



For the Budget Subcomm and full Commission

Chris D <chris7307@gmail.com>
To: varedist@dls.virginia.gov

Tue, May 25, 2021 at 11:37 AM

To members of the Budget & Finance Subcommittee, and the members of the full Redistricting Commission:

There has been discussion about hiring lawyers. That is a separate topic that I have already addressed. Here are my recommendations for the Commission :: please consider hiring experts in:

Mapping – someone who may be a mathematician and/or political scientist who understands how to draw maps, as well as how to evaluate maps for criteria such ethnic/language/racial- minority representation and compactness, as well as Communities of Interest. Two such experts that I am familiar with are:

Moon Duchin, Tufts University : MGGG Lab_(Metric Geometry and Gerrymandering Group)
<https://mggg.org/people/mduchin/>

Bernard Grofman, mathematician and political scientist University of California, Irvine. Mr. Grofman was hired as the special master who was hired to re-establish boundaries for Congressional District 3 in 2015, as well as re-drawing the lines in 2019 for the eleven (11) House districts that were racially gerrymandered.

Communications – someone who knows how to provide information to the public in an effective manner. The Commission is charged with providing timely notice in a variety of languages to Virginians. You need an expert in this field to help the Commission accomplish this mandated goal. We, the citizens, were surprised and not pleased to learn that the Selection Committee spent \$160,000 to advertise the Citizen Commissioners Application process. No one that I know ever saw a Selection-Committee's paid media ad or article about this. We wonder how many of the current citizen members of the Commission were motivated to apply because of paid advertising?

One communications consultant that I am aware of is **Beau Cribbs** <https://www.linkedin.com/in/beaucribbs>

Website development – to create and maintain an effective, user-friendly website dedicated specifically to the Commission and its work. I would highly recommend the website for the Michigan Redistricting Commission. It is extremely user-friendly and provides information, including a Citizen portal with a user-friendly, fillable "google-form" collects information from the public and automatically uploads the submission into a "Gallery". This Gallery, also very user-friendly, " is a collection of public comments which are sortable by tags ("COIs" "Districting Plan" " Written Testimony "). We are very pleased that DLS has created a separate website that is dedicated to the Commission. It is a step in the right direction. However, improvements can be made. (For one thing, the print on the page is very small; this is difficult for older folks like me to read easily) Currently, public comments are sent to an email address and uploaded only hours before a scheduled meeting, rather than in "real time". (Actually, no comments were posted for yesterday's Commission meeting or today's subcommittee meeting. Why is that? Perhaps DLS staff was overburdened.) Comments that I submitted in February have never been posted; in fact there are NO February comments posted except for one. That seems unusual. Another improvement would be to post new materials as separate documents in the "Materials" tab, rather than appended to the previous document). This is why a website manager may be needed.

Thank you for your hard work, and your kind attention.

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VA Redistricting <varedist@dls.virginia.gov>

To the Budget and Finance Subcommittee and the full Commission

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Sun, May 23, 2021 at 11:44 PM

Dear Commissioners,

I am a resident of Arlington. I am Co-coordinator of the Redistricting Issues Group of the League of Women Voters of Virginia. I have been working for #fair redistricting for Virginia for many years.

I am writing to encourage you to conduct a thorough and energetic search for the Unicorn. As elusive as it may be, it may be possible to find one if you are determined and resourceful. Perhaps some of our community non-profit, non-partisan groups can assist you in the search! Most of us are fully-immunized and ready to venture into the world and embark on a hunt for the elusive unicorn with you!

But, seriously, I must protest the highly-partisan nature of the discussion at the first meeting of the Budget and Finance Subcommittee on May 19th. Senators Barker and Newman insisted that there is no attorney or law firm on earth that would be neutral or non-partisan :: neither Democrat- nor Republican-leaning. Senator Barker said, "We should make sure nobody's interest is disregarded in any way." May I remind the Commission that the **people's interest should be represented**. The Senators' statements demonstrate a negative and highly partisan attitude that they have perhaps developed over decades of political life. This is exactly why Virginia voters voted overwhelmingly for the Constitutional Amendment to establish this Commission. We ask the legislators to put down your political swords and keep in mind the task that we have given you: to draw fair maps for Virginia. As Director Wade stated, the law clearly states that "any attorney would be hired for the full Commission." Not one for the Republicans and one for the Democrats. One for the Commission and the people of Virginia.

We also ask that you respect the hard-working voters of Virginia and use our taxpayer dollars wisely. Hiring two legal experts or firms will be very expensive, I'm sure. I would much rather see that those funds are used to hire experts in other fields, including mathematics/political science/redistricting, communications, and website and graphic design. As Commissioner Kumar suggested, you must be "good stewards" of Virginians' monies.

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