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## Resources for Commissioners

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**Liz White** <[liz.white@onevirginia2021.org](mailto:liz.white@onevirginia2021.org)>  
Reply-To: [liz.white@onevirginia2021foundation.org](mailto:liz.white@onevirginia2021foundation.org)  
To: [varedist@dls.virginia.gov](mailto:varedist@dls.virginia.gov)

Wed, May 19, 2021 at 8:21 AM

Good morning,

As members of the Commission move into their work groups and start to make procedural decisions, I wanted to pass along the videos and accompanying materials from our virtual conference last week. (Thank you so much to those of you who attended!) I have broken the video down into subject matter areas, as I know a 3.5+ hour video is hard to fit into a busy schedule.

After watching the discussions in the Engagement Subcommittee meeting Monday, I would especially direct your attention to the Public Engagement Section of the conference - in particular, the presentation by Nancy Wang, head of Voters Not Politicians in Michigan who talked at length about the outreach to the public that the MI Commission is doing, including their first public hearing just last Tuesday. I think there are a lot of best practices there that could help guide the efforts here in Virginia.

### **PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:**

Chris DeRosa (League of Women Voters -VA)  
Nancy Wang (Voters Not Politicians)  
Moon Duchin (Metric Geometry and Gerrymandering Group, Tufts)

### **VRA + REDISTRICTING:**

Yurij Rudensky (Brennan Center for Justice)  
Eric Claville (Center for African American Public Policy, Norfolk State Univ.)  
Chris Lamar (Campaign Legal Center)  
Aleks Kajstura (Prison Policy Initiative)

### **CENSUS DELAY:**

Rebecca Green (W&M Law School) - she's also a good one to talk to about a student map-drawing contest, as her class participated in the 2011 competition that was mentioned in the subcommittee meeting yesterday.  
Suzanne Almeida (Common Cause)

### **NUTS AND BOLTS:**

Gil Ontai, Jeanne Raya, and Andre Parvenu - Members of the 2011 California Commission  
Angel Chen - Redistricting Data Hub  
Suzanne Almeida (Common Cause)

We also have a list of [valuable education resources on our website](#), including [this site](#) that provides FAQs and other tools in multiple languages.

I hope you find this helpful. Please don't hesitate to reach out with questions or if I can help connect you to any of these speakers.

Thank you for your work.

Liz

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Liz White  
Executive Director, OneVirginia2021  
[liz.white@onevirginia2021.org](mailto:liz.white@onevirginia2021.org)  
she/her



VA Redistricting &lt;varedist@dls.virginia.gov&gt;

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**Fwd: Independent Redistricting Commissions Prepare Preliminary Data**

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**Candace Butler** <candy@edandcandy.com>  
To: varedist@dls.virginia.gov

Mon, May 17, 2021 at 11:08 PM

This information is for the complete membership of the Virginia Redistricting Commission. I am forwarding this Colorado Independent Redistricting Commission press release because it speaks directly to that portion of the May 10 Commission discussion about the usefulness of the Census Bureau's American Community Survey data sets for "practice" map drawing.

I hope you find this helpful.

Candace Butler  
Annandale VA

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

From: **Colorado Independent Redistricting Commissions** <[colorado.redistricting2020@state.co.us](mailto:colorado.redistricting2020@state.co.us)>

Date: Mon, May 17, 2021 at 6:54 PM

Subject: Independent Redistricting Commissions Prepare Preliminary Data



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**Colorado Independent Redistricting Commissions**

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Contact: Julia Jackson  
Colorado Independent Redistricting Commissions Staff  
303-866-4788

[colorado.redistricting2020@state.co.us](mailto:colorado.redistricting2020@state.co.us)  
<https://redistricting.colorado.gov/>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
May 17, 2021

**Independent Redistricting Commissions Prepare Preliminary Data**

The Colorado Independent Congressional and Legislative Redistricting Commissions have both approved a data set to allow them to prepare preliminary redistricting maps. Because census redistricting data will not be released until August 2021, the commissions agreed that proceeding with preliminary data gives them the best chance of completing their work and receiving valuable feedback without delaying the 2022 election calendar.

Redistricting commissions staff and the Colorado State Demography Office have worked together to create the data set, using as a benchmark the recently released state resident population from the US Census Bureau of 5,773,714. The preliminary data comes from the Census Bureau's American Community Survey and state population forecasts, and its distribution is based on the Census Bureau's Master Address File. The total population number will match the redistricting data exactly, and the distribution should be a close match.

The preliminary maps will be prepared on 2010 census blocks, which means the geometry will not align exactly with the 2020 census blocks that will be used for the final maps. This allows the data to be more accessible to the public, and the commissions believe it will only marginally impact the quality of the preliminary maps.

Once it is complete, the commissions' data set will be publicly available, and interested persons will be able to draw their own maps using the commissions' redistricting GIS portal.

The Independent Congressional Redistricting Commission anticipates receiving a preliminary congressional map from staff by June 23, 2021. The Independent Legislative Redistricting Commission will receive preliminary State House and State Senate maps by June 28, 2021. Both commissions will review these preliminary maps and seek public comment on them through a series of public hearings held throughout the state in July and August.

When the full, block-level redistricting data is released by the Census Bureau in August, staff will prepare maps for the commissions using this final data on 2020 census blocks. Thus no final approved maps will use the preliminary data set. The commissions have also set aside time in their schedules to allow for public review and comment on the proposed final maps.

The commissions continue to seek public input on communities of interest. Visit our [Public Engagement](#) page to learn how to get involved.



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Candy Butler

VA Redistricting <[varedist@dls.virginia.gov](mailto:varedist@dls.virginia.gov)>

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## Hello from your friends at VCET!

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**Erin Corbett** <[erin@engageva.org](mailto:erin@engageva.org)>  
To: [varedist@dls.virginia.gov](mailto:varedist@dls.virginia.gov)

Mon, May 17, 2021 at 5:07 PM

Hello DLS and Redistricting Commission!

Thank you for hosting another meeting today, this one being focused on a favorite topic of ours here at VCET -- Engagement!

We were really excited to hear/see the commissioners discuss the potential opportunity to incorporate outreach effort by the groups that have been speaking at every commission meeting. With this in mind, I would like to make the case for the commission to utilize VCET and our wide-reaching coalition, Virginia Counts Coalition.

As I'm sure you have seen and heard me speak throughout each meeting, part of what I do in anticipation of these meetings is recruit attendance and collaborate with over 30 organizations in our coalition to foster participation and outreach. Our coalition spans across Virginia and beyond, and highlights communities that are frequently undercounted and underrepresented in redistricting processes. From the Virginia Coalition of Immigrant Rights to NAKASEC, from the League of Women Voters to the Virginia Interfaith Center, we have a cohort that represents the many diverse communities of the Commonwealth and I would love to see the Commission lean on us to help provide this outreach. I encourage you to entrust us with this incredible work and leverage the expertise of our coalition's organizations to connect all Virginians with redistricting work.

Thank you for your consideration!  
Erin

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Erin Corbett  
Redistricting Coordinator [VCET](#)  
e: [erin@engageva.org](mailto:erin@engageva.org)  
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[Meet with me](#)



VA Redistricting &lt;varedist@dls.virginia.gov&gt;

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## Citizen Engagement Subcommittee - Please take a look at the Michigan Redistricting Commission Portal!

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**Fran Larkins** <franlarkins40@gmail.com>  
To: "varedist@dls.virginia.gov" <varedist@dls.virginia.gov>

Mon, May 17, 2021 at 12:14 PM

To the Citizen Engagement Subcommittee -

Before you progress too far on discussion of Citizen Engagement, I really hope you will take a few moments to view the public portal for the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission. In addition to providing useful information on the Commission and the redistricting process, the portal offers a very easy way for citizens to submit maps and comment.

Please give serious consideration to using this tool for Virginia.

Thank you!

Fran Larkins  
Fredericksburg, VA

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10



## May 17 Citizen Engagement Subcommittee Meeting: Points to Consider Further

**Candace Butler** <candy@edandcandy.com>  
To: varedist@dls.virginia.gov

Wed, May 19, 2021 at 11:41 AM

The Citizen Engagement Subcommittee meeting was substantive, moving through the agenda efficiently but with thoughtful discussion.

Here are the points in the discussion we think are important to consider further:

### 1. The public hearings

Pre-map drawing hearings:

- *Timing*: the pre-map drawing hearings should occur well before the Census numbers are received by the Commission, concluding by the end of the first week in August.
- *Number of pre-map drawing hearings*: there should be pre-map drawing hearings in at least 7-8 regional hubs based upon either:
  - the eight hearing locations used by the joint House and Senate Committees in 2011 (see p. 11 of "Drawing the Line 2011" in attached pdf) OR
  - regions based on those identified in the University of Virginia Weldon Cooper Center "Virginia's Demographic Regions" (see attached pdf)
- *Format*: We believe each pre-map drawing hearing should be held in-person with a virtual component. The Subcommittee can decide on the number of Commissioners to attend in person. Citizens should be able to access the meeting in person. The remainder of the Commission and all interested citizens should be able to attend the same hearing virtually. This would maximize the citizen participation possibilities.

Given that the 2020 constitutional amendment and subsequent code provide a much stronger mandate to engage the public than existed in 2011, we believe the Commission should have at least as many in-person public meetings as were held in 2011.

Post-map drawing hearings:

- *Timing*: the post-map drawing hearings should be held after the Commission completes the map drawing and the maps have been posted on the Commission website long enough for the public to study them and formulate specific questions
- *Number of post-map drawing hearings*: replicate the number of hearings held pre-map drawing
- *Format*: due to the time constraint for the Commission to submit completed maps to the General Assembly, each post-map drawing hearing should be held virtually, focused on each of the regions where pre-map drawing hearings were held, but open to everyone.

### 2. Advertising, accessibility and additional outreach and communication

Many citizens and advocates have commented on the vital importance of the stand-alone Virginia Redistricting Commission website. The website is a key, statutorily-required component of the Commission's effort to both educate the public about its work and to receive public input. It should be accessible in all languages that are used on ballots in state and local elections.

Though aspects of the website were discussed on May 17, there was no specific discussion of the website structure and rollout schedule. We urge the subcommittee to agree on the structure, content and schedule for website completion during the next two meetings.

We would like to associate ourselves with the remark of Del. McQuinn: "We don't let the budget drive us, we drive the budget." This should apply to the website as well as other functions of the Commission.

During the discussion about additional outreach and communications needs, several Commissioners asked questions about citizen-produced community-of-interest (COI) maps - how are they to be received? One Commissioner asked specifically, to paraphrase - if the Commission had a question about a COI map, how would they ask it if they are not permitted to speak directly with citizens? The DLS staff response indicated that this type of exchange would be permitted during the public meetings. There must be more permissible avenues of communication between the commissioners and the public; the website, open to all, would be such an avenue.

We suggest that the Subcommittee and the entire Commission study the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission's (MICRC) Online Public Comment Portal located on the home page of the MICRC website: <https://www.michigan.gov/micrc/> Virginia could stand up a portal as a component of the stand-alone Commission website, working with the group that created the Michigan portal. The Virginia portal would facilitate the collection of citizen

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Virginia Legislative Information Systems Mail - May 17 Citizen Engagement Subcommittee Meeting: Points to Consider Further

maps and comments; and it could provide an additional public forum in which Commissioners can ask questions of citizens about their maps.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment.

Bill Millhouser, Falls Church VA

JoAnn Kennedy Flanagan, Fairfax VA

Candace Butler, Annandale VA

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**2 attachments**



**2011 Draw the Lines - Virginia.pdf**

66K



**CooperCenter\_DemographicRegions\_Map\_ListCountiesCities.pdf**

2114K



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## For the Commission and the Public Engagement Subcommittee

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Chris DeRosa <chris.lww.222@gmail.com>  
To: varedist@dls.virginia.gov

Wed, May 19, 2021 at 11:27 PM

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<sup>th</sup> @ 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.

**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)*



5/20/2021

Virginia Legislative Information Systems Mail - For the Commission and the Public Engagement Subcommittee

*Co-Coordinator, LWV-VA Redistricting Committee*  
[chris.lwv.222@gmail.com](mailto:chris.lwv.222@gmail.com)

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 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.

## How we can and will engage Virginians

Including but not limited to:

- Mapping Tutorials
- Texting Campaigns to Recruit Participation
- Workshops on Engaging with the Commission
- Language Translation Services
- ASL Interpretation Services
- Town Halls and Similar Events
- Community, Digital, and Relational Organizing
- Building Coalitions of Community Leaders
- Uplifting Social Media and Digital Toolkits



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 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,

