is more likely that they will not: Latinos are a historically disenfranchised voting group with nearly *zero* presence at any level of civil service in state government, the lowest voter turnout rates, and the highest poverty rates in the Commonwealth. If the VRC approves maps that make it difficult for the only two legislators in Virginia's history who are Latino to compete in elections there would be a significant disadvantage to the Latino community in the Commonwealth that now numbers over 850,000 or 10.5% of the population. The seniority these two legislators have

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

represents the only political currency of any kind in the General Assembly and it is unthinkable that good governance and equal representation would benefit if they were forced to compete under the maps as currently drawn. Furthermore, this may be a legal issue. If adopted as the consultants drew them, it could (and likely will) be argued that the maps are creating multiple Voting Rights Act violations. Several state and national Latino organizations are discussing legal strategies to that effect and will be commenting publicly to the VRC in the coming days and weeks. As Chair of the Virginia Latino Advisory Board I ask that you not interpret this as anecdote; there are serious conversations taking place that will emerge as legal challenges if greater attention is not given to retaining what little representative power Latinos have in Virginia.

DATE RECEIVED: 9/12/2021 6:24:58 PM
DATE SENT: 9/12/2021 6:24:06 PM
FROM: PAUL BERRY <pberry@ccbellerose.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

The maps that have been reviewed thus far by both the Republican and Democratic consultants demonstrate a serious risk to the Latino community in the Commonwealth. In the strongest possible terms, I encourage the commission to alter any final result to bring greater equity to bear.

Specifically, the current maps draw the only two elected Latinos *in the entire Commonwealth* out of their districts. While some may argue that doing so still creates majority-minority Latino districts, there is *no guarantee* that Latinos will win in those districts. Indeed, it is more likely that they will not: Latinos are a historically disenfranchised voting group with nearly *zero* presence at any level of civil service in state government, the lowest voter turnout rates, and the highest poverty rates in the Commonwealth.

If the VRC approves maps that make it difficult for the only two legislators in Virginia's history who are Latino to compete in elections there would be a significant disadvantage to the Latino community in the Commonwealth that now numbers over 850,000 or 10.5% of the population. The seniority these two legislators have represents the only political currency of any kind in the General Assembly and it is unthinkable that good governance and equal representation would benefit if they were forced to compete under the maps as currently drawn.

Furthermore, this may be a legal issue. If adopted as the consultants drew them, it could (and likely will) be argued that the maps are creating multiple Voting Rights Act violations. Several state and national Latino organizations are discussing legal strategies to that effect and will be commenting publicly to the VRC in the coming days and weeks. As Chair of the Virginia Latino Advisory Board I ask that you not interpret this as anecdote; there are serious conversations taking place that will emerge as legal challenges if greater attention is not given to retaining what little representative power Latinos have in Virginia.

--

Paul Daniel Berry
Principal
Contra Costa Bellerose

DATE RECEIVED: 9/12/2021 4:37:16 PM
NAME: Name: Sara Fitzgerald
EMAIL: Email: sarafitz@aol.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

SUBJECT: Subject: Better Districts Already

COMMENT:

Comment: I want to echo Co-Chair Babichenko's comments at the September 9 meeting that the draft maps for Northern Virginia are already an improvement over the current maps because they recognize existing jurisdictional boundaries and have been proposed and discussed in the sunshine. I appreciate that the co-chairs are wrestling with figuring out the best process for getting drafts proposed, soliciting and managing public comments, and then processing those comments into the final maps. While changes in announced hearings and schedules are unfortunate, I want to express appreciation and support, as Delegate McQuinn did, for the way the two co-chairs appear to be working together, providing leadership, and steering the commission through its first months of operation.

DATE SENT: 9/12/2021 11:30:56 AM
FROM: DONNA BARTH <donna.don@comcast.net>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

SUBJECT:

COMMENT:

I feel everyone can agree that the Virginia Redistricting Commission Constitutional Amendment was ratified by the public to assure the districts were fair to all, be NON-PARTISAN with no gerrymandering and the districts were to be drawn so NO legislator would gain the upper hand with the new maps. I understand the map drawers have already been selected, one selected by the Republicans and one selected by the Democrats and have started their work. In order to make sure the maps are non-partisan (as we all voted on) someone must act to coordinate/rectify the differences in the maps. Moon Duchin is that person. She is non-partisan and has refused to be hired by either political party. She has impeccable credentials and has a history of working as a non-partisan party to draw other states' district lines. In order to fulfill the intent of the Constitutional Amendment, someone must be the coordinator/rectifier and Moon Duchin is that person, thus I am requesting she be hired immediately. Thanks you
Don Barth

DATE SENT: 9/11/2021 9:10:23 AM
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

Thank you for your time and for letting us know of your withdrawal from public comment on 9/13. Virginia Redistricting Commission
On Sat, Sep 11, 2021 at 8:45 AM Jason Morgan <jvmorgan@gmail.com> wrote:
Members of the Virginia Redistricting Commission,
I submitted a request to provide virtual public comments on September 13. Unfortunately, because public comments are taken at the end of the meeting, rather than at the beginning, and because I have scheduling conflicts later that afternoon, I must withdraw my request to provide such comments.
Instead, I would like to share my thoughts in writing.

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

First, I am optimistic about this process. I have looked at the initial proposals and they all seem to show that there is a good faith effort taking place to come up with districts that are fair, that meet the constitutional requirements for Virginia legislative districts, and that would ensure that the Virginia General Assembly is a legitimate representative lawmaking body rather than something engineered to be a partisan organ carrying only the façade of democracy. Please make sure that you continue to act in good faith and that you carry out your duty successfully. I'm sure none of you want this commission to fail and for the Supreme Court of Virginia to have to step in, which would lead to more uncertainty and less transparency. Second, I want to draw attention to a small, but meaningful bit of seemingly arbitrary border drawing evident in the current Virginia Senate districts (map 22), the A-line of proposed Senate districts (maps 36 and 62), and Senator Barker's proposal for Senate districts (map 60). The border I find upsetting is evident in, for example, map 62, just south of Tysons between districts 6 and 4 in the area between Chain Bridge Road, Leesburg Pike, and I-495. In this region, district 6 extends down rather arbitrarily, cutting through neighborhoods with no apparent reasoning. I have been trying to make sense of this particular border and the best I can come up with is that it may have been influenced by an old (early 2000's) census designation for Tyson's Corner. If so, then this border is based on an obsolete understanding of these neighborhoods and it needs to be revised in future proposals to ensure that close-knit communities of interest are not arbitrarily split.

At this point, I can think of two reasonable options for borders in this region. One option would be to follow the borders shown on map 1 (page 2) of the 2017 Edition of the Comprehensive Plan for the Tysons Corner Urban Center. https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/tysons/sites/tysons/files/assets/documents/pdf/comprehensive_plan/fc_comp_plan2017ed_tysons_amended04_04_2017.pdf. This would be a good option as keeping the Tysons Corner Urban Center together as a community of interest makes a lot of sense.

The second option would be to extend the border of district 6 in this region to go all the way out to Chain Bridge Road, Leesburg Pike, and I-495. This is not as ideal as following the borders for the Tysons Corner Urban Center. But it would seem to be less arbitrary than what is evident in the current and proposed maps identified above.

I really do appreciate the time and effort that is going into the redistricting process. And I appreciate that the public has a meaningful opportunity to participate in this process, including identifying potential communities of interest, questioning unusual borders, and challenging potentially outdated assumptions.

Thank you all for your hard work. I look forward to seeing this process as it continues to unfold.

--Jason V. Morgan

DATE SENT: 9/10/2021 10:41:34 AM
NAME: Name: Elaine Braverman
EMAIL: elaine_braverman@msn.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Subject: Commission guidelines

COMMENT:
Comment: In discussing his maps, Senator Barker mentioned that he had discussed them with Delegate Ransone. If this was a private conversation, it appears to violate the Commission's guidelines.

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

DATE SENT: 9/9/2021 2:37:22 PM
NAME: Name: Chris DeRosa
EMAIL: Email: chris7307@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

SUBJECT: Subject: Response to fact that B2 maps used incumbent data

COMMENT:

Comment: I am unable to comment in person, so I am submitting this via this portal. I was shocked that Ken Strasma, map-drawer, requested incumbent addresses from the Redistricting Data Hub to evaluate his draft B2 maps for Senate and House. It is unclear who directed him to request that data - was it the Democrat legal team or counsel (Crayton? Hebert?) ? Was it a legislator? As Co-chairs Babichenko and Harris clearly stated, the criteria document says that incumbent addresses MAY be used, but no directive was given to the map drawers. If and when such data is used/requested, it should come through the Commission via DLS. Based on this information revealed today, then I suggest that B2 maps NOT be considered going forward. They are tainted, in my opinion.

DATE SENT: 9/9/2021 12:52:07 PM
FROM: From: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Name: James Fox
EMAIL: coachjimfox@cox.net
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

SUBJECT: Subject: Test for Gerrymandering

COMMENT:

Comment: Thank you for the critical public service you are providing though your work on redistricting. Please consider including a test for gerrymandering during your important deliberations. See the updated Guide to Fair Redistricting.
<https://preprints.apsanet.org/engage/api-gateway/apsa/assets/orp/resource/item/6138e4f565db1ec5eab053ec/original/fair-and-square-redistricting.pdf> (More than 1650 views and 950 downloads on the American Political Science Association Preprints Page) Respectfully and Gratefully, Jim Fox

DATE SENT: 9/9/2021 11:50:25 AM
FROM: From: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Name: Caleb Quiroga
EMAIL: Email: calebq2007@icloud.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

SUBJECT: Subject: State Senate District 7, Barker Plan

COMMENT:

Comment: State Senate District 7 under the Barker Plan doesn't make sense. Putting Franconia and Clifton into the same district isn't a good idea. The best way would be a Franconia-Annandale district. So please, vote this down.

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

DATE SENT: 9/8/2021 11:58:17 PM
FROM: From: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Name: Rees Shearer
EMAIL: Email: rrshearer@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

SUBJECT: Subject: Legislators should not be drawing or redrawing their own districts

COMMENT:
Comment: Sen. Barker has stepped across a line. The Commission should not consider his self-interest-driven map. The Commission is charged to draw district lines for citizens' interests, not the interests of incumbent legislators. Period.

DATE SENT: 9/8/2021 6:58:30 PM
FROM: From: Jack Houston <jackhouston2012@gmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:
Commissioners,
I was and still am a supporter of this commission. Additionally, the draft maps put forward this week are encouraging. However, it's extremely upsetting that a member of the commission would state his opposition to maps that place him in a different district. This is NOT what Virginians voted for. These maps should be politically neutral and focus entirely on what benefits Virginia's voters, not politicians. I can assure you that if the corrupt practice of incumbent protection is employed, the voters will remember this during the next election. Please do what you were placed on this commission to do and prioritize Virginians over any partisan preferences or your own incumbency,
Jack Houston
Virus-free. www.avg.com

DATE SENT: 9/7/2021 6:44:30 PM
FROM: From: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Name: Alex Killey
EMAIL: alex.killey@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

SUBJECT: Subject: Congressional Map Plan

COMMENT:
Comment: Hello, I designed this map with incumbent residency in mind as well as minimizes county a municipal splits. There are two districts in the south of the state where African Americans should be able to elect candidates of their choice. Competitiveness was also included as a goal in some of the districts. Thank you. Link: <https://davesredistricting.org/join/63202efe-36bd-43d7-9ec4-abeee8dfd3f5>

REGION: NA

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

LOCALITY: n/a multiple mentioned

COMMENT:

1 Virginia_Redistricting_Strategy_Proposal_2021_v7.docx April 30, 2021

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING STRATEGY PROPOSAL

Introduction

Background

In 2020, a Virginia constitutional amendment to end gerrymandering in the state was passed and a Virginia Redistricting Commission was established. The Virginia Redistricting Commission's mission is to redraw Virginia's election maps for both its congressional districts and for its state legislative delegates. Public comments on the redistricting process are being encouraged by the Commission.

Redrawing of Virginia Election Maps

The overriding principle for redrawing Virginia's election maps should be that it is "data driven" not partisan driven. This implies that key demographic factors such as ethnicity/race, industry/occupation and educational levels of residents should be driving forces in shaping the new election maps.

Redistricting Criteria

Overview

The drawing of Virginia's new congressional district maps should be guided by the following criteria:

1. Incorporate the concept of communities of interest/communities of place
2. Their land areas must be contiguous and be of equal population as much as possible
3. Allow for racial fairness
4. Don't give a partisan edge
5. Preserve existing geographic boundaries
6. Reflect the U.S. census data as concerns the number of congressional districts allocated to Virginia.
7. The land area chosen for each new congressional district map should be reflective of key demographics.

1) Communities of Interest/Communities of Place

The Virginia Redistricting Commission has established that one of the criteria for redrawing any Virginia election maps is that the maps reflect "communities of interest" or "communities of place". The National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) has also established this criterion for every state in the United States. Communities of interest share similar historical, cultural, or economic interests. However, they should not be defined by political affiliation.

Wikipedia defines a community of place as such:

"A community of place or place-based community is a community of people who are bound together because of where they reside, work, visit or otherwise spend a continuous portion of their time.[1] Such a community can be a neighborhood, town, coffeehouse, workplace, gathering place, public space or any other geographically specific place that a number of people share, have in common or visit frequently...."

2) Contiguous Space and Equal Populations

Per past U.S. Supreme Court rulings, each congressional district's land area must be contiguous and each district within the same state must be of approximately equal size in population. In the case of Virginia,

2 Virginia_Redistricting_Strategy_Proposal_2021_v7.docx April 30, 2021

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING STRATEGY PROPOSAL

this implies that each newly designed district's population must be within a 5% +/- range of one-eleventh of Virginia's current population (currently at 784,201). At the present time, the following Virginia congressional districts do NOT fall within a 5% +/- range of 784,201: VA-01, VA-02, VA-05, VA-09, VA-10.

3) Racial fairness

The redrawn congressional district maps should not intend to or have the effect of diluting the power of minority voters or their ability to elect candidates of their choice.

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION

PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED

November 19, 2021

4) No Political Party / Candidate Advantages

The newly redrawn Virginia congressional district maps must not give a partisan edge or advantage to any one political party, candidate or incumbent.

5) Preserve Existing Geographic Boundaries

The newly redrawn Virginia congressional district maps should adhere to the guideline of not splitting existing city, town, or county boundaries as much as possible.

6) Reflex U.S. Census 2020 data

Unless the U.S. census data 2020 for Virginia indicates otherwise, the number of Virginia congressional districts will remain at eleven (11).

7) Reflective of Key Demographics

The newly drawn congressional district maps must take into consideration percentage breakdowns of the following demographics:

a) Race/Ethnicity % Distribution (White, Black, Hispanic, Asian, etc.)

b) Industries and Occupations

c) Urban/Rural breakdown

d) Education (Enrollment/Level of Educational Achievement)

3 Virginia_Redistricting_Strategy_Proposal_2021_v7.docx April 30, 2021

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING STRATEGY PROPOSAL

Proposed Strategy for Redrawing Virginia's Congressional District Maps

Overview

The proposed strategy for redrawing Virginia's congressional district maps is based on a hub-and-spoke architecture where the hubs are Virginia's 25 most-populated counties and the spokes are adjacent smaller populated counties. The proposed overall congressional district maps architecture is modeled after how the Virginia Association of Counties -Regions ("VACO") is organized which currently has thirteen designated state regions and a subset (80+) of all existing counties in the state of Virginia.

District Architecture -the Hubs

Virginia's 25 most populated counties represent significant communities of interest and place and account for two-thirds of Virginia's total population. These counties can be used as the hubs for any new congressional districts because that is where:

- Most people live in Virginia
- Highest concentration of schools exists
- Highest concentration of jobs and industries exist
- The largest collection of major shopping centers occurs
- Where many major religious centers are located
- And further these counties provide a wide-array of government products and services to their residents and neighboring smaller counties (e.g.; Police, Courts, Utilities, Election Polling Locations & Libraries).

District Architecture – The Spokes

Each district hub will have attached to it adjacent smaller populated counties going out in wider arcs until a congressional district population of one-eleventh of the total population of Virginia is achieved. The total population of Virginia as of 2020 was: 8,626,210. The total population of the twenty-five (25) most populated counties in Virginia is: 5,756,900.

Candidates for the adjacent counties must satisfy the following criteria:

- Either be adjacent to the congressional district hub and/or each other to be in compliance with the "contiguous" rule.
- Should have similar demographics as much as possible as regards:
 - a) Race/Ethnicity % Distribution (White, Black, Hispanic, Asian, etc.)
 - b) Industries and Occupations
 - c) Urban / Rural breakdown
 - d) Education (Enrollment/Level of Educational Achievement)

4 Virginia_Redistricting_Strategy_Proposal_2021_v7.docx April 30, 2021

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION

PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED

November 19, 2021

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING STRATEGY PROPOSAL

Candidate Virginia Congressional Districts to be Redrawn / Rationale

The overriding rationale for redrawing the map for any particular Virginia congressional district is to have its demographic attributes fall within a 95 % to 105% range of the averages for those demographic attributes for all of the state congressional districts.

The demographic attributes recommended to be used as benchmarks for redistricting are:

1. Urban versus Rural percentage breakdown of a congressional district
2. Congressional District Population (use actual count not averages)
3. Land Area (square miles)
4. Median Household Income
5. Race/Ethnicity %s Distribution (White, Black, Hispanic, Asian, etc.)

VA-01 Congressional District

Rationale for redrawing district's map:

- Current population not within 95% to 105% of 1/11 of Virginia's total population. Has an excess of 48,945 current residents.
- District's Urban Land Area is 69.54% and deviates from the state-wide average of 75.51% by a negative 5.97%.
- Current Percentage (%) of White Residents exceeds the state-wide average by 6.83%.

VA-02 Congressional District

Rationale for redrawing district's map:

- Current population not within 95% to 105% of 1/11 of Virginia's total population; shortfall of 52,070 residents.
- District's Urban Land Area exceeds the state-wide average by 16.99%.

VA-05 Congressional District

Rationale for redrawing district's map:

- Current population not within 95% to 105% of 1/11 of Virginia's total population; shortfall of 40,231 residents.
- District's Urban Land Area falls short of the state-wide average by 40.21%.
- Entire Land Area is 10,030 square miles that exceeds all of the other Virginia congressional districts total land areas. VA-05 is larger in area than six US states (Vermont, New Jersey, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Delaware, and New Hampshire).
- Current Percentage (%) of White Residents exceeds the state-wide average by 9.41%.
- Current Percentage (%) of Hispanic Residents falls short of the state-wide average of 5.5%.

5 Virginia_Redistricting_Strategy_Proposal_2021_v7.docx April 30, 2021

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING STRATEGY PROPOSAL

VA-06 Congressional District

Rationale for redrawing district's map:

- District's Urban Land Area falls short of the state-wide average by 11.17%.
- Current Percentage (%) of White Residents exceeds the state-wide average by 18.07%.
- Current Percentage (%) of Black Residents falls short of the state-wide average by 7.83%.

VA-08 Congressional District

Rationale for redrawing district's map:

- District's Urban Land Area exceeds the state-wide average by 24.2%.
- Current Percentage (%) of White Residents falls short of the state-wide average by 9.49%.
- Current Percentage (%) of Hispanic Residents exceeds the state-wide average by 9.74%.
- Current Percentage (%) of Asian Residents exceeds the state-wide average by 6.51%.

VA-09 Congressional District

Rationale for redrawing district's map:

- Current population not within 95% to 105% of 1/11 of Virginia's total population shortfall of 71,919 residents.
- District Urban Land Area falls short of the state-wide average by 33.76%.

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION

PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED

November 19, 2021

- Current Percentage (%) of White Residents exceeds the state-wide average by 25.62%.
- Current Percentage (%) of Black Residents falls short of the state-wide average by 8.33%.
- Current Percentage (%) of Hispanic Residents exceeds the state-wide average by 9.74%.
- Current Percentage (%) of Asian Residents exceeds the state-wide average by 6.51%.

VA-10 Congressional District

Rationale for redrawing district's map:

- Current population not within 95% to 105% of 1/11 of Virginia's total population; excess of 81,696 residents.
- District Urban Land Area exceeds the state-wide average by 10.02%.
- Current Percentage (%) of Black Residents falls short of the state-wide average by 12.62%.
- Current Percentage (%) of Asian Residents exceeds the state-wide average by 8.96%.

VA-11 Congressional District

Rationale for redrawing district's map:

- District Urban Land Area exceeds the state-wide average by 24.46%.
- Current Percentage (%) of White Residents falls short of the state-wide average by 15.79%.
- Current Percentage (%) of Hispanic Residents exceeds the state-wide average by 9.43%.
- Current Percentage (%) of Asian Residents exceeds the state-wide average by 13.81%.

6 Virginia_Redistricting_Strategy_Proposal_2021_v7.docx April 30, 2021

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING STRATEGY PROPOSAL

Redistricting Efforts to Date

Demographics Data Collection/Organization

As of March, 2021, I have downloaded U.S. census data for 2019 for the state of Virginia as it pertains to the existing congressional districts of Virginia and its twenty-five most populated counties. The data has been organized into a set of multiple separate Microsoft Excel 2019 workbooks. Each Excel workbook contains multiple worksheets presented in several formats; raw data, data ranges, tabular and charts (e.g., funnel charts) The data that has been captured includes:

- Congressional district population counts, median incomes and land areas in square miles
- Current political party representing the Congressional district
- Urban/Rural Percentage breakdowns of Congressional districts
- Congressional district ethnicity percentages and population counts
- Congressional district educational levels and resident counts
- Congressional district income brackets and resident counts
- Congressional district industry types and corresponding employment counts
- County population counts, median incomes and land areas in square miles
- County ethnicity percentages and population counts
- Henrico County Programs & Services
- Compilation of a list of all the community colleges in Virginia; enrollment counts and location

Data Sources for Redrawn Congressional District Maps

- Most current data available from the US Census Bureau for zip codes/ZCTAs is from the American Community Survey's 2019 5-year estimates.
- Demographic / GIS data sourced from the GIS departments of the twenty-five most populated counties
- Virginia Regions Study Guide
- Authoritative articles found in Wikipedia
- Virginia County Map from "Maps of World" organization
- Virginia Demographics by Cubit

7 Virginia_Redistricting_Strategy_Proposal_2021_v7.docx April 30, 2021

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING STRATEGY PROPOSAL

Appendices

About the Author (Ken Chasin)

- Resident of Charlottesville, Virginia

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

- Retired senior-level Information Technology professional
 - Areas of expertise include business intelligence solutions, data warehousing and data analysis
 - Have worked in multiple industries that include:
 - o Computer Manufacturing
 - o Health Care (HMOs)
 - o Insurance (Property & Life Liability)
 - Have developed strategic planning documents for large corporations.
- Virginia Association of Counties – Regions (“VACo”)

The Virginia Association of Counties exists to support county officials and to effectively represent, and promote the interests of counties to better serve the people of Virginia. It currently represents over eighty (80) Virginia counties.

For more information about the Virginia Association of Counties-Regions, please visit the Web site <https://www.vaco.org/county-profiles/vaco-regions/>. This Web site includes the following information:

- County Employment
- County Profiles
- Rural Caucus
- Regions

The City of Lynchburg is divided into FOUR state legislative districts.

TWO Senatorial Districts: 22nd-Sen. Mark Peake and 23rd-Sen. Steve Newman

TWO House of Delegates Districts: 22nd-De. Kathy Byron and 23rd-Del. Wendell Walker

If you vote in these precincts, you are in the If you vote in these precincts, you are in the
22nd Senate and 22nd House District 23rd Senate and 23rd House District

201-St. Paul's Episcopal Church 101-Heritage Baptist Church

202-R.S. Payne Elementary School 302-Liberty University Vines Center

203-Jubilee Family Center 304-First Church of Nazarene

204-Fairview Christian Church 305-Heritage United Methodist Church

301-Public Library Community Room 401-Crosspoint Church

404-Linkhorne Middle School

If you vote in these precincts, you are in the If you vote in this one precinct, you are in the
22nd Senate and 23rd House Districts 23rd Senate and 22nd House Districts

102-Bedford Hills Elementary School 303-Sheffield Elementary School

103-First Presbyterian Church

104-Rivermont Presbyterian Church

105-First Christian Church

402-Sandusky Middle School

403-Perrymont Fellowship Hall

District 22-green District 23-orange

map from lynchburgva.gov

District 23: Walker

District 22: Byron

District 22: Peake

District 23: Newman

State Senate District 22: Mark Peake

Lynchburg is only 17% of Sen Peake's district maps from vpap.org

State Senate District 23: Steve Newman: look for Lynchburg

Lynchburg is only 17% of Sen Newman's district

House of Delegates District 22: Del Kathy Byron

25% Lynchburg

41% Bedford County

22% Campbell County

12% Franklin County

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

House of Delegates District 23: Del Wendell Walker
64% Lynchburg
24% Bedford County maps from vpap.org
12% Amherst County

DATE RECEIVED: Wednesday, August 18, 2021 8:27:40 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Douglas Bishop
EMAIL: sendCB2theWH@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Congressional Redistricting Proposal Map

COMMENT:
Zero gerrymandering. I was done in 22 minutes. <https://districtr.org/plan/37107>

DATE RECEIVED: Sunday, August 22, 2021 4:07:02 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Martha Rollins
EMAIL: mgr757@aol.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Redistricting Virginia Fairly NOW

COMMENT:
Yes! Start with new maps, of course. And the new maps need to focus on the demographics of the people. Omit the incumbent legislators. Respect local jurisdictions and keep communities together. Minimize split districts. Do not pretend that water is a connector of communities when the communities on other sides are different. The Commission was created in good faith by the voters to end political gerrymandering. Please do not fail to give us fair maps for the next General Assembly. Thank you sincerely: it's important.

DATE RECEIVED: Friday, August 20, 2021 4:42:00 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Melissa Ferrell
EMAIL: mwferrell3@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Support for fair redistricting

COMMENT:
Yes, indeed, many people I know are very much in support of fair redistricting by our commission (made up of all of you). We are counting on you to put statesmanship before politics, an especially tall order these days, to which I expect you to rise to the occasion. I volunteered at the polls for OneVa2021 where I heard so much support from both republicans and democrats. I've talked to friends and family during all this time and hear the same. Why wouldn't a citizen of these United States want to be fairly represented?!

DATE RECEIVED: Tuesday, August 10, 2021 11:17:10 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

NAME: Michael Angeloni
EMAIL: mike65057@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Map Drawing

COMMENT:

With the Commission getting ready to draw new maps, I ask that the Commission please start from scratch with new maps and not work from the current maps in place, which are clear gerrymanders. This would reduce the risk of bipartisan gerrymanders and also incumbent protection gerrymanders like we saw in 2011.

DATE RECEIVED: Friday, August 13, 2021 1:32:14 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: Ann Stephens
EMAIL: astephens@acchase.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Computer Optimization

COMMENT:

Why not give computer optimization a shot? It's much more fair, much quicker, and much less expensive. Until now, optimization has not been a feasible redistricting method, as no viable software or modeling solution existed that was able to properly analyze hundreds of millions of potential redistricting plans to come up with a single ideal result. This is no longer true. All Virginia has to do is identify it's parameters, (equal population, compactness, contiguity, adherence to Federal law, as well as protecting any communities of interest that you choose) and you can get a mathematically fair solution. If you decide to change the parameters along the way, this is also fine. We are happy to supply free tests to Virginia if you would like to see more. <http://www.encore-data.com>

DATE RECEIVED: Friday, August 13, 2021 5:25:48 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: Ruth Twiggs
EMAIL: rtwiggs329@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: REDIISTRICING

COMMENT:

WHY do we allow the repeating of mistakes when we have an opportunity to do it correctly. MANY of us pointed this out BEFORE voting on the referendum! START FROM SCRATCH!

DATE RECEIVED: Sunday, August 22, 2021 9:04:32 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Roberta Falquet
EMAIL: bobbie.falquet@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Redistricting

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

COMMENT:

While my husband and I cannot attend your meeting of August 23, 2021, we are paying close attention to your actions. Do not mistake our absence as a lack of interest. We have worked hard these past several years to make fair redistricting possible. We are dismayed with your efforts so far. Politics as usual seems to be your guiding principle. Shame on you. That is not what we nor our fellow citizens voted for nor expect. You are charged with drawing free and fair electoral maps that fairly represent the citizens of this Commonwealth not politicians. This has been done in many places around the country and can happen here. Start fresh. Stop the nonsense. You're charge is to represent the people of this state, not one party or another.

DATE RECEIVED: Sunday, August 29, 2021 9:01:13 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Michael Clancy
EMAIL: michaelclancy1@verizon.net
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Draft Maps

COMMENT:

What is the projected date for when draft maps of the state and congressional districts will be available to the public? Thank you.
This comment has not been reviewed and is not available for viewing by the public (if public viewing settings have been enabled). You may click APPROVE on this email to approve it for public viewing.

DATE RECEIVED: Saturday, August 14, 2021 5:15:33 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Caryl Burtner
EMAIL: Burtnercaryl@yahoo.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Redistricting

COMMENT:

We must start from scratch when redistricting! It must be done without any preconception. Make it fair for everyone!

DATE RECEIVED: Wednesday, August 18, 2021 3:09:09 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Anne Moriarty
EMAIL: selectteam@msn.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Redistricting

COMMENT:

We don't need partisan redistricting in VA. The commission should hire a non-

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

partisan group to draw the maps. We're watching!

DATE RECEIVED: Thursday, August 12, 2021 5:22:32 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: Michael Spragins
EMAIL: spraginsm@yahoo.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Redistricting Maps

COMMENT:

We already have gerrymandered maps in Virginia. Beginning the redistricting process with the current maps will only give incumbent officeholders a preference. We should start from scratch with the Census data and new maps should be drawn from that information, not with current maps as a reference.

DATE RECEIVED: Saturday, August 7, 2021 5:48:51 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: Shelley Tamres
EMAIL: shelly.tamres@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Need New Districts

COMMENT:

Virginia has some of the worst gerrymandering in the country, such that some of both congressional and state legislative districts have been ordered to be redrawn by the courts in recent years. In order to have fair districts, you MUST start from scratch instead of trying to tweak the existing lines. And while you are about it, please ensure there are NO MORE SPLIT PRECINCTS! Voters in one split precinct in 2019 were given the wrong ballot, and thereby disenfranchised for that race. There is no excuse for split precincts. Thank you for your time and attention.

DATE RECEIVED: Friday, August 13, 2021 10:24:08 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Allen Muchnick
EMAIL: allenmuchnick@yahoo.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Don't Start Redistricting with the Old Maps

COMMENT:

To put an end to partisan Gerrymandering and use intuitive jurisdictional and physical district boundaries (e.g, rivers, major highways), it's important to not use the maps of the present distorted districts as the starting point for drawing new districts. I urge the Redistricting Commission to create compact election districts that respect jurisdictional and voting precinct boundaries and minimally split zip codes.

DATE RECEIVED: Wednesday, August 11, 2021 11:46:26 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

NAME: Catherine Sullivan
EMAIL: cathiesullivan@hotmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Use 2020 census data

COMMENT:

To promote more equitable representation for all Virginians, I urge the commission to use newly released US Census data to draw their legislative maps. Census data is less biased than existing districts which reflect the party in the majority preferences a.k.a. gerrymandering.

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 16, 2021 2:47:42 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Susan West
EMAIL: brodney2@comcast.net
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Redistricting

COMMENT:

To be fair, you must draw new maps without consideration of existing district lines!
Thank you.

DATE RECEIVED: Sunday, August 15, 2021 7:13:57 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Aliyah Khan
EMAIL: alik0219@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Adding Districts

COMMENT:

There has been a sharp growth in the population and this there is need to add more districts and thus proper representation.

DATE RECEIVED: Sunday, August 22, 2021 11:52:10 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Neal G Sumerlin
EMAIL: neal.sumerlin@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Map drawing

COMMENT:

The time to start making some important decisions is at hand! Please consider the following. Rather than beginning with the current district lines, start from scratch. Please revisit whether addresses of current legislators should play any part in how you draw maps. Consider

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

hiring some outside help in map drawing. Finally, please remember that even if "only a very small segment" of the population cares about what you are doing, your decisions affect all Virginians. Not just partisans, and not just legislators.

DATE RECEIVED: Friday, August 13, 2021 6:48:23 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: Matthias Paul Telkamp
EMAIL: cutulus@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Start with NEW MAPS

COMMENT:

The time has come to redraw the lines and there is absolutely no other reason to use the existing map other than to protect incumbents. We need to have real changes and we need the maps to be fair. Not a century from now. NOW is when we need them.

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 30, 2021 5:35:15 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Judith E. Brown
EMAIL: judithevansb@yahoo.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Watching another state draw their maps

COMMENT:

The process in Michigan is fascinating! Hope you can spend a little time watching, as I did this afternoon. They will meet again tomorrow 10am-5pm (EDT)
https://www.michigan.gov/documents/micrc/MICRC_Mtg_Notice_Aug_31_734002_7.pdf They are meeting almost daily....

This comment has not been reviewed and is not available for viewing by the public (if public viewing settings have been enabled). You may click APPROVE on this email to approve it for public viewing.

DATE RECEIVED: Saturday, August 14, 2021 7:43:40 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Lynn Melton
EMAIL: lmshop@jmelton.net
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Starting from scratch is a necessity

COMMENT:

The opportunity to change to a non-partisan redistributing method earned my vote, despite my misgivings on the possible effects from amendments on commission composition. If the effort is baselined at what boundaries currently exist, it in effect gives the incumbents on the committee the weight of a majority and makes a mockery of the non-partisan label. This is an opportunity to change the years of gerrymandering by both sides. Please don't throw it away.

DATE RECEIVED: Thursday, August 12, 2021 2:56:54 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

NAME: Elizabeth Spencer Spragins
EMAIL: bethspragins@yahoo.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Do not start with existing maps!

COMMENT:

The current maps are gerrymandered. Tweaking gerrymandered maps will only lead to more gerrymandered maps. Please start afresh. That is the only way to achieve fair maps!

DATE RECEIVED: Saturday, August 14, 2021 10:14:23 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Patrick Herbst
EMAIL: pjherbst@cox.net
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: I Oppose Starting Redistricting Based Upon Old Maps

COMMENT:

The Commission should not start from the assumption that the old districts merely need a little tinkering. Such a premise reeks of protecting incumbents.

DATE RECEIVED: Sunday, August 22, 2021 5:15:45 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Richard C. Brown, MD
EMAIL: brownrc2@cox.net
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Redistricting

COMMENT:

The commission must seek the professional help of experienced experts who know how to draw these districts fairly. This redistricting is important enough to be a constitutional mandate. The General Assembly members of the commission cannot be relied upon to make it fair. They of course will offer something which will be to the advantage of their party.....that's what politicians are supposed to do. Yet that is not what our new amendment was intended to allow. Get non political experts in to do it fairly and blindly, starting with new blank maps.

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 16, 2021 1:07:28 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Christopher Schmidt
EMAIL: scottschmidt10@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Start from Scratch redistricting

COMMENT:

The citizens of Virginia voted for an independent process of redistricting. There are technologies available to draw district lines without partisan considerations. These technologies should be the basis for fair, nonpartisan redistricting. If the commission adopts the current districts as the basis for redistricting, the worst fears of all of us who opposed a commission

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

comprised of current legislators and other members recommended by the parties will be confirmed. Start from scratch or dispense with any pretense that your work is not based on partisan incumbent protection. Sincerely, Christopher Schmidt

DATE RECEIVED: Thursday, August 5, 2021 10:33:37 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: Chris DeRosa
EMAIL: chris7307@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Try your hand at drawing new districts

COMMENT:

The census arrives in just one week! You will soon be deeply involved in drawing #fairmaps for Virginia. I hope that all Commissioners have taken the opportunity to be trained in using CityGate software. As you wait for census data to be uploaded into CityGate, may I suggest that you try your hand at drawing districts "in your spare time"? One free online tool that I would recommend is Dave's Redistricting App. You can view current district lines and demographics; you can view "Notable maps" that are ranked for various criteria. And then you can draw districts -- perhaps you might start with Congressional Districts since there are only 11 to draw. Consider this a "trial run" and preliminary instruction in preparation for the "real thing". As a retired public school teacher, take my advice -- practice practice practice.
<https://davesredistricting.org/maps#state::VA>

DATE RECEIVED: Sunday, August 22, 2021 6:10:03 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Susan Roth
EMAIL: susanaustinfoth@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Redistricting

COMMENT:

Thank you for your service on this commission. The citizens of our Commonwealth are counting on you to be fair and unbiased. Our democracy is presently very fragile and its continued existence depends upon this! For the sake of fairness, we ask that you draw new maps that make sense, not jiggle the present gerrymandered ones! To do the job right, we expect the commission to hire professional, non-partisan map drawers to assist in the redistricting, to ignore the present districts and not protect the incumbents. Thank you for your honorable service on this commission.

DATE RECEIVED: Wednesday, August 25, 2021 1:07:36 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Margaret Van Yahres
EMAIL: vanyahresp@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Districts

COMMENT:

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

Thank you for throwing away the old boundaries and starting over again. Please draw districts that are compact, contiguous, and communities of interest, similar to our planning districts. Thanks for your overwhelming work

DATE RECEIVED: Sunday, August 22, 2021 11:10:32 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Marilyn Adams
EMAIL: marilynja@att.net
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Redistricting maps

COMMENT:
Thank you for the work you are doing. Please know that many of us are interested and concerned that the process be as fair and unbiased as possible. I strongly encourage you to hire a nonpartisan map-drawer and start the redistricting process fresh with brand new maps, rather than by using the current maps as a starting point. Thank you.

DATE RECEIVED: Wednesday, August 11, 2021 1:33:20 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: James Fox
EMAIL: coachjimfox@cox.net
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Redistricting and Gerrymandering

COMMENT:
Thank you for the critical work you and your colleagues are doing on redistricting. Please make sure your maps stop gerrymandering. Gerrymanderers are deflecting from the importance of this fundamental goal. Redistricting criteria are very important. Gerrymanderers focus on some of these criteria and build maps that stress particular criteria AND the map is STILL GERRYMANDERED. Beware of this ploy. Do not allow gerrymanderers to implement other redistricting criteria in a way that hinders the eradication of gerrymandering. Please, keep your eye on the fundamental goal of stopping gerrymandering. Advocates of particular redistricting criteria should be aware that maps can be drawn that stop gerrymandering and achieve other redistricting criteria. But, in addition to advocating for particular criteria, make sure that gerrymandering is defeated and representative democracy prevails. The Guide to Fair Redistricting provides, for a wide range of states, examples of maps that advance specific redistricting criteria and prevent gerrymandering. <https://preprints.apsanet.org/engage/api-gateway/apsa/assets/orp/resource/item/60e46f7ea4e06bf9217014db/original/fair-and-square-redistricting.pdf> (more than 1550 views and 800 downloads on the APSA Preprints Page). Representational Fairness eliminates gerrymandering. Best Wishes in the Pursuit of Fair Maps, Jim Fox

DATE RECEIVED: Friday, August 27, 2021 8:47:58 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Noelle Dwyer
EMAIL: noelledwyer@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Incumbents and current legislators should have no role in redrawing these maps

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

COMMENT:

Thank you for taking on this hard work. Please do not consider the addresses of current legislators or those running for office. Your commission should be completely independent of VA Congress members and delegates, that's what the citizens voted for. Please make the districts compact, along city and/or county lines, and keep communities of interest together rather than slicing them up. Thank you.

This comment has not been reviewed and is not available for viewing by the public (if public viewing settings have been enabled). You may click APPROVE on this email to approve it for public viewing.

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 16, 2021 12:51:26 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Sharon Kenna
EMAIL: sakenna2710@live.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Redistricting

COMMENT:

Start from scratch so there is no preconception. This is necessary to make it fair

DATE RECEIVED: Friday, August 6, 2021 2:03:19 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: Ally Dalsimer
EMAIL: ally@allyforcongress.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Redistricting

COMMENT:

Redistricting should be based on existing jurisdictional boundaries, compactness, and community cohesion, and should not be made to benefit a particular party or candidate. Those engaged in redistricting efforts must ensure that all decisions promote fair opportunities to all candidates, and not preferentially benefit incumbents. Voters deserve to participate in a system where their votes count.

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 23, 2021 2:50:08 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Rubyjean Gould
EMAIL: gouldrl@cox.net
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: New Maps

COMMENT:

Please, I strongly support the drawing of new district maps using algorithm's to identify preferred standards and having them professionally drawn. Proceed to hire A-partisan graphic specialists to render the maps. This would be key to fair representation of our electorate. Thank you, Rubyjean Gould

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

DATE RECEIVED: Sunday, August 22, 2021 8:15:31 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Pamela Stroh
EMAIL: strohps1967@yahoo.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: fair redistricting

COMMENT:

Please use a fair system for redistricting. Everyone wants to be fairly represented in Congress and there's no excuse for having an unfair system. Especially when there are easily available algorithms for creating new, fair districts.

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 16, 2021 4:37:45 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Terry Dutcher
EMAIL: Tdutcher@aol.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Start from scratch

COMMENT:

Please start redistricting from scratch. We need to move AWAY from gerrymandering. Thank you.

DATE RECEIVED: Saturday, August 7, 2021 10:00:58 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: John Peterson
EMAIL: petermaten4@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Starting maps

COMMENT:

Please start fresh with new maps, and not the gerrymandered maps from the past. 1. Past maps divided neighborhoods and communities, making it hard for counties to give people the correct ballots. 2. We voted to stop gerrymandering. It makes no sense to start with the old maps. 3. Computers can draw new maps quickly. Please do not leave us yet again with gerrymandered maps using timeframes as the excuse.

DATE RECEIVED: Friday, August 20, 2021 9:26:27 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Michael Clancy
EMAIL: michaelclancy1@verizon.net
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Commission Guidelines Document & Map Drawers

COMMENT:

Please post the final version of the Commission Guidelines document on your

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

website. Also, please identify the two map drawers. Thank you

DATE RECEIVED: Friday, August 13, 2021 5:25:34 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: Marcia L Keener
EMAIL: marcia.keener@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Start With New Maps

COMMENT:
Please look at our voting districts afresh and see if we can address the deleterious effects of gerrymandering in another recommended way, as other pioneering states have! Please do not "start" with existing maps and assume that they are valid and just need a little "tweaking." That would be a waste of great civic energy. We need the time and expertise to do that, but let's find what is needed to do it right! PLEASE START WITH NEW MAPS!

DATE RECEIVED: Saturday, August 14, 2021 11:24:31 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Kari Buchanan
EMAIL: kab1125@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Hire professional map drawers

COMMENT:
Please hire professional map makers to draw the district lines. You have the criteria. Hiring a professional and starting from scratch should stop some of the mistakes from the past. Please limit how a community is divided. It decreases citizen voices. Legislators are representatives of the people of Virginia, not a party. The best way to limit legislator impact on map drawing is to hire a professional and remove incumbent legislator addresses from the maps.

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 16, 2021 9:15:29 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Fran Larkins
EMAIL: franlarkins40@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Unicorn found!

COMMENT:
Please give strong consideration to the University of Richmond's Spatial Analysis Lab for the Commission's map drawing expertise. From this group's "responses to questions," they have an in-depth knowledge of Virginia; are academic experts in managing and analyzing Virginia spatial data, are familiar with the already established methods of tracking "communities of interest," and have suggested using "fairness report cards" an efficient approach to allow the commission "to point out problematic boundaries that need to be addressed." (This last as an option instead of an open-ended starter map approach.) Just because both law firms don't agree is not a reason to instead choose two competing map drawers, once again heading down the political path Virginians have said they don't want. Read the group's responses to questions

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

thoroughly, and please use your good judgment to hire them.

DATE RECEIVED: Thursday, September 2, 2021 3:26:25 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Melanie
EMAIL: baa_baa77@yahoo.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: New start necessary!

COMMENT:
Please don't start the redistricting process with the current gerrymandered map we've hated to live with this last decade. It's wrong! Start new, fresh and make sure every vote truly can & will count.
This comment has not been reviewed and is not available for viewing by the public (if public viewing settings have been enabled). You may click APPROVE on this email to approve it for public viewing.

DATE RECEIVED: Friday, August 13, 2021 4:54:00 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: mel titus
EMAIL: mtitus_4@msn.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: redistricting

COMMENT:
Please do start from scratch for redistricting. That would be the fairest way to decide the maps. No gerrymandering please like the old map. sincerely, a committed voter mel titus ashland, va 23005

DATE RECEIVED: Tuesday, August 10, 2021 11:14:57 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: Helen Wheelock
EMAIL: hfwheelock@me.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Don't begin with gerrymandered maps. Other options are available.

COMMENT:
Please do not use existing voting district maps. *Using gerrymandered maps will erode public confidence. *They will contain legislators' addresses and create an appearance of favoritism. *More time will be needed to undo the gerrymandering before the rebuilding begins. There are more positive options for starter maps. *Use student maps. *Use population block maps. *Use mathematically produced maps. Please begin with a neutral map in this historic fair redistricting process.

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 23, 2021 10:23:17 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Elizabeth B Laundon
EMAIL: eblaundon@gmail.com

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: decision points

COMMENT:

Please do keep towns and cities in one Congressional/ one Senate district. Start with fresh maps and do not consider addresses of incumbants. Use the help of professionals with computer algorithms to draw contiguous, compact, proportional districts, as least as a start.

DATE RECEIVED: Sunday, August 22, 2021 7:43:06 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Alice Moore
EMAIL: acmoore07@yahoo.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Start Afresh with Non-Partisan Map Drawer

COMMENT:

Please agree on one non-partisan map drawer who will start from scratch based on 2020 Census results. It's the only sensible path that gives the greatest chance for an accurate, fair outcome. Please.

DATE RECEIVED: Sunday, August 22, 2021 4:23:57 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Fran Larkins
EMAIL: franlarkins40@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Is the Fox Guarding the Hen House?

COMMENT:

One of the reasons so many Virginians (65%) voted for the Constitutional Amendment to establish the Virginia Redistricting Commission is that they no longer wanted politicians to draw their own legislative districts and choose their own voters. If you ignore current maps, there should be less reason to be concerned about incumbent protection. I realize some of the citizen commissioners may feel the legislators on the Commission will give you the best advice on redistricting which can be a very complicated process. Please consider, however, in this instance, whether the "fox may be guarding the hen house." Please vote on Monday that maps will not be drawn using the current maps that are so terribly gerrymandered. Thank you for your service on the Commission!

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 16, 2021 10:20:44 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Chris DeRosa
EMAIL: chris7307@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Start fresh!

COMMENT:

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

Once again, I am asking that the Commission "start fresh", either with a blank slate, or with starter maps drawn by a mapping expert - or with those created in 2011 by nonpartisan groups and individuals. Not one Virginian who has submitted written or oral comments to this Commission has advised or requested that you begin with the existing maps. Should you choose to use current maps as you begin your map-drawing, you will be shattering any hopes for a NEW, transparent, and fair redistricting process in Virginia. Virginians overwhelmingly voted for a new approach to map drawing. Do not disappoint us!

DATE RECEIVED: Friday, August 13, 2021 10:48:03 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Kate Loring
EMAIL: kmloring1@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Starting from scratch is the only way to correct old wrongs

COMMENT:
My subject line really says it all. Rather than starting with the old maps, which will inevitably influence your work and limit the mental models that seem possible to you, it's essential that you start fresh. Please don't make this an empty exercise that continues the unfair practices of the old gerrymandering! Thank you so much for your work and for serving the people of Virginia.

DATE RECEIVED: Wednesday, August 11, 2021 8:42:26 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: Rebecca Piatt
EMAIL: beknwoods@yahoo.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Don't start with old maps

COMMENT:
Many communities were divided by the old maps. Urban areas were often cut up so that urban votes would be diluted in mostly suburban districts.

DATE RECEIVED: Wednesday, August 11, 2021 6:47:02 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: Kahleen Husted
EMAIL: khusted6@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: redistricting

COMMENT:
Let's make this as fair a possible Let's start completely fresh, using none of the old gerrymandered districts. Give all Virginians a fair chance for representation. Thank you.
Sincerely; Kahleen Husted

DATE RECEIVED: Wednesday, August 4, 2021 2:40:27 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

NAME: Scarlett M Bunting
EMAIL: sembunt35@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: The shape of districts

COMMENT:

Let a computer grid the state longitudinally and latitudinally with each "block" having the same, or as close to possible, number of residents (not registered voters). This re-districting should not be political, it is based on population, to establish representation. The voters can decide who to vote for in their district block and that is when it becomes a political process.

This comment has not been reviewed and is not available for viewing by the public (if public viewing settings have been enabled). You may click APPROVE on this email to approve it for public viewing.

DATE RECEIVED: Wednesday, September 1, 2021 10:35:54 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Kent Bress
EMAIL: kgbress@icloud.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Honor the will of the voters - end gerrymandering in Virginia

COMMENT:

Last year the citizens of Virginia did something amazing. They overcame the obstacles to add a new amendment to the Virginia Constitution to create the commission you now serve on. Thank you for your service. Now you must honor their intent by creating new voting districts that will allow the people to elect their representatives, not the other way around. In these divided times there are many cynics who believe that no process involving a politician of the opposing party can be legitimate. By virtue of your position on the commission, you can prove the cynics wrong. Do not fail them. Stand up to the politicians on your commission! You equal them in number, so be united in your purpose. Fair Districts for Virginia! This comment has not been reviewed and is not available for viewing by the public (if public viewing settings have been enabled). You may click APPROVE on this email to approve it for public viewing.

DATE RECEIVED: Saturday, August 21, 2021 5:57:07 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Roberta Kiver
EMAIL: roberta12345@earthlink.net
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: New Redistricting Maps

COMMENT:

Last year I voted to establish a commission to draw up the voting districts for our state. Since our state is so severely Gerrymandered, it is important to do this in a meaningful way. I read that the commission is looking to use the old maps a starting point. I think this is a bad idea. The purpose of the vote for the commission was to take a fresh look at establishing the voting districts. Using computers to generate NEW voting districts based on fair criteria, should

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

give districts that do not fracture communities and created “squiggly” districts that would favor one party over another. Fairer voting districts will give Virginians a fairer vote in future elections. Please take your time to get this serious job correct for us voters in Virginia.

DATE RECEIVED: Friday, August 13, 2021 6:47:53 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: Emily Klinedinst
EMAIL: Emilythebrave@yahoo.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Start from scratch

COMMENT:
Just scrap the whole thing and start over

DATE RECEIVED: Friday, August 13, 2021 9:08:49 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: Alice C Moore
EMAIL: acmoore07@yahoo.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Use new maps

COMMENT:
It's hard work, but worth doing right. Please start afresh.

DATE RECEIVED: Tuesday, August 10, 2021 2:56:26 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: Robert L Morris
EMAIL: rmorris@pobox.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Start from scratch on map drawing

COMMENT:
It seems you will get a better outcome if you ignore the past. Surely there is a way to get population data in to some computer program that would quickly create something better.

DATE RECEIVED: Sunday, August 22, 2021 9:13:12 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Janice morris
EMAIL: Janiceandclaire@aim.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Thank you for your service. Please do the right thing and agree on one map maker. Virginia voters want bi-partisanship

COMMENT:
It may seem like VA voters are not paying attention but we are. Please choose one bi-partisan map maker to draw the maps. You can do this. Put principle before politics and show

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

true courage. We have faith in you. All the best, Janice Morris

DATE RECEIVED: Thursday, August 5, 2021 10:33:43 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Chris DeRosa <chris7307@gmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

It may not be important, but the time stamp on the comments submitted is incorrect. For example, my comment shows 2:08 am on 8/6 but I actually submitted it at 10:08 pm today, 8/5. So the time seems to be "off" by four hours.

Thanks for including this portal. Makes it so much easier for Virginians to submit their comments and questions – and the posting of the comments as separate posts with a "title" makes it easier for all of us, including the Commissioners, to read them.

Many thanks!
Chris DeRosa
Sent from Mail for Windows 10

DATE RECEIVED: Thursday, August 12, 2021 9:05:02 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: Elizabeth Kelley
EMAIL: kelleyei@aol.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Let the people's vote count

COMMENT:

It is not right to redraw districts so one political party has advantage over another and it's not the "self evident" truths that are talked about in the Constitution. Our current gerrymandered maps do not offer fair and open delineations of districts: they raggedly tear them along party lines. When the person with the most votes fairly and honestly wins a district and then goes on to represent those who elected them, our democracy works just the way it should. Please be objective and honest when you take that pencil in hand to start anew to draw district lines and make sure those lines do not divide us unfairly.

DATE RECEIVED: Saturday, August 14, 2021 9:27:15 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Barbara Lipsky
EMAIL: blipsky@cox.net
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Start from Scratch in Drawing Maps

COMMENT:

It is imperative that the Commission start from scratch in drawing maps. The whole reason that Virginians voted for a new constitutional amendment to create a Redistricting Commission is that they had no confidence in the partisan maps drawn in the past, often with an eye to enhancing the election chances of incumbent legislators or incumbent parties. These old maps should be thrown out and the Commission should start from scratch.

DATE RECEIVED: Saturday, August 21, 2021 12:27:08 PM GMT-04:00

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Mary Anne Pugh
EMAIL: Maryannepugh@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Board integrity

COMMENT:

In posting on social media that “Trump Won” Virginia Trost-Thornton contributed to efforts to overturn a free and fair election and install her favored candidate, despite his losing the election. Not accepting election results is undemocratic behavior that she is likely to repeat to draw maps to suit her political preferences. I will have no confidence in the work of this board as long as she is a member. She must resign.

DATE RECEIVED: Wednesday, August 11, 2021 12:36:45 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: Ian MacInnes
EMAIL: Ian@MacInnes.Events
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Map drawing

COMMENT:

I’m writing about where we start with redrawing maps. I voted in favor of a redistributing committee because I want fair representation across the state and I feel like our current maps are not there. I would greatly prefer that we start from scratch rather than start from an already flawed system, it would give us the best chance at the best map. Thanks, Ian

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 16, 2021 9:32:34 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: JoAnn Kennedy Flanagan
EMAIL: jflanagan1224@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Non-partisan map drawers

COMMENT:

I'm writing to request that each and every commissioner, legislators as well as citizens, vote for a single, non-partisan map drawing team. This is the spirit of our new Redistricting Reform Amendment which you are charged with carrying out. Having each party draw their own maps didn't work in 2018 and is not likely to be successful now.

DATE RECEIVED: Thursday, August 12, 2021 11:22:54 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: Marcia Tugendhat
EMAIL: mtugendhat@me.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Start fresh

COMMENT:

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

I write to you as a Unitarian Universalist. Our principles call on us to work for democracy for every one and level playing field. Working with old data perpetuates districts that favor incumbents and prevents good governance of communities. Please start fresh with current data and draw maps accordingly.

DATE RECEIVED: Wednesday, August 11, 2021 11:57:03 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: Pete Goddard
EMAIL: peteag@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Don't start with current, gerrymandered maps - Start Fresh!

COMMENT:

I would like to urge all the commissioners not to start from the current maps, which are heavily gerrymandered and are too likely to retain that character no matter how much work is done. Please either have your mapmaker create "starter" maps or use the maps created by the 2011 Independent Bipartisan Advisory Commission... either is a better choice than using the current maps.

DATE RECEIVED: Sunday, August 22, 2021 8:55:33 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Nancy Wilbert
EMAIL: Nancy.wilbert@me.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Redistricting

COMMENT:

I would like to share my strong hope that you draw new maps and not re-adjust the present gerrymandered maps, I also sincerely hope you will hire non-partisan, professional, expert map drawers. Please approach this job fairly and unbiased. So much is at stake. This job is so important, I care. Thank you.

DATE RECEIVED: Sunday, August 22, 2021 12:50:29 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Kari Buchanan
EMAIL: Kab1125@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Hire one map drawer and go from scratch

COMMENT:

I watched much of the meetings last week. I was disheartened by some of the conversation. I cannot understand how difficult this is for the citizen commissioner. You have a huge weight upon you. We are counting on you to bring about fair maps. Ones that don't represent the delegates and senators. Districts are for the people. I voted for the Constitutional Amendment, because in Virginia, we citizens cannot bring about a change to how the Commonwealth is governed unless it goes through the legislature. So I voted for a step in the right direction. We need this Commission to work for all of us. For your decisions on Monday, my ask is simple, start from scratch and hire one map drawer. We know there are strange pairings is

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

districts. The only way to stop that is to forget the old maps. In reflecting on your decision to have two different map drawers, the Commission seemed to think the operative word was bipartisan. Stop wasting our money and make a hard decision that doesn't say Republican or Democrat. A personal note to Senator Barker. Don't minimize the citizens of this Commonwealth. We deserve better.

DATE RECEIVED: Saturday, September 4, 2021 3:46:39 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Judith E. Brown
EMAIL: judithevansb@yahoo.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: WHOSE districts are they?

COMMENT:

I was shocked during your Sep. 2 meeting! Legislators repeatedly used the terms my district, "her district", "your district", etc. A Legislative District does not belong to the incumbent. Each district belongs to its residents. Please watch your language! And please find a way to help each other use the correct words.

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 30, 2021 3:18:48 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Sarah Creel
EMAIL: goodtrouble181902@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Don't Start With Old Maps!

COMMENT:

I was flabbergasted to learn that Virginia's new Redistricting Commission is considering using the old, gerrymandered voting maps as a starting point for the maps that will determine our voting districts for the next decade. This makes no sense whatsoever! Virginians expect a new approach to drawing voting maps, and we voted overwhelmingly for a new start in the November 2020 election. If you're serious about changing Virginia for the better and giving voters what we've asked for, please DO NOT START THE REDISTRICTING PROCESS WITH OLD MAPS. Thank you.

This comment has not been reviewed and is not available for viewing by the public (if public viewing settings have been enabled). You may click APPROVE on this email to approve it for public viewing.

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 23, 2021 9:21:16 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Mary-Helen Sullivan
EMAIL: sulgray4@verizon.net
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: fair maps!

COMMENT:

I was appalled to read that some members of the commission think that Virginia citizens in general don't care about the redistricting process and whether or not it's fair. I have

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

not supported the efforts to change the redistricting process only to have incumbent legislators once again draw districts to guarantee their reelection. That is not democracy! I would very much appreciate your working much harder for a bipartisan approach and for fair and compact districts!

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 23, 2021 6:55:07 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Janet mcconnell
EMAIL: Janbuys1518@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Redistricting

COMMENT:

I want you to redistricting that is done fairly. I believe there would be better representation if lines for districts were drawn that represent fairness not gerrymandering. This is important for democracy. I will be watching to see how this is completed.

DATE RECEIVED: Wednesday, August 4, 2021 2:45:20 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: Richard Hagen
EMAIL: rhagen12@verizon.net
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Some suggestions on your work

COMMENT:

I want to thank every commission member for taking on this most important task. Redistricting is the single most important thing to protect our Democracy. I attended the public comment hearing in Norfolk and have listened in on several other meetings. I heard many very passionate and thoughtful presentations. I would like to quickly share the major points I gleaned from the meetings. 1. The Commission should be NON-patrician not Bi-Patrician. A Commission with no Legislators is the Amendment we citizens really wanted. 2. Every Commission member should view them self as a Virginia Citizen and not a member of a political party. 3. Ignore voting patterns and political parties' as part of the discussion. Don't consider Political party as a 'community of interest'. The largest 'party' is the Independent voters. 4. Do not look at Legislators home addresses. 5. Start anew. Do not consider the old maps. 6. Get Professional help from outside of Virginia Thanks again for your hard work.

DATE RECEIVED: Tuesday, August 31, 2021 11:29:38 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Teresa Stanley
EMAIL: teresastanleyobx@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Virginians Care about Fair and Impartial Redistricting!

COMMENT:

I want to again thank the Commissioners who are voting to make this process fair and transparent for all Virginians. Your service is of great importance in creating a new culture

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

of transparency. Please start from scratch and do not use old maps. Map drawers should be neutral and nonpartisan and should not include any incumbents or current legislators. Your deliberations and decision making should be done in public meetings and avoid any impression of protecting incumbent legislators. All newly created maps, materials, and other critical information should be shared with the public at least 3 business days before meeting and hearings. Time to do away with gerrymandering in Virginia!
This comment has not been reviewed and is not available for viewing by the public (if public viewing settings have been enabled). You may click APPROVE on this email to approve it for public viewing.

DATE RECEIVED: Tuesday, August 17, 2021 10:44:00 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Martha Ades
EMAIL: marthalades@aol.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

SUBJECT: Draw Current Maps from Scratch

COMMENT:
I voted for new districts being drawn and I assumed any rational process would use current population maps, not just start with old partisan maps and move a few people around. Please don't start with old maps. Start from scratch and draw non-partisan districts! My religious principals call me to work for democracy for everyone with a level playing field in our elections. We should have fair elections that are drawn on fair maps.

DATE RECEIVED: Wednesday, August 11, 2021 8:43:01 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: Bill Millhouser
EMAIL: bmillhouser2010@cox.net
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Please take a fresh look at drawing new district maps

COMMENT:
I urge the Commission to not be boxed in by the existing districts as you approach drawing new maps for the upcoming decade. Relying on the existing maps will just repeat our checkered history of gerrymandering. In passing the constitutional amendment last year, voters demanded a new way of drawing district maps, one that rejects the past practice of drawing districts for political reason; that approach gave us odd-shaped gerrymandered districts that put parties and incumbents before the voters of Virginia. Please consider alternative approaches to drawing maps that are based on communities of interest and which respect local jurisdictional boundaries. Thank you for your service on the Commission and the opportunity to provide these comments

DATE RECEIVED: Thursday, August 12, 2021 8:04:18 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: Linda Garvelink
EMAIL: garvelink@outlook.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

SUBJECT: Start from scratch

COMMENT:

I supported this commission so that VA could end gerrymandering and be a leading state with fair, as competitive as possible, districts. Please do the right thing and start the Redistricting process from scratch ... do not build on our current gerrymandered districts.

DATE RECEIVED: Sunday, August 22, 2021 11:08:59 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Tina
EMAIL: tinamarie2c@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: I Care, and I Am Monitoring!

COMMENT:

I have worked with organizations to end gerrymandering in Virginia for 6 years. When the amendment passed by a large majority of Virginia voters, the level of interest was resounding, and the task given to the Commission was clear: work TOGETHER to draw NEW boundaries that keep communities together and eliminate partisan bias. Virginia citizens should not have to be physically present at every meeting to ensure the Commission is fulfilling their duty. Let history judge this first Redistricting Commission as Brave, Innovative, and Nonpartisan!

DATE RECEIVED: Friday, August 13, 2021 7:33:37 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: Bryan Sullivan
EMAIL: sullbivan@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Start from scratch..old map was not real

COMMENT:

I encourage the commission to start from scratch as the old map was not real but a republican wish list. Using that as a starting place will just keep any map generated unreal too. A real map will end up showing the reality that VA is 45% Republican and 55% Democrat.

DATE RECEIVED: Friday, August 13, 2021 6:48:09 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: Kristin Hoffman
EMAIL: abc123ko@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: redesign of maps

COMMENT:

I encourage the commission to completely redraw all district maps. All the work to complete a census, and legislate for a commission was not intended to result in the tweaking around the edges of existing maps. To support the true spirit of the redistricting commission would be for the team to "start from scratch". Please do your best to fairly distribute our districts in concise and rational, brand new maps. This best supports democracy. Thank you

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 23, 2021 2:05:43 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

NAME: Betty OGarr
EMAIL: betty5204@cox.net
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Redistricting

COMMENT:

I don't know how you came to the understanding that people do not care but that statement is outrageously incorrect. Send out a survey to EVERYONE and you will see the majority of people do care. Please start drawing your lines on a clean slate and use the verified correct data while doing that. This is too important not to. A concerned citizen, Betty O'Garr

DATE RECEIVED: Sunday, August 22, 2021 4:37:31 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Marilyn Mendelson
EMAIL: marilynmendelson@me.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Redistricting

COMMENT:

I care. Let's keep partisanship out of this process and make it fair to all. Represent citizens justly. Stop the gerrymandering.

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 23, 2021 3:22:00 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: John
EMAIL: shulark@cox.net
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: redistricting

COMMENT:

I cannot not add anything notably different from the majority of the comments submitted other than to heartily support unbiased, not partisan, fair decisions that result in fair, equal, community-focused lines that define democracy.

DATE RECEIVED: Tuesday, August 17, 2021 10:01:06 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Anne M Beals
EMAIL: oakleyfrm@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: redistricting

COMMENT:

I assure you, I am interesting in fair redistricting, and I am LISTENING.

DATE RECEIVED: Sunday, August 8, 2021 6:38:37 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

NAME: Ankit Jain
EMAIL: ajankit92@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Do not start from existing maps. There are other options if you are pressed for time

COMMENT:

I ask that you not start your line-drawing from the heavily gerrymandered existing maps. No matter how much these lines are tweaked, starting from this baseline inevitably will bake gerrymandering into the final product. Your legal counsel has suggested this option because they believe there is not enough time to start from scratch. But if you don't think you can start from scratch, there are numerous alternative options available to you. These options can be grouped into three buckets: 1) Have your mapdrawer use an algorithm to generate a computer-drawn map. The algorithm would be based on the ranking of the redistricting criteria the Commission will soon vote on. This map can serve as a starting point for the Commission and the Commission can then adjust that map to make specific changes that commissioners feel necessary. This would allow an algorithm to start the process, and for the Commission to complete the process 2) Have your mapdrawer use their redistricting software to generate equi-populous districts that do not take the Commission's criteria into account. This would create a starting point that the Commission can then adjust 3) Start with another set of non-gerrymandered maps. Either the 2011 Independent Bipartisan Advisory Commission maps or the winning maps of the 2011 Virginia College and University Redistricting Competition would be fine starting points for the commission, as these maps were drawn with fairness in mind As you can see, there are more than two options available here. The Commission can easily engage in a clean break from the current gerrymandered maps while also giving itself enough time to draw maps by the statutory deadline. I urge you to reject your attorneys' suggestion of starting from the current maps and pursue one of these other options.

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 16, 2021 8:36:16 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Bill Millhouser
EMAIL: bmillhouser2010@cox.net
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Inadequate Commission meeting agendas and materials

COMMENT:

I am writing to request that the following information regarding the August 17 Commission meeting be posted on the Commission website ASAP. - A more informative agenda which clearly identifies decision points to be voted on at the meeting; I note that the agenda that has just been posted does not include discussion of selection of a map-drawing consultant—is this an oversight? - All materials germane to the issues to be voted on so that the public can understand and provide comments on the options that the Commission will be discussing and voting on. The lack of publicly available information for today's meeting prevented the public from fully participating in the meeting as required by statute, For example, the agenda did not explain that key issues, with exception of the "Official Start Date" would only be discussed today, and that that votes on these issues would be held at Tuesday's meeting. Again, with the exception of the alternative start date calendars, no materials were provided on the Commission website for any of the other topics discussed. The dearth of written materials make it impossible for the public to understand the various options that the Commission is considering and the pluses and minuses for each option. For example, the public had absolutely no idea what the

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

Revised Criteria guidelines entailed when the commission engaged in a line-by-line discussion. Similarly, members of the public have no idea how the option of using the University of Richmond to draw maps came about. As a separate matter I urge the Commission to hire the University of Richmond or another Virginia-based entity to; this is the commonsense solution to ensuring fair map drawing from the start.

DATE RECEIVED: Wednesday, August 18, 2021 8:41:30 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Cyrelle Gerson
EMAIL: ckerson@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Fair redistricting -- Virginia voters care

COMMENT:

I am a constituent in Virginia and I am writing to call for true non-partisan map creators. Please discard existing gerrymandered maps completely, and do what the commission was formulated to do-- draw fair maps from scratch with clean contiguous borders wherever possible, not done for partisan advantage. I voted for new districts being drawn and I assumed any rational process would use current population maps, not just start with old partisan maps and move a few people around. I assure you, I am interested in fair redistricting.

DATE RECEIVED: Tuesday, August 17, 2021 4:17:05 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Jennifer Young
EMAIL: honeycombstudio67@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Non-Partisan Maps for fair redistricting- start from scratch

COMMENT:

I am a constituent in Virginia and I am writing to call for true non-partisan map creators. Please discard existing gerrymandered maps completely, and do what the commission was formulated to do-- draw fair maps from scratch with clean contiguous borders wherever possible, not done for partisan advantage. I also call on legislators to stop cutting citizen members on the commission out of the process. Legislators' determination to disregard the citizens entirely in order gerrymander for political advantage will prove the entire process that the citizens of Virginia approved a total sham. Observe Sen. Barker's hot mic moment where he says to a commissioner "nobody cares" about redistricting. Au contraire, we do care. We demand an end to gerrymandering and to stop the reliance on cronyism and broken systems that allow legislators to choose their voters rather than voters choosing their legislators.
<https://youtu.be/fcAOcBIQfXo>

DATE RECEIVED: Saturday, September 4, 2021 10:17:35 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Terry Ouverson
EMAIL: touverson@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Map boundries

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

COMMENT:

I agree with maps that maximize compact areas with one exception. Boundaries should consider city and county boundaries because city and county governments should not have their impact split across Representatives.

DATE RECEIVED: Wednesday, September 1, 2021 3:26:02 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Michael Clancy
EMAIL: michaelclancy1@verizon.net
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Congressional Districts -- Northern Virginia

COMMENT:

Here is another version of a Congressional map:
<https://davesredistricting.org/join/6f4979a0-7b1f-437e-8dd7-c801cffc4448> Focusing on northern Virginia, based on the 2016 electoral results: Blue is competitive (with a lean towards D), Green is R, Purple is heavy D, Orange is heavy D, and Yellow is competitive.
This comment has not been reviewed and is not available for viewing by the public (if public viewing settings have been enabled). You may click APPROVE on this email to approve it for public viewing.

DATE RECEIVED: Wednesday, September 1, 2021 7:43:51 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Chris DeRosa
EMAIL: chris7307@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Initial NoVA map presentation

COMMENT:

Hello. I see that the agenda has been posted for the Sep 2nd mtg. I also see that Mr. Morgan and Mr. Strasma will present on "initial No VA maps". Looking at the maps, I see they are CURRENT MAPS (CD, Senate, House). The Commission voted to NOT start with current maps, but to start "fresh" instead. I hope my suspicions are allayed during the presentation; however, I am concerned that the presentation will center around current maps.
This comment has not been reviewed and is not available for viewing by the public (if public viewing settings have been enabled). You may click APPROVE on this email to approve it for public viewing.

DATE RECEIVED: Tuesday, August 17, 2021 11:21:16 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Chris Buchheit
EMAIL: buchheitcjc@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Non-Partisan Maps

COMMENT:

Hello, We voted this amendment to the Virginia Constitution because we were tired of politicians choosing its voters. Recreating maps on a partisan basis will be completely

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

unacceptable to me, and it does not reflect the will of Virginia voters. The commission *must* take all efforts to make the maps reflective of Virginia's voters - not how the politicians want them to look. Anything less will be viewed as a sham and will be rejected by the voters. Very Respectfully, Chris Buchheit

DATE RECEIVED: Thursday, August 12, 2021 9:15:42 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: William Helfrich
EMAIL: william.helfrich9@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

SUBJECT: Redistricting

COMMENT:
Hello, Please do not use the existing legislative map to assist in redistricting. This would lead to a historical bias in the results of the commission when there are so many fast and simple solutions to developing new districts. I work in data analytics and recommend using a clustering algorithm that can draw lines using a set number of clusters (the number of desired districts) to sperate voters into equal groups based on geographic distance to cluster centers. This is the most unbiased method to develop districts and would likely take less than a single day's work for a single analyst using census data to do what would take 45 days for an entire committee. Very respectfully, Will Helfrich

DATE RECEIVED: Thursday, September 2, 2021 4:04:55 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Chris Buchheit
EMAIL: buchheitcjc@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Don't mind the politicians

COMMENT:
Hello, I'm commenting in response to something that was said in today's meeting - specifically that the map drawers would be happy to work with the politicians on the committee to help ensure the districts "work better" for them. Please do not let this happen. Regardless of party, I do not care what the incumbents think about their districts. This is about ensuring adequate representation for the voters, not protecting incumbents. Please make sure the maps are for that purpose and that purpose only. Thank you so much. Very Respectfully, Chris Buchheit
This comment has not been reviewed and is not available for viewing by the public (if public viewing settings have been enabled). You may click APPROVE on this email to approve it for public viewing.

DATE RECEIVED: Wednesday, August 11, 2021 1:33:00 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: Tom Parisi
EMAIL: tparisi3@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Please start from scratch when creating new maps

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

COMMENT:

Hello VRC, Thank you so much for the work you are doing to create fair redistricting maps that can best represent all Virginians. I simply wanted to express my desire that you scrap the old maps and start from scratch as you begin this process. This should help lead to the fairest outcome as so many others are also expressing. I realize this may take a little extra work, so thank you in advance for that. This is such an important matter, and I'm glad VA can be one of the states leading the way! -T

DATE RECEIVED: Friday, August 27, 2021 12:03:43 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Fran Larkins
EMAIL: franlarkins40@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: How and When Will You Use Maps from the Public?

COMMENT:

Have you given consideration to how and when you will use maps that are submitted to the Commission from the public? Will you accept maps using Representable, Districtr, and Dave's in addition to the Citygate software? Many citizens are drawing their "communities of interest" using Representable. If you wait until the end, it may be too late to incorporate these ideas into maps being prepared by the map drawers. It would be a terrible waste of time and energy and a disappointment for citizens if their suggestions are dismissed off-hand. On that note, when will the communications and outreach consultants begin their work? Thank you! This comment has not been reviewed and is not available for viewing by the public (if public viewing settings have been enabled). You may click APPROVE on this email to approve it for public viewing.

DATE RECEIVED: Sunday, August 22, 2021 7:06:05 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Janet Bing
EMAIL: janet.bing@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Start fresh

COMMENT:

Given how current districts currently divide communities of interest and include areas from different towns and cities, I urge the Commission to start from scratch when drawing the maps.

DATE RECEIVED: Wednesday, August 11, 2021 11:58:30 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: Paige Smith Lee
EMAIL: paigesmithlee@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: start fresh for district maps

COMMENT:

Gerrymandering is a blight on our voting process. You have an opportunity to create

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

maps that are representative of the constituents of Virginia. I will echo Ms. Strange on what we would like you to do: Please ensure that the following gets done as you draw the new maps. 1) Virginia is the fifth most gerrymandered state so throw out the very gerrymandered 2011 maps drawn by the Republicans in the House of Delegates and Democrats in the Virginia Senate. 2) Draw completely new maps focused on keeping "Communities of Interest," towns, cities, and counties together. 3) Pay absolutely no attention to where the Republicans or Democrats politicians live in Virginia. 4) Meet the state constitution's requirement that congressional maps be contiguous and compact (all existing congressional districts are contiguous but not very compact). 5) Meet as much as you can, even if it means working every day, to get the new maps drawn as quickly as possible. 6) Give citizens as much time as possible to review the new maps. 7) Be transparent in all your actions. 8) Invite the press into your meetings. 9) Give the citizens of Virginia the fairest congressional district maps possible. 10) Make Virginia a shining example of what citizens and politicians can do, working together, to ensure our democracy works for all of us. Thank you, Paige Smith Lee

DATE RECEIVED: Friday, August 13, 2021 7:49:43 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: Not Sharing
EMAIL: arianwen@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Redistricting

COMMENT:
Gerrymandering has long been an issue and to do this properly, we MUST start fresh. It's the only way to make sure redistricting is done fairly and for the benefit of ALL Virginians.

DATE RECEIVED: Saturday, August 7, 2021 9:37:23 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: Jessica Sun
EMAIL: jessica.sun27@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Incumbent Protection Gerrymandering

COMMENT:
Free and fair elections require a fair opportunity for both primary and general election challengers. In a functioning democracy, voters should always choose their elected officials based on the needs of their communities. Incumbents should not have a wildly unfair advantage in choosing who their voters are to secure their seat. It should be basic common sense for anyone claiming to support America and our Constitution that voters should pick their elected officials. The residence locations of incumbents should not be considered by the redistricting commission. The commission should emphasize communities of interest, jurisdictional lines, and compactness.

DATE RECEIVED: Tuesday, August 17, 2021 9:06:01 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Sherri Neil
EMAIL: zahnganna@aol.com
REGION: NA

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Counting of prion population

COMMENT:

For the purposes of redistricting, I agree that the prison population should be counted at the address they came from (if in Virginia) and not at the prison in which they are housed. Rural communities have already had an unfair advantage of bolstering their population numbers through the Census process of counting the prison inmates as part of the overall population of the county where they are being housed. When private prisons exploded in this nation and Virginia under Governor Allen, these prisons were all built in rural areas. Purposely, it was decided to count inmates in these institutions as being part of the population counts for these rural areas. Thus bolstering their population numbers, and providing an unfair allotment of federal and state funds that are allocated based on census counts, as well as giving them an increased number of representatives in Congress. Conversely, being that persons housed in these penal institutions are predominately black and brown people, that come from and will return to urban localities, those localities have been underfunded because of how census counts prison inmates, regardless of the fact that when they return home, that jurisdiction must provide services for them. Also, these jurisdictions are cheated out of proper representation in Congress due to this process. Therefore, it is only fair that by allowing the Virginia Redistricting Commission to count inmates based on their last address in Virginia, (especially for those that will be released) and not as a portion of the population in rural prisons merely helps to more fairly balance the scales that have been unfairly tilted in favor of the more rural areas, which (not coincidentally) also tend to be more representative of the Republican party.

DATE RECEIVED: Sunday, August 22, 2021 1:46:24 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Judith E. Brown
EMAIL: judithevansb@yahoo.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Your task is so important to all of us -- please do it right !

COMMENT:

First, thank you for the time and attention you are spending on this redistricting process -- on behalf of the residents of our Commonwealth. Please, please: 1 -- Please draw new maps for us. Don't just try to jiggle the old ones a little. Those maps don't make sense on the ground now, and they won't make sense with a few jiggles! 2-- Please get professional, non-partisan map drawers to help make your job do-able. I've listened to some of the "Masters" explain how they work. I've studied what the experienced specialists & centers at universities (Princeton and others) can offer. Please use them ! Give them guidance, and tell them your principles; then let them work their magic 3 -- We citizens remain deeply interested in the entire redistricting process. Please keep faith with us and do the best, fairest job you can. We will be grateful indeed.

DATE RECEIVED: Friday, August 13, 2021 8:56:50 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: Michelle Schmitt
EMAIL: michelleschmittphd@yahoo.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Start with new maps

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

COMMENT:

Elected officials should represent real areas: city and county lines should be used.
That is the map of the Commonwealth where the Commission should start.

DATE RECEIVED: Friday, August 6, 2021 1:06:21 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: Stephen Spitz
EMAIL: stephenlspitz@icloud.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Incumbent Protection Gerrymandering

COMMENT:

Elected officials should not be able to pick their voters. Voters should pick their elected officials. The residence locations of incumbents should not be considered by the redistricting commission. The commission should emphasize communities of interest, jurisdictional lines, and compactness. Free and fair elections require an fair opportunity for both primary and general election challengers.

DATE RECEIVED: Thursday, August 12, 2021 6:33:57 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: Linda Stanley
EMAIL: linda_s_20190@yahoo.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Redistricting Maps

COMMENT:

DO NOT START WITH MAPS DRAWN in 2011. Start a new and use 2020 Census Data.

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 23, 2021 1:49:21 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Arielou Marcy
EMAIL: pabmarcy@msn.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Gerrymandering map

COMMENT:

Do not start from gerrymandered maps. PLEASE we are trying to be a true democracy. Do not consider incumbent addresses. PLEASE and THANK YOU

DATE RECEIVED: Thursday, August 5, 2021 10:32:52 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: Chris DeRosa
EMAIL: chris7307@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Do not use existing maps

COMMENT:

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

Despite what the legal teams have recommended, I urge the Commission to reject the idea of using current maps when it begins drawing new district lines. Starting with existing maps will automatically grant incumbent protections because all 140, no, 151 elected representatives are obviously placed in districts. No matter how much you "tweak" the lines, most of the incumbents will benefit from remaining in their old home districts. The people of Virginia voted for this bipartisan commission because they want fair maps, not maps that are the same old, same old. Do NOT start with the existing maps. NO incumbent protections. For the people, not for the politicians.

DATE RECEIVED: Wednesday, August 18, 2021 10:32:26 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Ann Speicher
EMAIL: ALSpeicher7@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: We Need Nonpartisan Map

COMMENT:
Dear Commissioners: I am writing to urge you to create the new voting districts in Virginia on a nonpartisan basis. That's what the voters approved and I would expect it is what you feel obligated to provide. That means starting from scratch using the new census information, not basing the redistricting on the old boundaries with a few changes. I realize redistricting is a difficult process and the timing is short. But nonpartisan redistricting is what we need to help ensure fair, competitive elections.

DATE RECEIVED: Sunday, August 22, 2021 10:01:43 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Chris DeRosa
EMAIL: chris7307@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: We are listening... Are you?

COMMENT:
Dear Commissioners, I have heard that at least one Commissioner has stated that very few Virginians are paying attention to the redistricting work that you are doing. I might agree that the number of people attending meetings and hearings in person has been less than what we had hoped - this despite the tireless efforts of myself and others (individuals and organizations) to encourage public participation. Perhaps if we had had a Communications expert "on board" three months ago, more Virginians would have been aware of these meetings and hearings. I hope that we will see more robust and widespread engagement in the coming weeks. Make no mistake - Virginians are watching and listening. I note that over 300 pages of information and testimony have been submitted via email. Many others are listed in individual meeting sites. The public portal on the Commission website is a new tool that more Virginians are using to communicate with you. In less than 4 weeks, 125 comments have been submitted - the number has been growing (from 33 the first two weeks to 92 during the past 11 days). I hope that you have read them all. Our voices (should) matter. As you meet on Monday, I hope that you will keep the citizens and voters and residents of Virginia in mind. They have told you loudly and emphatically to take partisanship and politics out of this process; hire a nonpartisan map drawer; respect our communities of interest; do not start from existing maps - start fresh! Thank you.

DATE RECEIVED: Wednesday, September 1, 2021 8:56:01 PM GMT-04:00

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Chris DeRosa
EMAIL: chris7307@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: We must have better outreach and communications

COMMENT:

Dear Commissioners and DLS staff, I hope that all of you are well. I am looking forward to hearing a report from the Communications team that has been contracted by this Commission. Many of us have been eagerly anticipating improvements and changes in the outreach to the public - specifically, a more user-friendly website, as well as a more robust publicity effort. Thus far, I have been disappointed that I haven't seen any signs of greater outreach. For example, tomorrow's meeting agenda was posted only a few hours ago - only about an hour prior to the deadline for signing up to speak virtually. I was not aware of the agenda items and thus did not sign up to speak. Many other Virginians were also "in the dark". This should change. Might I also suggest that the deadline to sign up to speak virtually be extended - to perhaps 4 hours or even 8 hours prior to the meeting, rather than 24 hours. I hope that changes will be visible soon - including: -organizing and sorting written public comments - establishing a robust social media presence including Facebook -providing information about meetings in a more timely fashion, including agendas and materials - providing greater access to all Virginians, including providing closed captioning, as well as sign language interpreters and other language interpreters (as Michigan's Redistricting Commission does) (https://www.michigan.gov/documents/micrc/MICRC_Mtg2_Notice_Sept_2_734005_7.pdf) - utilizing the email distribution list to provide greater information in a timely manner Thank you. As always, I thank you for your dedication and service on this very important commission and your dedication to keeping the public's interest in mind as you proceed. This comment has not been reviewed and is not available for viewing by the public (if public viewing settings have been enabled). You may click APPROVE on this email to approve it for public viewing.

DATE RECEIVED: Thursday, August 19, 2021 11:59:29 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Meghan Crowley
EMAIL: meghan.mairi@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Don't start with old maps!!

COMMENT:

Dear Commission, I am a Virginia citizen who voted in favor of the redistricting commission. However, I am gravely concerned by the current proposal to begin the commission's work with the old voting maps. Our old voting maps fractured communities and interfered with good governance in the state. Furthermore, starting to draw our 2021 maps based on 2011 voting maps will perpetuate districts that favor incumbents over challengers. Any purported time constraints are irrelevant, as fidelity to a balanced, fair process is paramount. Furthermore, computer map drawing produces maps quickly, once the map criteria are set. Think about the precedents that the commission is setting with each action, and ask yourself, "Is this decision in the best interest of ALL Virginia voters?" Our democracy needs competitive districts, which will come based on data analysis, not the old, non-competitive districts. Virginians expect a new approach to drawing voting maps, and voters (like me!) strongly endorsed a new start in the

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

November 2020 election. How disappointing it will be if special interests and incumbents continue to hold sway over our democratic processes. Sincerely, Meghan Crowley

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 23, 2021 8:12:58 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Linda Rice
EMAIL: lindarice678@cox.net
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Drawing Maps

COMMENT:

Dear Commission Members, I worked for 8 years to promote and advocate for an independent redistricting commission. I am greatly disturbed by the partisan bickering reported by the press among your members. Virginians want maps drawn that use the new census data which is demonstrated by the overwhelmingly support to establish this commission. You need to remember that your efforts should reflect the desire of most Virginians to have maps that are not gerrymandered. I and my neighbors do not want you to shun your responsibility and send the action to the courts. Step up to your responsibility!!

DATE RECEIVED: Wednesday, August 11, 2021 12:14:12 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: Emily Haines
EMAIL: persephoneunderground@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Please start redistricting with fresh maps

COMMENT:

Dear Commission Members, I am writing to state my strong opinion on how the redistricting process should begin. I'm aware that one of the first questions you will face is what to use as a baseline for your decisions. I strongly believe that in order to have a truly unbiased process, the commission must start fresh, and under no circumstances should the current district maps be used as a starting point. Including them will make incumbent protection part of a process it has no place in. Fair maps benefit everyone, and incumbent protection by its very nature is about protecting the status quo for the few at the expense of the many, and will severely limit the ability of the commission to fix maps that have historically been extremely partisan and both politically and racially gerrymandered. If a starting point is needed for expediency, I suggest that the commission use the maps drawn by the 2011 Independent Bipartisan Advisory Commission, or ask for basic starter maps to be drawn up based on population blocks alone. Please start this process off right- use fresh maps for a clean slate, and a fresh start for all of Virginia's districts. On the concern of lawmakers being "drawn out" of their districts, perhaps a grandfathering provision could be included to allow an incumbent to run again as long as they continue to be reelected, regardless of their current address as long as it remains within a certain distance of their district. This would allow the commission to shelve that concern and focus on what matters most- fair maps for all Virginians.

DATE RECEIVED: Thursday, August 5, 2021 3:34:56 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: judy marie johnson
EMAIL: renaissancewomyn@gmail.com
REGION: NA

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: redistricting

COMMENT:
create compact contiguous and communities of common interest. so that voters decide rather than politicians, keep the districts and board diverse in age, sex, ethnicity, wealth reflective of the community and its needs

DATE RECEIVED: Tuesday, August 24, 2021 8:26:51 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Edward Novak
EMAIL: efxnovak@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Use of Computer Technology

COMMENT:
Could the commission use a computer technology that would divide areas up utilizing county and city data?

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 23, 2021 6:36:48 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Leo Watkins
EMAIL: leo@wheatenergyaudits.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: non-partisan mathematical audit

COMMENT:
Congratulations on your decision to draw the maps from scratch. Thank you. Your actions give citizens hope. Please continue your good work in increasing the public trust by using a non partisan consultant and mathematical audit of the state as part of your map drawing process. Keep up the good work. We're counting on you! Thanks. Leo Watkins

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 16, 2021 7:22:36 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Janet Martin
EMAIL: janet5204martin@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Pick ONE map drawer and post meeting info

COMMENT:
Commission: As I watched the meeting today I was dismayed by a number of things. I would like to highlight two of those issues. 1) Please do NOT choose two map drawers. If you allow there to be one Republican and one Democratic map drawer that will only enable incumbent protection to be implicitly baked in from the beginning. You must start from a neutral place in order for the citizens of the Commonwealth to have a fair chance at having their voice heard going forward. Also, you do not only have a binary choice of current maps or a blank sheet of paper, as was suggested by the Lawyers. There are plenty of options that will give you a more

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

neutral starting point, like using other maps from 2011. 2) You MUST provide us with the same information as that which is being discussed in the committee. There was no way for the public to follow the discussion about the priorities that the committee is going to draw the maps with, and given your charge to have this be a transparent process, it seems a huge oversight. Please correct this going forward so the citizens of the Commonwealth can fully understand that what is going to happen to their districts. Thank you for all your hard work and looking forward to the meeting tomorrow a.m.

DATE RECEIVED: Thursday, August 12, 2021 6:34:15 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: Eleanor Loos
EMAIL: Elinva333@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: New district maps - do it right!

COMMENT:

Because of the prevalence of drawing districts to support particular parties, ideas, races etc. (i.e. gerrymandering), starting now with maps that have been tainted by that practice makes no sense. Virginia voted for a new system to negate the past practices. The only way to do that is to start fresh, drawing district based on data and common sense and untainted.

DATE RECEIVED: Wednesday, August 11, 2021 6:46:34 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: Fran Larkins
EMAIL: franlarkins40@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: No "Band-aids" Please!

COMMENT:

At the last Commission meeting, we learned that “all four legal counsel strongly encouraged the Commission to gain map drawing expertise.” Given the short window of 45 days from tomorrow – August 12 - to present the maps to the General Assembly, bringing nonpartisan map expertise on board is certainly wise. Many are very concerned, however, that the law firms also recommended using current maps as the starting point for redistricting. These lawyers were not there for the eight hearings when the commissioners listened to Virginians plead that their communities, cities, and counties no longer be divided. If they had been, they would never have considered such a recommendation. Virginia’s maps have been terribly gerrymandered and there are major problems with our legislative districts that cannot be solved with a “band-aid” approach. How are you going to decide which districts remain intact and which will need to be moved to another area of the state as population changes are taken into account? Which politicians will benefit? Wouldn’t it be less complicated, less political, and actually faster to start afresh? The Delegates and Senators who represent their constituents well should have no problem winning re-election no matter how the lines are drawn. They may even appreciate how much easier it is to get to know their districts. As a starting point, you could use computer-generated maps using an algorithm based on the legally mandated criteria. As Sen. George Barker suggested, a racially polarized voting analyst could begin right away looking at data and opportunities for minority representation districts. In addition, our cities and counties should be considered “communities of interest” and kept together as much as possible. Once again, thank you for listening!

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

DATE RECEIVED: Saturday, August 7, 2021 9:48:04 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: JoAnn Kennedy Flanagan
EMAIL: jflanagan1224@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Start Fresh!

COMMENT:

As always, thank you for the work you've taken on. There are many options for beginning our new voting maps. But basing new maps on the 2011 district maps would unfairly advantage incumbents. Please consult directly with non-partisan cartographers as you make this foundational decision. We deserve to know all the options from experts who do the technical work. Virginia Tech and George Mason University produce very skilled cartographers who can supply exact information on their methodology. Fair map drawing can only become more difficult as you work toward more detailed line drawing. Starting with a non-partisan map will be a major benefit to Virginia's democracy.

DATE RECEIVED: Thursday, August 12, 2021 1:35:27 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: Laura Moyer
EMAIL: moyer0@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Start afresh

COMMENT:

As a Virginia voter and advocate of having a citizen-led commission do the redistricting, I am disheartened to think our new districts might be based on outdated, previously gerrymandered maps. I know we can do better. Please use new the new Census and start afresh, drawing nonpartisan districts that reflect the current population and take into account Virginians' desire to keep localities intact as communities of interest. I support hiring nonpartisan professionals to draw the first draft based on the criteria set by the General Assembly. The commission could then make changes as needed to reflect the wishes of Virginians as expressed in public hearings. Thank you for doing this important work.

DATE RECEIVED: Thursday, September 2, 2021 1:37:52 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Margaret Stanton
EMAIL: stanton@sbc.edu
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: map availability

COMMENT:

As a VA resident, I would definitely want to be able to see online the current maps alongside drafts that the committee develops.
This comment has not been reviewed and is not available for viewing by the public (if public viewing settings have been enabled). You may click APPROVE on this email to approve it for public viewing.

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

DATE RECEIVED: Tuesday, August 17, 2021 10:45:03 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Jonathon Wright
EMAIL: jlwright@gmx.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Nonpartisan Map Technicians

COMMENT:

After the failed motion for hiring the University of Richmond Spatial Analysis Lab, I would like to strongly advocate for another round of legal counsel investigation for a single group of map drawers in a role specifically as the technicians operating GIS. The legal counsels, staff at DLS, and the commissioners would have full access to this group to guide the process to prevent any perceived shenanigans or partisan interests. The concept of reconciling two sets of partisan maps will likely lead this commission to failure.

DATE RECEIVED: Sunday, August 22, 2021 10:32:37 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: varedist@dls.virginia.gov
NAME: Chris Burton
EMAIL: burton.c.lee@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA
SUBJECT: Use A Collaborative Process

COMMENT:

1. Know that many Virginians deem your work vitally important for a better Commonwealth. We're looking for integrity from the commission. 2. I want to urge you to make sure that the new maps are completely collaborative with 2 citizen representatives from each party, 1 Senator from each party, and 1 Delegate from each party for both the Senate and House maps.

FROM: MusicAlchemist <mostalalchemist@aol.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

Greetings VRC Commissioners,
Thank you for voting to start Virginia's redistricting map with a "clean slate" in order to get it right. So far, there has been transparency in this process, so I commend you for letting citizens know what is going on. Next, I expect the VRC to hire a nonpartisan consultant who will apply a mathematical algorithm, that is based on our criteria, to any maps that are considered.
Keep up the good work and I look forward to your next step in this process. Average citizens, like me, care and are paying attention!

FROM: Ken Chasin <kenchasin1@gmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

COMMENT:

I vote 'yes' to do the redistricting process by starting from a blank slate and creating all new Virginia election maps.

--

Ken Chasin

Mobile Phone: 508-246-6887

FROM: Daniel Giesy <dpgiesy@netscape.net>

REGION: NA

LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

Please include a non-political mathematical audit in the redistricting process to evaluate proposed redistricting maps so as to insure that all voters have equal voices.

Thank you.

Daniel Giesy

dpgiesy@netscape.net

FROM: Ken Chasin <kenchasin1@gmail.com>

REGION: NA

LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

Attached you will find in .PDF format a 3-page document that analyzes which Virginia Congressional Districts should be candidates for redistricting.

The primary data source used to perform the data analysis was the most current data available from the U.S. Census

Bureau for zip codes/ZCTAs from the American Community Survey's 5 year estimates.

Four (4) criteria were used as yardsticks for determining whether a particular existing Virginia congressional district should be a candidate for redistricting. Failure to satisfy at least two (2) of the yardsticks was deemed sufficient to have

the congressional district to be considered as a candidate for redistricting:

1. Is the congressional district's current population within 95% to 105% of 1/11 of Virginia's total population?
2. Is the congressional district's current urban land area -rural land area breakdown within 95% to 105% of state-wide averages for all the Virginia congressional districts?
3. Is the congressional district currently ethnicity balanced based on state-wide averages for all the Virginia congressional districts?
4. How much does the congressional district's existing land area in square miles deviate from the average state congressional district land area?

I am proposing that the GIS departments of the 5-10 most populated counties in Virginia be used as a resource to facilitate redrawing the map of any existing congressional district that is a candidate for redistricting. These GIS departments are already experts in GIS mapping software and given the short time-frame (45 days once the 2020 Census data is received) the Redistricting Commission has to redraw up to 151 state election maps it makes quite a bit of sense to draw on their mapping expertise.

Your feedback is welcomed.

--

Ken Chasin

Mobile Phone: 508-246-6887

Virginia Congressional District Redistricting Decision Matrix

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

Author: Ken Chasin VA_CD_Redistricting_Decision_Matrix.docx 5/19/2021

Primary Data Source: Most current data available from the US Census Bureau for zip codes/ZCTAs is from the American Community Survey's 2019 5-year estimates.

VA Congressional

District

Current

population within

95% to 105% of

1/11 of Virginia's

total population?

Urban Land Area – Rural

Land Area Breakdown

within 95%- 105% of state-

wide averages?

Ethnicity Balanced? Land Area relative to

Average state CD Land

Area

Candidate for

Redistricting?

VA-01 No – Has excess

of 48,945

residents.

No - Urban Land Area

deviates from state-wide

average of 75.51% by

negative 5.97%

No -Current % of Whites

exceeds state-wide average by

6.83%.

Minor Deviation from

state-wide average (

i.e.; 94.28 square

miles)

Yes

VA-02 No -; shortfall of

52,070 residents.

No - Urban Land Area

exceeds state-wide average

by 16.99%.

Yes Shortfall of 2,598.32

square miles

Yes

VA-03 Yes Yes Yes Shortfall of 2,642.92

square miles

No

VA-04 Yes Yes Yes Exceeds state-wide

average by 720.28

square miles

No

VA-05 No - shortfall of

40,231 residents.

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

No - Urban Land Area falls short of state-wide average by 40.21%.

No - * Current % of Whites exceeds state-wide average by 9.41%

* Current % of Hispanics falls short of state-wide average of 5.5%.

Entire Land Area is 10,030 square miles which exceeds all of other congressional districts total land areas.

Yes

31 / 52

Virginia Congressional District Redistricting Decision Matrix

Author: Ken Chasin VA_CD_Redistricting_Decision_Matrix.docx 5/19/2021

VA Congressional District

Current

population within

95% to 105% of

1/11 of Virginia's

total population?

Urban Land Area – Rural

Land Area Breakdown

within 95%- 105% of state-wide averages?

Ethnicity Balanced? Land Area relative to

Average state CD Land

Area

Candidate for

Redistricting?

VA-06 Yes Urban Land Area falls short

of state-wide average by

11.17%.

No –

* Current % of Whites exceeds state-wide average by 18.07%.

* Current % of Blacks falls short of state-wide average by

7.83%.

Exceeds state-wide

average by 2,339.98

square miles

Yes

VA-07 Yes Yes Yes Shortfall of 813.62

square miles from state-

wide average

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

No

VA-08 Yes No - Urban Land Area exceeds state-wide average by 24.2%.

No -

* Current % of Whites less than state-wide average by 9.49%.

* Current % of Hispanics exceeds state-wide average by 9.74%.

* Current % of Asians exceeds state-wide average by 6.51%.

Shortfall of 3,440.82 square miles from state-wide average

Yes

32 / 52

Virginia Congressional District Redistricting Decision Matrix

Author: Ken Chasin VA_CD_Redistricting_Decision_Matrix.docx 5/19/2021

VA Congressional District

Current

population within

95% to 105% of

1/11 of Virginia's

total population?

Urban Land Area – Rural

Land Area Breakdown

within 95%- 105% of state-wide averages?

Ethnicity Balanced? Land Area relative to

Average state CD Land

Area

Candidate for

Redistricting?

VA-09 No - shortfall of

71,919 residents.

No -Urban Land Area falls

short of state-wide average

by 33.76%.

No –

* Current % of Whites exceeds state-wide average by 25.62%.

* Current % of Blacks falls short of state-wide average by 8.33%.

* Current % of Hispanics exceeds the state-wide average by 9.74%.

* Current % of Asians exceeds state-wide average by 6.51%.

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

Exceeds state-wide average by 5,523.88 square miles
Yes
VA-10 No - excess of 81,696 residents
No - Urban Land Area exceeds state-wide average by 10.02%.
No –
* Current % of Blacks falls short of state-wide average by 12.62%.
* Current % of Asians exceeds state-wide average by 8.96%.
Shortfall of 2,217.82 square miles from state-wide average
Yes
VA-11 Yes No - Urban Land Area exceeds state-wide average by 24.46%.
No –
* Current % of Whites falls short of state-wide average by 15.79%.
* Current % of Hispanics exceeds state-wide average by 9.43%.
* Current % of Asians exceeds state-wide average by 13.81%.
Shortfall of 3,404.92 square miles from state-wide average
Yes

DATE RECEIVED: Friday, July 30, 2021 9:07:25 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: Mike Clancy <michaelclancy1@verizon.net>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:
Enclosed is my written statement. Please include this statement with the written record.
Thank you.

DATE RECEIVED: Tuesday, January 5, 2021 3:46:27 PM GMT-05:00
FROM: Aaron Barden <ajbarden94@gmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

Good afternoon Selection Committee Members,
I appreciate your service in this new redistricting process.
As you fulfill your duties, I hope you will maintain the current pool's relatively good reflection of Virginia's diversity. In particular, please make selections that ensure regional, racial, gender, and economic diversity on the Commission.
The new Commission will only be effective if every Virginian can see themselves in its members.
Again, thank you for your service in this historic process.
Sincerely,
Aaron Barden

DATE RECEIVED: Wednesday, November 25, 2020 11:00:14 AM GMT-05:00
FROM: Anna Scholl <anna@progressva.org>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:
Good morning,
I write this morning to submit comments on the proposed citizen application for membership on the redistricting committee, as well as the proposed advertising plan to recruit applicants. Throughout the push to establish a redistricting commission, there have been frequent concerns expressed about ensuring diversity in representation. That concern should extend to diversity in socioeconomic background and education as well. The multiple fields to provide information about education experience and degrees earned sends the clear message that citizens should have extensive schooling in order to participate in the redistricting process. I would strongly recommend the committee include additional disclaimers clarifying that a college degree or other higher education is not required to apply or participate in the commission. Similarly, I wish to raise concerns regarding the proposed advertising plan. As the meeting materials clearly note, focusing advertising on print newspapers and newspaper websites primarily reaches "affluent, educated audiences." Advertising designed to reach that specific audience will only ensure applications to the commission are similarly skewed to well-off and educated people--not reflective of the commonwealth. I strongly encourage the committee to consider more diverse modes of advertising on platforms as part of a plan designed to reach an audience as diverse as the people who live here.
Best,
Anna Scholl
--
Anna Scholl
Executive Director, Progress Virginia
pronouns: she, her, hers
cell - (540) 460-1269
www.progressva.org
@ProgressVA
www.facebook.com/ProgressVA
Sent with Shift

FROM: Erin Corbett <erincorbett202@gmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:
Hello! Can we please address the following questions?

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

- 1) Will the commission create a website/newsletter/social media account to provide updates to the public?
- 2) When will we know which dates the commission hearings will take place?
- 3) Do we have an update on when the commission will receive census data?
- 4) How does the commission plan on representing demographics + regions fairly?
- 5) Will the chairperson be able to provide contact information for the public to communicate with him/her directly?
- 6) What key goals does the commission have in ensuring transparency in their processes and decisions?
- 7) Will public commentary be taken into decision regarding map development?
- 8) What criteria is the commission using to select the chairperson?
- 9) How does the chairperson reflect the diversity of the Commonwealth?
- 10) Does the chairperson have specific allegiance to any specific maps, regions or demographics?

Thank you!

Erin

--

Erin Corbett

DATE RECEIVED: Thursday, January 21, 2021 5:35:49 PM GMT-05:00
FROM: Ankit Jain <ajankit92@gmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

Hi,

I'm a Virginia voter who wants fair districts. If possible, I would like to offer spoken public comments during the 1/21 commission meeting. I am speaking to the citizen members in this email: I ask you to please assert yourselves throughout this process. You should not assume the politicians on this commission have the best interests of the citizens at heart. Politicians want to hold onto power. I hope to be proven wrong, but I expect the politicians will push you to adopt a bipartisan gerrymander. You, citizen members, represent all of us. Please do not shrink from your duties, and do not assume the politicians know best. I hope you will push back at any attempt to gerrymander and only vote for maps that are truly fair, with no poisonous partisanship.

Best,

Ankit Jain

DATE RECEIVED: Wednesday, January 6, 2021 12:09:11 PM GMT-05:00
FROM: Roger miller <rogerd.miller@verizon.net>
REGION: Na
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

High dollar donors already have inordinate influence in how our government functions. They don't also need a seat deciding who our representatives are. The purpose of the amendment was to give voters confidence that our leaders served the interests of their constituents, not special interests. If relatives of former electeds are disqualified, shouldn't mega-donors be too?

Thank you for hearing me out,

Roger Miller

DATE RECEIVED: Sunday, July 18, 2021 12:35:35 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Ankit Jain <ajankit92@gmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION

PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED

November 19, 2021

COMMENT:

Members of the Redistricting Commission,
My name is Ankit Jain and I am a volunteer with OneVirginia working to ensure the state passes fair maps. I write to you to ask that you hire a third-party to either draw the district maps or to consult closely with you as you draw them. I further ask that you issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for this position as soon as feasible, and that you ultimately select Moon Duchin from MGGG Redistricting Lab at Tufts University to draw or support you in drawing the district maps. I have attached my comments to this email as a Word document as well.
Most members of the Commission have no experience drawing district maps using the redistricting software. It is of course possible for members to learn, but there is no need for that. Members of the Commission were selected so they could imbue the new maps with their values, their understanding of their communities, and their ability to combine that knowledge with what they learn during public hearings. This can be done without members literally drawing the maps themselves. Members can easily lay out the parameters and guidelines of what they are looking for and leave the actual map-drawing to an outside expert. I am worried that if the Commission tries to draw the maps themselves, then the few members who do have a lot of experience in map-drawing will dominate the process. This would result in those members' values and understandings having an outsized influence on how the maps are drawn. If the Commission feels strongly that its members should actually draw the maps, it should hire an outside expert to at least consult with as it draws the maps to ensure the Commission is on the right path. The Commission should hire Moon Duchin and MGGG Redistricting Lab as its outside expert. They are some of the foremost experts in drawing district maps. Ms. Duchin already has experience analyzing district maps for a government entity—she was hired in 2018 to analyze maps in Pennsylvania for fairness after the previous maps were struck down by the state Supreme Court. She has run a program training others to become expert witnesses in redistricting lawsuits. And she has done groundbreaking research on how to use mathematics to make fair maps. Her reputation as nonpartisan map-drawer is unquestioned—if the Commission hires her, Virginians can rest assured that truly fair maps will come out of this process. If the Commission does not hire Moon, they should hire someone with similar qualifications who has a clear nonpartisan track record and who has not worked with a specific political party in the past to draw proposed maps.
The Commission needs to begin the process of selecting an outside expert to draw the maps ASAP. Census data will be released in less than a month, and the Commission must submit its first set of maps within 45 days of the release of the data. In order to hire an expert in time to actually support in drawing the maps, the Commission should put out an RFP for the position immediately. At the very least, the Commission needs to discuss and decide within the next few weeks who will actually be drawing the maps.
Best,
Ankit Jain

DATE RECEIVED: Thursday, January 21, 2021 4:46:48 PM GMT-05:00
FROM: Paul Hogarth <paul@dailykos.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

On behalf of 48,477 members of the Daily Kos community — including 1,782 Virginia residents — who have signed the following petition, we are requesting that Commissioner Jose Feliciano Jr. resign — and that his colleagues also request his resignation.
Jose Feliciano Jr. has used his personal Twitter account to claim the 2020 election was rigged,

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

throw misogynistic insults at women, and question America’s involvement in slavery. He lacks the temperament to objectively review facts and represent all Virginians on the commission, and must therefore resign.

Attached as a PDF document are the names of the 48,477 signatories of the petition — including 1,782 Virginian residents.

Below is the petition that our members have signed. You may also read it online at <https://www.dailykos.com/campaigns/petitions/sign-the-petition-virginias-pro-trump-redistricting-commissioner-must-resign>

Sign the petition: Virginia’s pro-Trump redistricting commissioner must resign

A commission to redraw Virginia's political boundaries for the next ten years will start meeting February 1st, but one appointee—Trump loyalist Jose Feliciano Jr.—is clearly unfit for the job.

Feliciano Jr. has used his personal Twitter account to claim the 2020 election was rigged, throw misogynistic insults at women, and question America’s involvement in slavery. He lacks the temperament to objectively review facts and represent all Virginians on the commission.

Feliciano Jr. was appointed upon the recommendation of Virginia delegate Mark Cole, one of several Republican legislators who urged Vice President Mike Pence to overturn electoral votes for Joe Biden. He was then selected by House Minority Leader Todd Gilbert.

The redistricting commission will set boundaries for congressional & legislative seats in Virginia for the next decade. Any individual who baselessly questions the legitimacy of the 2020 election and berates political opponents is unfit to serve on a commission so crucial to our democracy.

Feliciano Jr.'s incendiary language on social media proves he cannot serve on this commission, and must resign. The other appointed commissioners must also demand his resignation.

Sign the petition: Jose Feliciano Jr. must resign from Virginia's redistricting commission, and his colleagues must demand his resignation as well.

Paul Hogarth, Campaign Director

Daily Kos Activism Team

paul@dailykos.com

DATE RECEIVED: Wednesday, November 25, 2020 3:27:33 PM GMT-05:00
FROM: Greg Delawie <delawiegt5@gmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

Regarding the three-year VA residency requirement, I hope this will be interpreted to mean legal residency (domicile), rather than physical presence in the Commonwealth. I raise this because I believe military or Foreign Service personnel who may have been domiciled in VA for years should be eligible to serve, even if they were temporarily absent during some of the three-year period, whether in the US or abroad on assignment for the US government, assuming they maintained their domicile in VA (driver's license, pay VA state taxes, etc).

--

Greg Delawie
Ambassador (Ret)

DATE RECEIVED: Tuesday, July 20, 2021 10:05:20 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: senate district02 <district02@senate.virginia.gov>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

Thank you!
Locke for State Senate

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

Click here who's my legislator information

Theresa E. Parker
Legislative Assistant
757-825-5880 District office
804-698-7802 Richmond office
757-825-7327 fax
757-378-4011 cell
New Procedures

If you have legislation concerns, please fill out this Google form.

On Mon, Jul 19, 2021 at 2:39 PM Liz White <liz.white@onevirginia2021.org> wrote:

Thank you again for the opportunity to speak to you this morning. I am attaching my testimony with the list of questions I referenced. I hope they are helpful to you in these coming weeks.

Liz

--

Liz White
Executive Director, OneVirginia2021
liz.white@onevirginia2021.org
she/her

DATE RECEIVED: Thursday, January 21, 2021 1:21:53 PM GMT-05:00
FROM: William Shilton <wvs.4026@gmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

The size of the 1st Congressional district was gerrymandered to favor one party over the other. The boundaries of this district must be changed to remedy that effect. Why not just divide Virginia districts into equal square mileage districts so they do not favor either party?

FROM: <sghdly@aol.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

Virginia voted for a fairer representation system. Please honor that vote by setting up a new system - not an "add-on" to the existing system!

DATE RECEIVED: Thursday, September 2, 2021 12:46:37 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: VA Redistricting <varedistrictingcommission@dls.virginia.gov>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

Attachments: Fwd: mapping.eml,Fwd: Optimized Redistricting Proposal.eml,Fwd: Let me tell you about my community.eml,Headers: Fwd: mapping,Headers: Fwd: Optimized Redistricting Proposal,Headers: Fwd: Let me tell you about my community
Virginia Redistricting Support Staff
Division of Legislative Services

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

DATE RECEIVED: Tuesday, August 24, 2021 12:04:24 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Jessica Larsen <jtrojak@gmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:
Dear Commission Members,
Thank you for voting to begin the map-drawing process from scratch.
I'm writing to urge you to hire a nonpartisan consultant to apply an algorithm based on Virginia's criteria to any maps that are considered and to ensure the redistricting process is as transparent and non-partisan as possible.
A Virginia Voter,
Jessica Larsen

DATE RECEIVED: Wednesday, August 25, 2021 9:44:23 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Nathan Bynum <nathangbynum@gmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:
Dear commission,
Please fulfill your charge and do your part to ensure a non-partisan, mathematical audit to assure fair voting districts where neither party will wind up with a disproportionate number of wasted votes.
-Nathan Bynum
<https://nathanbynum.com/teaching>

DATE RECEIVED: Tuesday, August 24, 2021 11:51:12 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: Joshua Greene <kiddush18@yahoo.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:
Dear Virginia Redistricting Commission,
I am grateful that the Commission voted on August 23, 2021 to do a "from the ground up" redistricting plan. I urge the Commission to proceed in a non-partisan manner while respecting the need to reflect minority groups in any final redistricting plan.
Sincerely,
Joshua Greene

DATE RECEIVED: Thursday, August 26, 2021 7:59:45 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: jonxgrainger <jonxgrainger@protonmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:
Good Morning,
Thankyou for voting to start redistricting from scratch. To be fair to all we a non partisan's touch using a fair mathematical model to try and make all voters count in subsequent elections.

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

Regards
Jon Grainger
Sent with ProtonMail Secure Email.

DATE RECEIVED: Tuesday, August 24, 2021 2:09:55 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Katrien Vance <msorion@gmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:
Hello, Redistricting Commission!
I am one of those ordinary people who worked with OneVirginia2021 to convince voters to vote to create an independent redistricting commission. It's the only cause I've ever participated in because I am a middle school teacher, and I try to stay as neutral as possible. But this cause was a no-brainer, and I did many activities with my class that brought them to the realization that districts drawn by the politicians trying to get elected to those districts were silly!
Anyway, I know your work has been hard, and it probably feels frustrating and unappreciated. I just wanted to let you know that I appreciate your willingness to serve on this commission very much. Thank you for helping Virginia make its voting maps more logically represent the people. With regard to that logic, I love the idea of bringing in a mathematician to apply an algorithm. He doesn't get a vote, but he can provide information for you. More information is a great thing! I hope you'll vote to use this service.
Thank you again for your work!
--
Katrien

DATE RECEIVED: Tuesday, August 24, 2021 1:15:08 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: E. Bryant" <ebryant784@gmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:
I am a concerned citizen of America and a voting resident of Virginia. In simple terms, do not allow partisanship to taint our democratic processes. In other words, hire a nonpartisan consultancy to apply a strict mathematical algorithm to any districting proposal you may come up with. I would also like the algorithm vetted by a third party, to ensure it is as neutral as possible. I believe strongly that Virginia can lead the southern states in showing how to run fair elections and redistricting.
You may contact me further if you have any questions,
Emille Bryant

DATE RECEIVED: Wednesday, September 1, 2021 5:44:36 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Sue Rosenberg <sue.rosenberg@verizon.net>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:
My name is Sue Rosenberg.
I want to speak about the concept of communities of interest, in particular, defining religion as a community of interest. When you say "religion" I hear "ghetto." I urge you not to turn districts

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

into ghettos.

Gerrymandering is another issue. A good test for gerrymandering is the number of split precincts in a district. I've looked at existing split precincts in Virginia, and there are several where one precinct has an 80/20 split between districts, and an adjacent precinct is split 20/80 with the same districts. This is a clear case of gerrymandering, and I urge you to minimize splitting precincts.

DATE RECEIVED: Wednesday, September 1, 2021 1:31:06 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Lucille Omeara <llomeara@yahoo.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

On August 17 your commission voted to illuminate barriers to considering political data when re-drawing district boundaries. That is not what we voted for. New district boundaries were meant to be based on compact communities of interest, not politics. We are paying attention and we are tired of gerrymandering. Do what you were supposed to do and what we voted for.

DATE RECEIVED: Tuesday, August 24, 2021 12:49:44 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Emily McPhie <ebm7554@gmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

Please ensure that Virginia's district boundaries are based on geographically sensible lines and not on a partisan gathering of like-minded voters. Personally, I want to live in a district where I have a REAL CHOICE BETWEEN REASONABLE CANDIDATES from each party, hopefully both of whom are more to the middle of their parties' platforms rather than one candidate only, chosen by that party's extreme wing.

Please stop the partisan wrangling and let us be able to choose the best and most reasonable candidates! Virginia can be a leader in a return to greater political sanity in the U.S. if you show the way by your rational, non-partisan actions.

Thanks -- Emily McPhie

DATE RECEIVED: Tuesday, August 24, 2021 12:10:25 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Robert Wilson <rdwilson837@gmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

Please make sure the mathematical audit is a nonpartisan audit. As statisticians know how to lie with numbers, a mathematical audit can be skewed to reach a predetermined result. The Commission seemed to rediscover it's purpose August 23rd. The number of considerations that have been added through legislation, in addition to the raw head counts will complicate audit's mission. Some concessions will no doubt have to be made. The Commission will need to take pains to make the necessary compromises without the taint of partisanship.

DATE RECEIVED: Tuesday, August 24, 2021 12:21:07 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Lisa Coker <lisa_coker@yahoo.com>
REGION: NA

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

The non-partisan mathematical audit the commission discussed is a must for fair redistricting. I have been a resident of Virginia since 1982, and am proud of the progress in equality and transparency I have been seeing in recent years.

DATE RECEIVED: Tuesday, August 24, 2021 6:19:48 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: gynbarb@gmail.com
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

Dear commission,
Thanks, in advance, to you all for your hard work to come. Please continue to rectify the very unfair system that we have, re. Gerrymandering. Thank you so much! Sincerely,
Virginia Barber, MD
Sent from my iPhone

DATE RECEIVED: Tuesday, August 24, 2021 6:14:11 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: Michael Pan <71pan@cua.edu>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

It is time for an audit right now.

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 23, 2021 10:38:12 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: ROGER SOLES <MABRES@aol.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

I understand you've made progress on a nonPartisan basis. Congratulations in reflecting the will of the people.
While we all wait to see the draft the non-partisan consultant's algorithms produce, I personally am less concerned with maintaining "communities of interest" as versus districts where communities are encouraged by their district lines to have to work together to represent the best interests of all the citizens. How weird the district's borders appear Geographically is not the crux of the issue. We Americans must learn to live & work together for our common good. Good gerrymandering can help develop well balanced districts where no special group/race/ or interest has power over others and we must all work together.
Go for it.
Sincerely,
Roger E Soles
Sent from my iPhone
Roger E. Soles
703-314-5561 cell
703-527-0305 home

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 23, 2021 10:49:20 PM GMT-04:00

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

FROM: Ken Berger <kenbergerrva@gmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

Dear Virginia Redistricting Commission,
I believe your decision to start from scratch to determine redistricting, rather than starting by utilizing the existing districting map as the basis, is the correct one.
It is my understanding that, in addition to utilizing partisan consultants for developing redistricting options, the Commission is considering using a nonpartisan consultant to utilize an algorithm based on criteria you establish to evaluate proposals and that you will publicly present the results prior to selection of a final recommendation. I strongly support the use of an independent nonpartisan consultant to make this type of evaluation and to make those results public before your Commission makes a final recommendation.
Should you require additional clarification, please contact me.
Thank you for your efforts.
Ken Berger

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 23, 2021 9:48:50 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Jodi Fisler <jfisler@gmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

First, I would like to thank the members of the Virginia Redistricting Commission for taking on the crucially important -- and excruciatingly difficult -- task of redrawing Virginia's legislative districts in an independent, fair, and nonpartisan manner. I know you all volunteered for this task, and I suspect it is proving to be even more challenging than you imagined when you signed on for the job. I heartily appreciate your efforts.
I would just like to voice my support for the Commission hiring a nonpartisan consultant and applying a mathematical algorithm to the remapping process. I know it has been difficult for you to reach agreement about acceptable nonpartisan advisors. I urge you to continue working together to identify people who can help move this process along in the way Virginians intended when we voted to approve the redistricting amendment. I hope I'm not naive in thinking the Commission can serve as a model for breaking through the intense political polarization that is staining our democracy.
Keep the faith, and thank you again for your perseverance.
Jodi Fisler

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 23, 2021 8:53:43 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: OAH <OAH@vyndicar.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

Please work on a blank slate and don't Gerrymander to either side.
Cheers, Olga Hernandez

DATE RECEIVED: Tuesday, August 24, 2021 10:53:12 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: Barbara Lidell <barbhawaii2@gmail.com>

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

I'm an 80 yr old,, active citizen who wants our voting districts to be non partisan. I realize creating boundaries for districts is a very difficult job due to many factors including density, topography and biases that we all have.
But I trust that those in charge love our country and want to do their best. Thank you for taking this on and good luck. You have a difficult, but very important task with many pressures.
Thank you.
A lot of people are praying for you and sending good wishes and hope.

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 23, 2021 9:58:49 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: dirich111 <dirich111@comcast.net>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

Please move forward with a plan to hire a nonpartisan consultant to mathematically apply an algorithm based on Virginia's criteria to any maps that are considered.
Thank you,
Dianna Richardson
Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 23, 2021 10:32:29 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Steve Fitzgerald <fitzunc1fan@gmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

There must be equal and fair representation in Virginia with bipartisan input for the committee to follow in the redistricting process! To start rmapping from scratch is a step in the right direction!
Steve Fitzgerald

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 23, 2021 7:49:53 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Mary-Helen Sullivan <sulgray4@verizon.net>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

I very strongly urge the commission to hire a consultant to apply an algorithm, based on Virginia's criteria for fair redistricting maps, to the map that the commission draws up. Virginia voters want a fair and transparent process and fair maps.
Thank you,
Mary-Helen Sullivan

DATE RECEIVED: Tuesday, August 24, 2021 10:50:11 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: Cathy Brinkley <bereacat77@gmail.com>

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

I am writing today to encourage you, as a committee, to consider only reasonable districts based on location and numbers. Do not let whether my party or someone else's gets an advantage. That is not what the founding fathers intended and certainly not what we deserve. Please, be as forthright and unbiased as any human can be in fulfilling this duty.
Thank you,
Cathy A Brinkley

DATE RECEIVED: Tuesday, August 24, 2021 6:22:48 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: Susan Thompson <susanthom816@gmail.com>
REGION: Na
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

Thank you for your continued work toward a non partisan mathematical audit for redistricting.
Sent from my iPhone

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 23, 2021 8:06:51 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Stephanie Theofanos <stephanie.theofanos@gmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

Dear Virginia Redistricting Commission,
I urge you to hire a nonpartisan consultant to mathematically apply an algorithm based on Virginia's criteria to any maps that are considered. In the interest of public confidence, please move forward with this plan.
Sincerely,
Stephanie S. Theofanos

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 23, 2021 9:03:57 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Karen Miller <ksmillr@gmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

Thank you for your work on the Virginia Redistricting Commission.
Please count my vote for support of a non partisan mathematical audit of any redistributing plans you are considering. It is important that Virginia shows we can redistrict in a nonpartisan way even though we have a bipartisan commission.
Thank you,
Karen Miller

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 23, 2021 8:38:02 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Don Boileau <dmbouileau@verizon.net>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

COMMENT:

As a Virginia resident for the last 40 years, I was pleased that you are starting from scratch. I hope that you had looked at the PROCESS that students from 5 universities in the Commonwealth did one year to draw state and congressional districts. Each School team used different assumptions on what made a district. Thus, I know it can be done without any data from precinct voting records.
Don Boileau
dmboileau@verizon.net

DATE RECEIVED: Tuesday, August 24, 2021 8:08:20 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: Lynn Dolnick <lynn.dolnick@gmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

You took a huge step toward making elections fair by starting with a clean slate. Thank you! Now please be sure to use the best auditing system to be sure where the voters are - a nonpartisan mathematical one. Thank you for your service.
Lynn Dolnick

DATE RECEIVED: Sunday, August 22, 2021 1:11:34 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Bill Millhouser <bmillhouser2010@cox.net>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

Hi All,
The agenda is the same as the agenda for the August 17 meeting, including the same date; very confusing.
The public needs to see complete and accurate agendas, and supporting materials beforehand to be able to participate in VRC meetings.
Thank you, Bill Millhouser

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 23, 2021 6:48:18 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Wesley Craig <wescraig@gmail.com>
REGION: Na
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

I support a non-partisan mathematical audit of redistricting maps.
:wes

DATE RECEIVED: Friday, August 20, 2021 9:26:14 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: Mike Clancy <michaelclancy1@verizon.net>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

Please post the final version of the Commission Guidelines document on your website.
Also, please identify the two map drawers.

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 23, 2021 6:09:43 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Elliott Dubin <elliottj1@verizon.net>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:
Virginia voters overwhelmingly voted for a commission that would draw non-gerrymandered congressional district, VA House of Delegates districts,an VA Senatorial districts. I wholeheartedly support this.
I suggest the Commission investigate whether any faculty members and/or advanced graduate students at any VA university are willing and/or able to perform this task. It would be much less expensive than private consulting companies.
Elliott Dubin
elliottj1@verizon.net

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 23, 2021 7:16:01 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Jan Erkert <janerkert@spanglererkert.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:
Dear commission,
Thank you for voting to make the map a blank slate! Please hire a nonpartisan mapping company to fulfill the will of Virginia voters!
Sent from my iPhone and I have to

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 23, 2021 6:55:50 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Leslie Cochrane <lesliecochrane@gmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:
As a Virginia voter, I support hiring a nonpartisan consultant to mathematically apply an algorithm based on Virginia's criteria to any maps that are considered for redistricting.
Leslie Cochrane
23188

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 23, 2021 6:17:35 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Marian Lapp <marianlapp@verizon.net>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:
Re: redrawing voting district lines:
This is one voting household in favor of a nonpartisan mathematical audit.
Sent from my iPhone

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 23, 2021 6:31:58 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: mchristina <mchristina@mm.st>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:
Thank you for all the good work you're doing. As a long time supporter of Virginia 2021 at every step of our redistricting effort, I urge you to take the next strong step. Thank you, Marion Nelson

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 23, 2021 8:59:03 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: Amy O'Callaghan <whitead3@gmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:
Date Received: Monday, August 23, 2021 8:59:03 AM GMT-04:00
Dear Redistricting members,
In a time when partisanship seems to rule the day and our existing framework appears deigned to push us ever more toward extremes, the redistricting committee was a breath of fresh air and hope.
Democrats would have had the opportunity to redraw the maps, a group that I most often align with in voting as of late. I supported giving that power to the committee instead, hopeful that this would pave the way to a better path. I am now beginning to regret my support for the committee.
Please show that hope was not misplaced. Our politics cannot continue to function like this. Our country needs to allow it's people to choose their representatives fairly.
Thank you for your hard work.
Sincerely,
Amy O'Callaghan
--

Amy O'Callaghan
804.683.1596 - Whitead3@gmail.com

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 23, 2021 6:35:01 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: MARY DYKES <mdykes3805@aol.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:
I am very concerned about the redistricting process. We live in a horribly gerrymandered district and I hope that will be corrected. But all of the partisan bickering within the commission leaves me pessimistic. I believe the agreement to start from scratch could be a good sign. Let's hope so. Virginia, of all places, should be sure that everyone's vote will matter.
I was told before the election that this whole process is a charade, leading to an ultimate inability to agree and turning it over to the state supreme court. I'm praying that that is not true and that we have some true believers in democracy on the commission.
Thank you for serving on this important group and please don't let Virginia down.
Mary

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

Sent from the all new AOL app for Android

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 23, 2021 7:20:46 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Lynn Haynes <lynnhaynesaccess@yahoo.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:
We have to have fair elections. We have to have nonpartisan elections. We must have districts determined only by math, not parties.

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 23, 2021 5:57:29 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Carolyn Henly <cphenly@comcast.net>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:
I am writing in support of your decision to begin the redistricting process from scratch, rather than using the terribly gerry-mandered map we currently have. I am in complete support of a fair redistricting based in data, not in political partisanship. Thank you for your efforts on behalf of all Virginians.
Sincerely yours,
Carolyn P. Henly

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 23, 2021 6:52:49 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Elizabeth Christeller <echristeller@gmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:
Thank you for voting for a mathematical audit based on the new census. It may be a tough transition for some legislators but starting from scratch is the right thing to do.
Elizabeth Christeller

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 23, 2021 7:06:24 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Thomas A. Wilson <tomwilsoncatalpa@gmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:
I really want our Commission to take Virginia forward with steps that meet the voting requirements of the US Constitution and that push forward a Vigorous Virginia that is built for all of us.
Yes, use good math intelligently and fairly without partisanship.
Tom Wilson
Thomas A. Wilson
taw@catalpa.org

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 23, 2021 5:59:58 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Benjamin ragsdale <benragsdale@verizon.net>
REGION: NA

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

From a pretty partisan Democrat: Keep the politics out of this process.
Thank you for that 12-4 vote today.
Ben Ragsdale

DATE RECEIVED: Thursday, August 12, 2021 4:11:47 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Robert Choplin <choplinr@gmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

Dear Redrawers:
Over the past decade Virginia's political district maps have been poorly designed. Please do not start with them as a template. That perpetuates the problems that have been the impetus to create the Redistricting Commission In November 2020, Virginia citizens voted for a constitutional amendment to end gerrymandering. Fulfilling this mandate with entirely new political districts that reflect a balance of differing opinions and voters is mandatory to have the voters pick the candidates as opposed to the candidates picking the voters. This is crucial for our state to move forward.
An improved balance of voter opinion within a district encourages candidates willing to work with people with differing opinions to solve many real problems and get better overall governance.
Some of the current maps are a result of court intervention to undo racial gerrymandering. There is still a need to improve these districts.
Useable, but not necessarily final maps should be developed within 45 days and time for adjustments should be set aside as needed to accomplish the task of redrawing maps that consider previous demographics in an area, current demographics in an area, and projected demographics in an area.
Suggestions for non gerrymandered maps can be obtained from multiple sources.
· Computer-generated "starter maps" - using an algorithm based on the legally-mandated criteria, someone like Moon Duchin (Metric Geometry and Gerrymandering Group at Tufts University) could quickly and easily create maps to use as a starting point.
"A fairness report" - using the existing maps but running them through a fairness report like the one available from the Princeton Gerrymandering Project. This would point out the biggest problem areas and direct your attention to where the biggest changes need to happen.
Equal Population map - starting from a map that is just districts determined by population and no other criteria and adjusting from there.
--
Robert H. Choplin

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 16, 2021 8:25:57 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Ankit Jain <ajankit92@gmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

Dear Commissioners,

I am a citizen who grew up in Fairfax County writing to you to express my strong support for hiring the Spatial Analysis Lab and the Digital Scholarship Lab at the University of Richmond as your single nonpartisan mapdrawer; and my strong opposition to hiring two partisan mapdrawers. I have attached my comments to this email as a Word document as well. Hiring two partisan mapdrawers to draw maps is a sure way to either create dysfunction or to create an incumbent protection gerrymander.

First, it is unclear how two partisan mapdrawers would even work together. Would they each draw their own maps and then the Commission would have to select one of the two maps as its choice? Would they at first draw their own maps and then compromise on one map after seeing each other's ideal maps? Would they work together from the start to draw one set of maps? If the first option, as Delegate Simon said, there is no way a supermajority of the Commission would vote for either map. If either of the latter two options, this seems likely to lead to an incumbent protection gerrymander, as the two mapdrawers come in with partisan goals and "compromise" on protecting incumbents from both of their parties. In addition to being morally wrong and the antithesis of what the people of Virginia expected from this Commission, those maps would also be unlikely to clear a supermajority threshold, as a clear majority of citizen commissioners have made clear they will not vote for any kind of gerrymander. In short, hiring two sets of partisan mapdrawers is very likely to lead to failure.

Hiring the Spatial Analysis Lab and the Digital Scholarship Lab at the University of Richmond as your single, nonpartisan mapdrawer, on the other hand, would set the Commission up for success. These organizations clearly have a high degree of experience with mapping software. They have run innovative mapping projects that often rely on the exact same Census data that the Commission will rely on to redistrict. And they have a lot of experience with the geography, demography, and population statistics of Virginia.

There is further no question about this group's nonpartisan nature—all lawyers have agreed on that. The only real objection is that the Republican legal firm questioned their experience, while the Democratic legal firm did not. This is emphatically not a disagreement centered on partisanship. It is simply a technical dispute regarding experience. It is my strong belief that this firm has more than enough experience to do this job well, and also fulfills the difficult criteria of being seen by all as nonpartisan. I implore you not to look at the upcoming vote on mapdrawers as "right vs. left" but rather "right vs. wrong." Hiring partisan mapdrawers would simply be wrong for Virginia. Hiring a well-respected nonpartisan mapdrawer would be the right choice for our state, and that's true whether you are a Democrat or Republican.

Best,
Ankit Jain

DATE RECEIVED: Thursday, August 12, 2021 12:51:44 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: PAUL GOLDMAN <goldmanusa@aol.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:
For myself and others working on redistricting, I am trying to determine when citizens, like myself, can find out the population count in their current House District?
Paul Goldman

DATE RECEIVED: Thursday, August 12, 2021 3:42:32 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: info@nbnro.org
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

COMMENT:

Dear Virginia Redistricting Commission Members:

The National Black Nonpartisan Redistricting Organization (NBNRO) is still concerned with the Virginia Redistricting Commission continuing to hold meetings during workday hours. Many of the people who are the least represented in the redistricting process cannot take off one, less known two days straight during normal workhours to attend these important meetings. In addition, holding a meeting at 8:AM in Richmond is all but saying that the Virginia Redistricting Commission is not concerned about citizens and voters who live outside the Richmond area and would need to drive two to three hours to get to Richmond to attend a meeting.

Early morning hearings and meetings were always a tool of the Virginia General Assembly to ensure that public participation on certain legislative proposals would be limited to only the very committed; or those with Richmond addresses; or people with the resources to stay overnight in Richmond. This Commission like those legislators are tasked with doing the people's business. The NBNRO and many of our citizens did not vote for a Constitutional Amendment to create a redistricting commission to only have that commission temper down public participation in the process by holding meetings at inopportune times.

We hope that in the immediate future as this process moves forward the Virginia Redistricting Commission will make the time of its meeting more opportune for those citizens unable to miss work to attend an important government hearing and/or meeting. They say time is money, and many people in this state can't give up that time, so let's please take them into account in your scheduling decisions in the future.

Phillip E. Thompson, Esq.

Executive Director

National Black Nonpartisan Redistricting Organization

Cell: 301-535-0488

Fax: 202-905-0057

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DATE RECEIVED: Sunday, August 15, 2021 5:05:48 PM GMT-04:00

FROM: DONNA BARTH <donna.don@comcast.net>

REGION: NA

LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

> Subject: Redistricting

>

>

> REDISTRICTING

>

> Several thoughts-

>

> We redistrict every 10 years. So it is not too much to ask to start from scratch rather than using the existing maps as a starting point. > We must employ a company with expertise and unquestionable credentials to draw the redistricting maps using their expertise as well as input from the commission members and citizens. Other states have drawn credible non-partisan redistricting maps, can we not draw from their experiences and draw truly NON-PARTISAN maps? > Non of our commissioners can be insurrectionists nor anti-democracy people. The legislative members should not be allowed to "bully" the non-legislative members. The most important thing is to have non-partisan, non racial fair districts so when we vote we are selecting

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

our government official rather than our government official selecting their voter.
Don Barth
>
> Sent from my iPhone

DATE RECEIVED: Thursday, August 12, 2021 2:22:08 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Jim Robertshaw <jim.robertshaw@cox.net>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:
I think that the following website has some good descriptions of state-by-state methods as well as court decisions.
https://ballotpedia.org/State-by-state_redistricting_procedures#Federal_requirements_for_state_legislative_redistricting
Good luck
Jim Robertshaw
Jim.robertshaw@cox.net
Sent from my iPad

DATE RECEIVED: Thursday, August 12, 2021 12:35:16 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Patty May <pattymmay@gmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:
Please do not use the current district map. When you have the bad visual in front of you I fear it will imprint on your mind and make it very hard to think creative and “outside the box”! Thank you in advance for your work on this important matter!
Patty May (5th district)
Sent from my iPhone

DATE RECEIVED: Thursday, August 12, 2021 10:28:05 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: judy rhoday <rhodayjudy@yahoo.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:
Please consider alternatives to starting with the exciting BADLY gerrymandered district maps!
Sent from my iPad

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 9, 2021 4:02:39 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Liz White <liz.white@onevirginia2021.org>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:
Dear Commissioners:
At the beginning of this process, our organization, OneVirginia2021, made the very conscious decision to avoid taking public positions on individual decisions the Commission has made. Both laborious and time

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

consuming, it would also give the inaccurate impression we are trying to interfere with the herculean task you have before you.

That said, today we feel compelled to speak on behalf of our supporters as you consider and debate whether to use existing legislative district lines as a beginning point to draw new maps for the next decade. We strongly believe that starting from existing maps will not only harm the final product but will also immediately undermine public confidence in the new maps as well as the new constitutionally mandated process.

We understand that this decision is being considered in the interest of saving time. It was clear by the comments made by several members of this Commission at the August 3 meeting that it seems unfeasible to begin this formidable process from a blank computer screen. But this is not a binary choice, and we want to make it notably clear that there are several viable alternative options that do not involve using the existing electoral maps. The options include, but are not limited to:

1. Computer-generated “starter maps” - using an algorithm based on the legally mandated criteria. For example, Moon Duchin (Metric Geometry and Gerrymandering Group at Tufts University) could quickly and easily create maps to use as a starting point.
2. “A fairness report” - using the existing maps but running them through a fairness report such as the one available from the nonpartisan Princeton Gerrymandering Project. This would point out the biggest problem areas and direct your attention to where the most needed changes should occur.
3. Equal Population map - starting from a map displaying districts determined by population only, with no other criteria, and adjusting from there.
4. Third party maps from 2011 - review of maps designed by students in the League of Women Voters/Wason Center Competition or the maps put forth by the Citizens Advisory Commission. Both are obviously a decade out of date, but so too are the current maps.

Any of these options will allow you to save time when compared to beginning without a reference point. We feel very strongly that the Commission should do everything possible to avoid the impression they are using existing electoral maps to protect incumbent legislators -- even if the intent of using this data is to simply meet a looming deadline. In other words, even if this rationale is not nefarious, the optics of it may tell another story.

Finally, we would once again like to thank you for your hard work thus far. The mere existence of this Commission proudly represents the most transparent redistricting process in Virginia's history, and we stand at the ready to assist you with our vast array of resources in any way possible in the coming weeks and months.

Thank you again for the opportunity to express our views. Sincerely,
Liz White

Executive Director, OneVirginia2021

--

Liz White

Executive Director, OneVirginia2021

804.305.8050

liz.white@onevirginia2021.org

she/her

DATE RECEIVED: Tuesday, August 10, 2021 9:52:36 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: Pete Costigan <ph.costigan@hotmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

The website announces that today's 4pm meeting of the full commission has been cancelled. Has a new meeting date been determined? Pete Costigan

DATE RECEIVED: Sunday, August 8, 2021 6:19:06 PM GMT-04:00

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

FROM: Ankit Jain <ajankit92@gmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

Dear members of the Redistricting Commission,
I ask that you not start your line-drawing from the heavily gerrymandered existing maps. No matter how much these lines are tweaked, starting from this baseline inevitably will bake gerrymandering into the final product. Your legal counsel has suggested this option because they believe there is not enough time to start from scratch. But if you don't think you can start from scratch, there are numerous alternative options available to you. These options can be grouped into three buckets:

- 1) Have your mapdrawer use an algorithm to generate a computer-drawn map. The algorithm would be based on the ranking of the redistricting criteria the Commission will soon vote on. This map can serve as a starting point for the Commission and the Commission can then adjust that map to make specific changes that commissioners feel necessary. This would allow an algorithm to start the process, and for the Commission to complete the process
- 2) Have your mapdrawer use their redistricting software to generate equi-populous districts that do not take the Commission's criteria into account. This would create a starting point that the Commission can then adjust
- 3) Start with another set of non-gerrymandered maps. Either the 2011 Independent Bipartisan Advisory Commission maps or the winning maps of the 2011 Virginia College and University Redistricting Competition would be fine starting points for the commission, as these maps were drawn with fairness in mind

As you can see, there are more than two options available here. The Commission can easily engage in a clean break from the current gerrymandered maps while also giving itself enough time to draw maps by the statutory deadline. I urge you to reject your attorneys's suggestion of starting from the current maps and pursue one of these other options. I have attached these comments to this email in a Word document as well for your convenience.

DATE RECEIVED: Wednesday, August 11, 2021 4:24:02 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Delegate Marcus Simon <delmsimon@house.virginia.gov>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

Wanted to make sure you received this public comment.
Andrea Tetreault
Chief of Staff

Delegate Marcus Simon

District: (571) 327-0053

Richmond: (804) 698-1053 (During Session Only)

www.MarcusSimon.com

Subject: Redrawing Virginia's districts From: Martha Woody <rbbmmw@comcast.net> To: <delmsimon@house.virginia.gov> Date: Wed, Aug 11, 2021 at 4:07 PM

"I understand that the redistricting commission faces a daunting task, given that the census data is only now available and the tight timeframe to complete new maps. However, I would strongly discourage the commission from starting with the existing maps. Over the last decade Virginia's districts have been among the most gerrymandered in the nation. To start with such a bad

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

choice would only perpetuate the problems that gave impetus to the creation of the commission. There are alternatives to 1) starting with the old map and 2) starting all over at square one. I encourage to commission to explore these alternatives.

Mary Martha Woody
rfbmmw@comcast.net"

DATE RECEIVED: Tuesday, August 3, 2021 1:01:55 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Ken Chasin <kenchasin1@gmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

My assessment of the Virginia Redistricting Commission progress
/prognosis

Introduction/Background

The Virginia Redistricting Commission was launched in December, 2020 to the best of my knowledge and its establishment is to be noted due to the tireless work of "One Virginia 2021". I have been actively engaged with the Commission since February, 2021.

I have made comments in each of the Commission's public Zoom meetings since that time. My comments laid out a step-by-step roadmap on how the Commission should go about redrawing any needed state election maps and the criteria to be used in particular for redrawing as needed any Virginia congressional election maps. I packaged all the comments into one comprehensive 10-page Adobe Acrobat document which I forwarded to the Virginia Redistricting Commission via email and they published that document on their Web site.

Additionally, I downloaded U.S. Census Bureau data from the American Community Survey's 5-year estimates for all of the current Virginia congressional districts and stored the data in Microsoft Excel workbooks. I then analyzed the data to discover relevant demographic trends and patterns to help guide redrawing the election maps for Virginia's congressional districts. The Virginia Redistricting Commission requested a copy of my data analysis which I forwarded to them in May of this year via email.

My observations of the Virginia Redistricting Commission's Conduct and Progress

- There is no dialogue between Commission members and the public. Citizens making comments to the Commission are heard but no feedback is provided by Commission members. For example, in the most recent Commission meeting held on Monday, July 19, 2021, "One Virginia 2021" in the person of Liz White and the state representative from the Virginia League of Women Voters, proposed some excellent redistricting tactics and posed some pointed questions. The only response from the chairperson of the Virginia Redistricting Commission was "Thank you".
- The Commission did purchase a robust mapping software package which is very complex and was to receive training on said software in May or June of this calendar year. However, no mention has been made of that in any of their recent Zoom meetings.
- No status reports have been issued by the Commission.
- There is no project plan for doing the redistricting.
- No preliminary redrawn election maps have been developed.
- There is no evidence that any Commission member has any prior experience with redrawing election maps.
- There is no comprehensive, established methodology that the Commission is following for doing redistricting. Instead, Commission members fall into multiple camps as regards redrawing any state election maps:
 - oOne camp wants to hire outside mapping experts with one set of experts to be hired by the Democrat members and the other set of experts by Republican members.

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

- oThe other camp wants to do at least some of the map drawing in conjunction with the mapping experts.
- oSome Commission members want to start from scratch and draw brand-new state election maps. Other members want to adjust existing state election maps as needed.
- o Finally, some members wanting to adjust existing state election maps, wish do so without incumbent addresses published on the maps.
- The Commission announced in their most recent public meeting that Calendar Year 2020 Census data is due to arrive in the next few weeks. Once the data is received the Commission has 45 days to redraw any needed state election maps:
There are a total of 151 state election maps; 11 congressional district maps, 40 Virginia state senate maps and 100 Virginia House of Delegate member maps. If we assume a worst-case scenario of all of the maps needing to be at least adjusted if not completely redrawn, a total of 3.35 maps would have to be produced daily!
Currently there exists a limited set of criteria for doing redistricting (e.g.; keeping communities of interest/place intact). However, no set of weighted demographic attributes have been put forth by the Commission for deciding which existing state election maps need to be modified or replaced.
- The Commission has appeared to be transparent in their actions but it is unknown if there are any backroom deals going on.

Prognosis for Success of the Virginia Redistricting Commission

Given the above-mentioned facts that:

1. There are no mapping experts on the Commission as far as known.
2. The mapping software package chosen is complex
3. There is no apparent established methodology for doing the redistricting
4. No preliminary redrawn election maps have been developed.

I forecast a low probability of the Virginia Redistricting Commission being successful in their mission. Most probably there will be some minor tinkering of existing election maps that will satisfy none but the citizens who want things to stay as they are. Further, the task of redrawing any election maps will probably default to the panel of retired judges who are tasked with reviewing any product developed by the Virginia Redistricting Commission.

The one possibility for a limited successful outcome would be to immediately hire out-of-state mapping gurus who are experts in the mapping software chosen by the Commission and let those experts do the redistricting as needed.

--

Ken Chasin

Mobile Phone: 508-246-6887

DATE RECEIVED: Wednesday, August 11, 2021 6:33:13 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Fran Larkins <franlarkins40@gmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

At the last Commission meeting, we learned that “all four legal counsel strongly encouraged the Commission to gain map drawing expertise.” Given the short window of 45 days from tomorrow – August 12 - to present the maps to the General Assembly, bringing nonpartisan map expertise on board is certainly wise.

Many are very concerned, however, that the law firms also recommended using current maps as the starting point for redistricting. These lawyers were not there for the eight hearings when the commissioners listened to Virginians plead that their communities, cities, and counties no longer be divided. If they had

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

been, they would never have considered such a recommendation. Virginia's maps have been terribly gerrymandered and there are major problems with our legislative districts that cannot be solved with a "band-aid" approach.

How are you going to decide which districts remain intact and which will need to be moved to another area of the state as population changes are taken into account? Which politicians will benefit? Wouldn't it be less complicated, less political, and actually faster to start afresh? The delegates and senators who represent their constituents well should have no problem winning re-election no matter how the lines are drawn. They may even appreciate how much easier it is to get to know their districts.

As a starting point, you could use computer-generated maps using an algorithm based on the legally mandated criteria. As Sen. George Barker suggested, a racially polarized voting analyst could begin right away looking at data and opportunities for minority representation districts. In addition, our cities and counties should be considered "communities of interest" and kept together as much as possible.

Once again, thank you for listening!

DATE RECEIVED: Wednesday, August 11, 2021 5:36:51 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Greg Delawie <delawiegt5@gmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

Dear Commissioners,

I hear you are feeling a lot of time pressure due to the requirement to redraw Virginia's electoral maps within 45 days; I understand this is an awesome responsibility that puts a heavy weight on your shoulders.

However, those of us, like me, who have been fighting for years for fair, democratic, and nonpartisan maps that empower currently under-represented communities will be very disappointed if you do not start from a clean slate. Virginia should not use as the basis for new lines the old maps that resulted from gerrymandering, court cases, or special deals for politically-connected individuals. Failure to completely toss out the old lines will undermine the confidence that the vast majority of Virginia's citizens placed in a new, fairer process when they voted to amend our Constitution last fall.

I have learned over the years that there are specialists and computer software available that can serve as a starting point for new maps that can then be tweaked to meet the new law's requirements and provide fair & equal representation. Please take another look at those possibilities before making a final decision.

Thank you for your time. Virginia's citizens are counting on you!

Sincerely,

Greg Delawie

--

Greg Delawie
Ambassador (Ret)
DelawieGT5@gmail.com
-9142

FROM: Martha Woody <rfbmmw@comcast.net>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

I understand that the redistricting commission faces a daunting task, given that the census data is only now available and the tight timeframe to complete new maps. However, I would strongly

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

discourage the commission from starting with the existing maps. Over the last decade Virginia's districts have been among the most gerrymandered in the nation. To start with such a bad choice would only perpetuate the problems that gave impetus to the creation of the commission. There are alternatives to 1) starting with the old map and 2) starting all over at square one. I encourage to commission to explore these alternatives.

Mary Martha Woody
rfbmmw@comcast.net

DATE RECEIVED: Tuesday, August 10, 2021 10:21:54 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: Christina Verderosa <verderosachristina@yahoo.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:
When the voters of Virginia approved the Redistricting Commission, they voted for a fresh start to the redistricting process. Let's make sure it's a fresh start by not just tweaking the old maps. There are several options that are not just a blank piece of paper but provide more options to correct the unfair maps of the past. Thank you for the work you are doing to build a fair and transparent system.
Christina Verderosa

DATE RECEIVED: Tuesday, August 10, 2021 7:06:51 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: Gail Kropf <gailkropf@gmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:
Please consider an alternate way of moving forward because using existing maps will be nothing short of disaster! You can do this! Start from the beginning and do what is right! Thanks for all your hard work as it WILL make a difference!! Gail Kropf
Sent from my iPhone
Gail Kropf
240-418-0797
Please get vaccinated!

DATE RECEIVED: Thursday, August 12, 2021 8:43:46 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: Bruce Falk <bruce.falk@gmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:
Hello, and happy summer to my friends on the Virginia Redistricting Commission. Thank you for your crucial, historic, precedent-setting efforts to reboot Virginia's broken redistricting process. After a spring and summer of intensive work and listening, I understand you are ready to begin the drawing process. Notwithstanding the guidelines laid out in the VA redistricting laws, this might seem a daunting undertaking -- a blank canvas -- apparently infinite possibilities. However, it's critical that you take on the challenge in full, to start the process in a manner that clears the field of previous bias.

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

To do that, you must start fresh and without relying on the current district maps as a starting point. After all, the biases, lawsuits, and inefficiencies of the old maps are precisely the tainted legacy that prompted sustained outrage and constitutional reform. Do not risk squandering the public trust invested in you by going back to the poisoned well. You are empowered, entrusted, and expected to make a new beginning.

How you do this I leave to you, but I would recommend asking a computer to sketch a preliminary map based on equal population that as best as possible preserves the boundaries of incorporated cities and towns. After all, the Commission has to start somewhere, and this approach seems hard to argue with.

Thank you again for doing the heavy lifting. I trust you to produce results all Virginians can be proud of.

Best regards,
Bruce

Bruce Falk
703 969 9358

DATE RECEIVED: Sunday, July 25, 2021 8:18:30 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: Miss Gina B <missginab2013@gmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

It is sad that the general public of VA is not aware of this process. Your advertising system is systematically unjust to all the public. Your commission to notify all of Virginia's citizens and guest residents is not affluent to every generation, race, and class of people. At your last commission meeting you shared letters and there was a great suggestion that you hire web designers, communication experts on reaching Virginia to notify of these processes and plans, and model behind the state of Michigan to keep things simplified and open dialogue. Your process again is systematically and unauthentic. Change your practices and behavior. You are hindering opportunities for a better Virginia. I did not know Virginia was in a redistrict process and I work and reside here.

DATE RECEIVED: Wednesday, May 26, 2021 9:16:49 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: Ken Chasin <kenchasin1@gmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

I would like to make some suggestions concerning possible resources that the Redistricting Commission might consider using to facilitate the election mapping process.

1) It is quite evident that the "CityGate GIS" mapping software is a very robust software product but also quite complex. Given the constraints that the Redistricting Commission is operating under,

a) Its members and staff needed to be trained in the mapping software and

b) once the 2020 Census data arrives, they have just 45 days to analyze existing state election maps for gerrymandering and redraw the state election maps as needed

it makes sense for the Commission to reach out for help to other state agencies that have experience with this particular mapping software.

Consequently, I am recommending that the Commission reach out to the GIS/Demographic Departments of the major populated Virginia counties that are currently using "CityGate GIS" for assistance in learning how to use the mapping software and getting help on redrawing any state election maps as needed. One such

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

Virginia county currenting using this mapping software is Prince William County.

2) As regards defining “communities of interest and place” the Redistricting Commission might consider contacting local school boards, real estate associations, civic organizations such as Rotary Clubs, the Virginia Beach Council of Civic Organizations and regional Chambers of Commerce for their ideas on this topic.

3) I developed a Decision Matrix to determine which current Virginia congressional districts are candidates for redistricting. I have forwarded the Decision Matrix earlier to the Commission in .PDF format. See attachment.

--

Ken Chasin

Mobile Phone: 508-246-6887

Virginia Congressional District Redistricting Decision Matrix

Author: Ken Chasin VA_CD_Redistricting_Decision_Matrix.docx 5/19/2021

Primary Data Source: Most current data available from the US Census Bureau for zip codes/ZCTAs is from the American Community Survey's 2019 5-year estimates.

VA Congressional

District

Current

population within

95% to 105% of

1/11 of Virginia's

total population?

Urban Land Area – Rural

Land Area Breakdown

within 95%- 105% of state-

wide averages?

Ethnicity Balanced? Land Area relative to

Average state CD Land

Area

Candidate for

Redistricting?

VA-01 No – Has excess

of 48,945

residents.

No - Urban Land Area

deviates from state-wide

average of 75.51% by

negative 5.97%

No -Current % of Whites

exceeds state-wide average by

6.83%.

Minor Deviation from

state-wide average (

i.e.; 94.28 square

miles)

Yes

VA-02 No -; shortfall of

52,070 residents.

No - Urban Land Area

exceeds state-wide average

by 16.99%.

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

Yes Shortfall of 2,598.32
square miles

Yes

VA-03 Yes Yes Yes Shortfall of 2,642.92
square miles

No

VA-04 Yes Yes Yes Exceeds state-wide
average by 720.28
square miles

No

VA-05 No - shortfall of
40,231 residents.

No - Urban Land Area falls
short of state-wide average
by 40.21%.

No - * Current % of Whites
exceeds state-wide average by
9.41%

* Current % of Hispanics falls
short of state-wide average of
5.5%.

Entire Land Area is
10,030 square miles
which exceeds all of
other congressional
districts total land
areas.

Yes

56 / 58

Virginia Congressional District Redistricting Decision Matrix

Author: Ken Chasin VA_CD_Redistricting_Decision_Matrix.docx 5/19/2021

VA Congressional
District

Current

population within

95% to 105% of

1/11 of Virginia's

total population?

Urban Land Area – Rural

Land Area Breakdown

within 95%- 105% of state-
wide averages?

Ethnicity Balanced? Land Area relative to
Average state CD Land

Area

Candidate for

Redistricting?

VA-06 Yes Urban Land Area falls short
of state-wide average by

11.17%.

No –

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

* Current % of Whites exceeds state-wide average by 18.07%.

* Current % of Blacks falls short of state-wide average by 7.83%.

Exceeds state-wide average by 2,339.98 square miles

Yes

VA-07 Yes Yes Yes Shortfall of 813.62 square miles from state-wide average

No

VA-08 Yes No - Urban Land Area exceeds state-wide average by 24.2%.

No -

* Current % of Whites less than state-wide average by 9.49%.

* Current % of Hispanics exceeds state-wide average by 9.74%.

* Current % of Asians exceeds state-wide average by 6.51%.

Shortfall of 3,440.82 square miles from state-wide average

Yes

57 / 58

Virginia Congressional District Redistricting Decision Matrix

Author: Ken Chasin VA_CD_Redistricting_Decision_Matrix.docx 5/19/2021

VA Congressional District

Current

population within

95% to 105% of

1/11 of Virginia's

total population?

Urban Land Area – Rural

Land Area Breakdown

within 95%- 105% of state-wide averages?

Ethnicity Balanced? Land Area relative to Average state CD Land

Area

Candidate for

Redistricting?

VA-09 No - shortfall of

71,919 residents.

No -Urban Land Area falls short of state-wide average

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

by 33.76%.

No –

* Current % of Whites exceeds state-wide average by 25.62%.

* Current % of Blacks falls short of state-wide average by 8.33%.

* Current % of Hispanics exceeds the state-wide average by 9.74%.

* Current % of Asians exceeds state-wide average by 6.51%.

Exceeds state-wide average by 5,523.88 square miles

Yes

VA-10 No - excess of 81,696 residents

No - Urban Land Area exceeds state-wide average by 10.02%.

No –

* Current % of Blacks falls short of state-wide average by 12.62%.

* Current % of Asians exceeds state-wide average by 8.96%.

Shortfall of 2,217.82 square miles from state-wide average

Yes

VA-11 Yes No - Urban Land Area exceeds state-wide average by 24.46%.

No –

* Current % of Whites falls short of state-wide average by 15.79%.

* Current % of Hispanics exceeds state-wide average by 9.43%.

* Current % of Asians exceeds state-wide average by 13.81%.

Shortfall of 3,404.92 square miles from state-wide average

Yes

FROM: VA Redistricting <varedistrictingcommission@dls.virginia.gov>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

COMMENT:

On Mon, Jun 7, 2021 at 6:51 AM Ken Chasin <kenchasin1@gmail.com> wrote:

I would like to comment on the process and timeline the Redistricting Commission is using to redraw if needed the state's election maps.

Virginia has a total of 151 distinct election maps that includes:

- 11 Virginia congressional districts
- 40 Virginia state senator districts (representing an equal number of single-member constitutional districts) and
- 100 Virginia House of Delegate member maps.

Assuming the worst-case scenario that all of Virginia's election maps will have to be at the very least modified (or perhaps completely redrawn) this means the Redistricting Commission would have to produce an average of 3.35 new or modified election maps per day, once the 45-day mapping period begins!

I would like to propose a "divide and conquer" strategy for how the Redistricting Commission approaches how it will redraw any election maps. Consider having the 16 members of the Redistricting Commission be divided into three (3) teams of five members each with each team having its own project leader and a sixteen person would be chosen as the overriding Project Manager:

1. Team #1 would be devoted to redrawing if needed the state's congressional district maps;
2. Team #2 would be devoted to redrawing if needed Virginia's state senator election maps and finally
3. Team #3 would be devoted to redrawing if needed Virginia's state delegate election maps.

Thank you for your time.

--

Ken Chasin

Mobile Phone: 508-246-6887

DATE RECEIVED: Sunday, August 15, 2021 5:28:55 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Mark Hergott <m.bergott87@gmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

Dear Commissioners,

I have updated my proposed map based on the new 2020 data:

<https://davesredistricting.org/join/5cd0b205-7c2d-404c-9bc4-8d6a654dfe8b>. Again, this map creates 4 majority-minority districts including 2 that are predominantly Black. Additionally, 5 of the 11 districts would be highly competitive.

Sincerely,

Mark Hergott

On Sun, Jul 11, 2021 at 8:02 PM Mark Hergott <m.bergott87@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Commissioners,

I am submitting to you a proposed draft map for our state's congressional districts:

<https://davesredistricting.org/join/5cd0b205-7c2d-404c-9bc4-8d6a654dfe8b>. Given the demographic changes in the state since 2010, this map creates four majority-minority districts rather than three as we have now. Districts 3 and 4 remain predominantly Black/African American. Thus, this map complies with the Voting Rights Act. Furthermore, this map minimizes splitting municipalities and counties to the extent possible and scores better than the current map on measures of compactness including the Reock and Polsby-Popper metrics. Furthermore, I have tried to unite communities of interest (e.g. major higher ed institutions in district 5- UVA, Liberty, James Madison). This map would also be quite competitive. Five

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION

PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED

November 19, 2021

districts would likely be winnable by candidates of both parties. Districts 2, 5, 7, and 10 would have all backed both democrats and republicans in statewide races since 2016. Additionally, democrats over the past 5 years would have generally won District 1 by mid- to high-single digits, meaning that this district is likely winnable by a strong Republican candidate in a favorable environment. To give a sense of the competitiveness of the districts, here are the results of 2016 presidential and 2017 gubernatorial elections by district:

District 1: 51% Clinton, 43% Trump; 54% Northam, 45% Gillespie
District 2: 48% Trump, 46% Clinton; 52% Northam, 47% Gillespie
District 3: 62% Clinton, 33% Trump; 66% Northam, 33% Gillespie
District 4: 61% Clinton, 35% Trump; 63% Northam, 36% Gillespie
District 5: 50% Trump, 45% Clinton; 51% Gillespie, 48% Northam
District 6: 63% Trump, 32% Clinton; 64% Gillespie, 35% Northam
District 7: 49% Trump, 44% Clinton; 51% Gillespie, 48% Northam
District 8: 71% Clinton, 22% Trump; 74% Northam, 25% Gillespie
District 9: 68% Trump, 27% Clinton; 68% Gillespie, 31% Northam
District 10: 47% Trump, 46% Clinton; 51% Northam, 48% Gillespie
District 11: 64% Clinton, 29% Trump; 67% Northam, 32% Gillespie

I encourage the commission to consider this map for adoption.

Sincerely,

Mark Hergott

DATE RECEIVED: Friday, July 16, 2021 5:04:18 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Andrew Starr <andrewstarr09@gmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

Greetings and Salutations,

Please redistrict every voting boundary in a non bi-partisan manner. All districts must have an equal proportion of registered republicans, democrats, libertarians, and anarchist hippie-tarians (green party). This way no congress-person or senator, in the general assembly, can feel "safe" and even fathom to maintain office unless they cow-tail to the whims of the people instead of corporate lobbyist like Chip. D. I know this is impossible as the sole income of the Virginia Assembly derives from undocumented "campaign support" (well, Washington for that matter as well). That is why, to coincide with my proposal, I recommend a minimum annual salary of all elected representatives in the state of Virginia to be 10 Million USA dollars with another 20 Million available (also annually) for campaign funding and general unsupervised shenanigans. This may seem extreme, but I submit that if you can prevent untalented lawyers from seeking elected office for, well let's call it bribery for now, then a most curious and radical change may take place. The way to sell this "package" is under the inauspicious guise of anti-corruptuptitorial influence. The public would meet this proposal with unrivaled fan-fare as the salaries are significantly less than those of state funded university football and basketball coaches. Clearly, the potential is endless in this situation, allow me to explain. With the salary being, "so high", many honest workers will make a valiant attempt at running for elected office. Imagine if you will a "Hunger Games" novel like scenario where instead of high-school children fighting to the death, it will be fully grown adults working 100 hrs a week to please the general population's wildest fantasies. And, if I might add, at the very end of course, this salary increase would take place while you yourself are in office! Why you could embrace the demeanor of a true champion of the people and tell Amazon to go launch itself into space.

Paradoxically,

-Well, you have my email address...

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

DATE RECEIVED: Thursday, March 4, 2021 4:34:19 PM GMT-05:00
FROM: Shirley Desimone <shirley.desimone@vcuhealth.org>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:
Draw districts of equal numbers of voters and so that the average or median income of each district is equal. People vote their pocketbooks, regardless of race, ethnicity or anything else.

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, March 8, 2021 10:32:34 AM GMT-05:00
FROM: Jeff Gould <gfgould@hotmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:
Dear Chairperson,
I am writing on behalf of the Board of Directors of the Senior Statesmen of Virginia, a twenty-five-year-old nonprofit organization whose main purpose is to encourage knowledge of and active participation in the legislative process of government on the part of citizens of the Commonwealth.
We are deeply concerned that the Redistricting Commission has no representation from the Fifth District, the largest congressional district in the Commonwealth and one of the most heavily gerrymandered. Our lack of representation by someone knowledgeable of our area could be a serious detriment to the actual and perceived fairness of any realignment (including the status quo).
We ask that the Commission immediately work with the legislature and the governor to rectify this situation.
Thank you for your consideration.
Sincerely,
GF Jeff Gould, President

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, February 15, 2021 11:34:27 PM GMT-05:00
FROM: Coach Jim Fox <coachjimfox@cox.net>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:
Hello,
Thank you for your commitment to work toward ending gerrymandering. I thought you might be interested in a new method that has been developed for constructing fair legislative district maps. This procedure is deliberately transparent. Although this approach is systematic and research-based, it can be, and was, implemented by hand. It can be used to build both Congressional and State Legislative district maps. The approach is attracting interest. It has garnered, to date, almost 500 views on the Preprints Page of the American Political Science Association.
I am aware of the computer-aided redistricting work being conducted by many extremely talented mathematicians at such institutions as Tufts and Princeton. I believe that work is amazingly elegant and sophisticated. At the same time, I understand that many citizens, advocates and jurists, alike (myself included), simply lack the skills and training to fully understand, and hence fully embrace, such work. (Witness, for example, Chief Justice Robert's comments regarding the related Efficiency Gap measure.)
The new approach is intended to be accessible to all. A Guide has been prepared which provides a quick overview of the procedure. The Guide

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

provides ready access to the essence of the approach for citizens, advocates, and commissioners as well as legislators and judges. A paper, "Fair and Square Redistricting," explains, justifies and applies this approach. Virginia was included in this study.

Abstract

"Fair and Square Redistricting" presents a new procedure for constructing fair legislative district maps. This straightforward, transparent, research-based approach is intended to be helpful to those interested in promoting fair legislative district maps. The work draws upon a recent award-winning study of preferences of redistricting experts and lay citizens to construct foundational legislative district maps. The mapping procedure then builds on that foundation, employing the well-established concept of partisan symmetry to construct maps that are fair to both major political parties. The article opens by discussing the new view of compact districts and describes the procedure for constructing the maps. Foundational maps are drawn for 12 states that have recently been under court scrutiny. Partisan symmetry is then applied to construct legislative district maps that are fair and square.

<https://preprints.apsanet.org/engage/apsa/article-details/60132387f0e57e892a97e039>

The paper also examines, for example, the state legislative map in Wisconsin. Wisconsin, as a whole, contains about the same number of Democrat and Republican voters. However, both state chambers contain about twice as many legislators from one party as the other. The "Fair and Square" procedure is applied to construct a fair map for Wisconsin where the partisan distribution of State Assembly districts matches the partisan distribution of the state as a whole. I'd be interested to learn what you think of an approach like this.

Jim Fox

DATE RECEIVED: Sunday, May 23, 2021 5:36:57 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Dolores Dwyer <joydotter@gmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

Dear Members of the Redistricting Commission:

Here are remarks that I made as a public participant at the May 10 Commission meeting. I am sending the text in hopes that Commission Members who were absent from the meeting will have the chance to read them. Thank you for your attention and consideration.

I am a resident of rural southern Albemarle County. I represent just myself, not any group or other individuals. This is the first meeting I

have been able to attend, though I have watched recorded videos of previous meetings.

Today I wish to address an issue that came up in the Redistricting 101 training video, about including addresses of incumbent officials

with census and other data used to determine district boundaries.

In the video, this topic followed sequentially after other topics as they were covered by various statutory criteria deriving from either

federal law or Virginia Constitution or code.

But it should be made clear that incumbency as a factor does not derive from the law, the Constitution, or regulatory code. It is not a statutory requirement.

The fact that the Joint Reapportionment Committee in October 2020 "approved ... legislator addresses" as part of data, should not confer

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

any regulatory status upon such data, or require its use.

Neither does the fact that using such data was accepted practice in past redistricting cycles. In fact, it does the opposite. The demand for a

nonpartisan redistricting commission arose from the need to do away with such past practices.

Virginia's electoral maps belong to the voters of Virginia, not the incumbents. Even the hint that even one district might be drawn to

accommodate a sitting elected official smacks of the kind of back-room manipulation that plagued past practices.

The addresses of current incumbents is information that should not be considered part of any values or criteria that the Commission uses

to determine how to draw a fair map.

--

Dolores Dwyer

434-996-2417

joydotter@gmail.com

FROM: VA Redistricting <varedistrictingcommission@dls.virginia.gov>

REGION: NA

LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

On Wed, May 19, 2021 at 11:27 PM Chris DeRosa <chris.lwv.222@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Commissioners,

These are the remarks that I presented in-person (virtually) at the April 26th Commission meeting.

It has come to my attention that several Commissioners were not in attendance at that meeting.

Furthermore, my suggestions have not been "acted on", so I thought I would forward my remarks to you in written format.

Good morning! My name is Chris DeRosa. I am one of the co-coordinators of the Redistricting Issues Committee of the League of Women Voters of Virginia.

The League has long supported a fair, non-partisan, transparent redistricting process. We encourage all Virginians to participate in this process. As such, we are hosting a Redistricting Information Session this Thursday, April 29

th @ 7 p.m. as part of the national League's

Redistricting Day of Action. All Virginians, including the members of this Commission and DLS staff are invited to join us at this virtual event.

Now for a few comments for the Commission:

To ensure full transparency, the League suggests 3 simple things that will assure the public that you are operating in full sunshine.

First, we ask that the Commissioners appear in Gallery View. In 3 meetings, we have only seen a handful of you on our screens; we want to see all of you!

Second, please publish the "chats" on the DLS website.

Third, we suggest that the Commission provide closed captioning during meetings to reach Virginians who are currently unable to access your meetings.

Next, the League encourages the Commission to take advantage of the extra time you have been granted due to the census delay.

Please schedule public hearings beginning in early summer, rather than waiting until July and August. Hearings should be concluded before you receive the census data in mid-August. Remember to publicize the hearings widely, in different languages, and with timely notice to the public.

We recommend that these hearings be held in person as well as virtually, and in all corners of the Commonwealth. Many Virginians may prefer to testify in person, especially those who lack access to reliable internet and technology.

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

Finally, the League suggests that the Commission devote a portion of every meeting to discussion. . Ask questions. Respond to citizens' questions and comments. Yes, this may require extending your meetings beyond the scheduled 120 minutes; but it would be valuable as you work towards the drawing of fair maps.

Chris DeRosa (she, her)
Co-Coordinator, LWV-VA Redistricting Committee
chris.lwv.222@gmail.com

DATE RECEIVED: Wednesday, May 19, 2021 8:19:23 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Erin Corbett <erin@engageva.org>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:
To the Redistricting Commission:
Please find a statement from the Virginia Counts Coalition here. It is also attached as a PDF.
Thank you for your consideration,
-The Virginia Counts Coalition

DATE RECEIVED: Friday, April 30, 2021 11:17:48 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: Ken Chasin <kenchasin1@gmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:
Attached you will find a copy of my latest proposal on the strategy for redrawing the election maps for Virginia's congressional districts. The document is in Adobe Acrobat (.pdf) format. The contents are an in-depth expansion of comments I made to the Redistricting Commission in its most recent Zoom meeting on Monday, April 26, 2021. I would welcome a public dialogue with the Commission on my proposed strategy for redrawing the state congressional district maps. Finally, I would like to be considered as a technical resource for the Commission.
--
Ken Chasin
Mobile Phone: 508-246-6887

REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:
To the Virginia Redistricting Commission:
Thank you for consistently hosting meetings for the last several months and for creating a subcommittee focused specifically on getting Virginians engaged in this crucial work.
We are excited to hear and see the commissioners discuss the potential opportunity to incorporate outreach efforts by the groups that have been speaking at every commission meeting.
With this in mind, we would like to make the case for the Commission to utilize the Virginia Civic Engagement Table and our wide-reaching coalition, the Virginia Counts Coalition (VCC). The Coalition has been working together since 2018 to ensure fair and accurate representation of all communities in

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

the Commonwealth. In 2020, the Virginia Counts Coalition reached over 400,000 Virginians to get out the count for the 2020 Census, and we have the existing infrastructure and momentum to support engaging the public to ensure equitable redistricting.

Our coalition spans across Virginia, representing over 30 different organizations and combines expertise from some of the most well-recognized organizations in community outreach, organizing, advocacy, and engagement. The coalition highlights communities that are frequently undercounted and underrepresented in redistricting processes including, but not limited to, Hispanic and Latinx communities, Arab Americans, AAPI communities, Black communities, cohorts of faith leaders, environmental justice organizations, rural communities, and immigrant-rights groups.

These organizations include, but are not limited to:

- Arab American Institute - AAI
- Asian Americans Advancing Justice - AAJC
- Advancement Project National Office
- CASA
- Campus Vote Project
- Common Cause
- Justice for Muslims Collective
- LatinoJustice PRLDEF
- League of Women Voters-Virginia
- NAKASEC - Virginia
- Planned Parenthood Advocates of Virginia
- Service Employees International Union - SEIU
- State Voices
- Virginia Coalition for Immigrant Rights
- Virginia League of Conservation Voters
- Voices for Virginia's Children

As I'm sure you have seen and heard, representatives from the Virginia Civic Engagement Table speak at each meeting. In support of increasing access to

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – NO REGION IDENTIFIED
November 19, 2021

these meetings, we already organize accountability viewing sessions for community members, recruit attendees, and collaborate with our coalition to foster education, participation, and outreach. Our coalition also has strong relationships with national civic engagement and litigation organizations who can provide insights and best practices from other states with recently formed commissions.

With the shortened timeline for drawing Congressional and legislative maps, we encourage the Redistricting Commission to lean on us to help provide needed community outreach necessary for a fully transparent and engaged redistricting process. We encourage you to collaborate with us in this incredible work and leverage the expertise of our coalition's existing relationships to connect all Virginians with redistricting work.

Thank you for your consideration,

DATE RECEIVED: Friday, September 3, 2021 9:50:02 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: Yvette Munnikhuisen <ymunnikhuisen@hotmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

Please do not think for one moment that no one cares about the results of your Redistricting effort. We are watching to be sure the process follows the wishes of the Virginia voters.

Sincerely,

One of the voters you disdain.....

DATE RECEIVED: Saturday, September 4, 2021 7:41:53 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Mitchell, Trey (am6se) <treym@virginia.edu>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

I'm responding to this Virginia Mercury story (link below) about the newly proposed districts. I understand why incumbent legislators would oppose being drawn out of their own districts. Rather than adjust the lines for the convenience of current legislators, I think it would be better to "grandfather" in the incumbents and allow them to continue to serve regardless of home address.

Drawing the lines based on whoever happens to currently be in office just doesn't make any sense.

The voter's needs should take priority over the convenience of incumbents.

Albert Mitchell

<https://www.virginiamercury.com/2021/09/02/virginias-redistricting-commission-has-its-first-draft-maps-they-look-normal/>

Sent from Samsung Galaxy smartphone.

Get Outlook for Android

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, September 6, 2021 11:08:42 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: Donna Morris <dmm622@gmail.com>
REGION: NA
LOCALITY: NA

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COMMENT:

Moon Duchin sounds like the perfect answer to prepare non partisan maps for Virginia.

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, September 6, 2021 11:34:57 AM GMT-04:00

FROM: Donna Morris <dmm622@gmail.com>

REGION: NA

LOCALITY: NA

COMMENT:

Sent from my iPhone