

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION

PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – VALLEY REGION

October 18, 2021

TOTAL NUMBER OF COMMENTS: 31

DATE: 10/15/2021 8:52:40 AM

Name: Joy Loving
Stakeholder Type: Private individual
Email: jal_1998@yahoo.com
Locality: Rockingham County, VA
Region: **Valley**
Type of comment: General comment about the conduct of the Commission

COMMENTS:

This message is in lieu of making in person remarks at the Thursday session. I submitted a request to make such remarks but am instead offering these views.
I voted for the flawed constitutional amendment reluctantly, because I was concerned it would not yield the non-gerrymandered, non-partisan electoral maps I believe VA must have. I especially disliked the inclusion of incumbent legislators and their ability to accept/reject the commission's proposals. And, leaving the ultimate decisions to unelected VA Supreme Court justices was also most unappealing.
I always appreciated the magnitude and challenges with which commission members were faced. I have followed your deliberations and have become increasingly dismayed at the incumbent and party posturing and intransigence, on both sides of the aisle.
I have concluded, sadly, that you would collectively be abrogating a duty you volunteered for by not completing your mission, if you decide to do that. You can agree that you cannot agree. But you appear, in aggregate, not to have done enough to work collaboratively and to compromise where needed. The gamesmanship has been ugly and disheartening to watch; it has demeaned, and ultimately undermined, your own faith in your efforts--not to mention that of your fellow Virginians.
I ask you to reconsider your positions and finish the job you asked, and were appointed, to do. The result likely won't be perfect and won't please everyone, maybe not anyone, but at least we will have a result that Virginians can understand and, eventually if necessary, accept or reject through the legislative process.
This process has been expensive of time and money--yours and the taxpayers'. But I supported it, and you. You really have no acceptable excuse for wasting the opportunity when so much is at stake.
I urge you to reconsider your positions and move on with drawing the maps you are tasked with designing. This isn't about the Democrats and Republicans; it's about all Virginia voters and citizens.
Respectively submitted,
Joy Loving
Rockingham County, VA

DATE: 10/14/2021 12:08:11 PM

Name: John Massoud
Stakeholder Type: Other
Organization: 6th Congressional Republican Committee
Email: 6thDistrictChair@gmail.com
Locality: Strasburg Virginia
Region: **Valley**
Type of comment: Comment on a map
Map: Map #21 Virginia Congressional (8-31-21)

COMMENTS:

Dear Commission Members - we all appreciate the hard work that each of you are doing - and understand that this process is tough at best. With that being said, it seems that one of the main reasons to have a "Redistricting Committee" is to ensure geographically logical boundaries. Having Congressional Districts go over mountains does

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not make alot of sense. I understand that things must change - but it seems to have a 6th Congressional District which has only part of the Shenandoah Valley makes little sense. Better to give the entire Valley to CD 6 - that way people from Loudoun won't be driving over the Blue Ridge mountains to Clarke County etc.

DATE: 10/8/2021 8:03:17 PM

Name: Sheriff Kevin Wayne HI
Stakeholder Type: Elected official
Organization: Alleghany Co./City of Covington Sheriff's Office
Email: Kevin.hall@co.Alleghany.va.us
Locality: Alleghany County/City of Covington
Region: **Valley**
Type of comment: Comment on the community in which I live
Map: N/A
Topic(s) of interest: Communities of interest

COMMENTS:

This wouldn't represent our community due to losing our House of Delegate member

DATE: 10/8/2021 10:23:54 AM

Name: Tom Long
Stakeholder Type: Private individual
Email: twlong51@gmail.com
Locality: Staunton
Region: **Valley**
Type of comment: Comment on the community in which I live
Topic(s) of interest: Communities of interest
Community of interest name: Staunton, Waynesboro, Augusta County

COMMENTS:

Thank you for serving on the very first Virginia Redistricting Commission. One of the most important jobs in this role is to listen to public input and consider the needs of communities of interest across the Commonwealth. To that end, I'd like to tell you a little about my community. Staunton, Waynesboro, and Augusta County are communities with many interlocking and shared interests. As much as possible, within the requirements that districts's populations are as equal as possible, those communities should be in the same district. Incumbents's resident addresses should not factor in the drawing of districts.

DATE: 10/7/2021 1:16:20 PM

Name: Janet Trettner
Stakeholder Type: Private individual
Email: jitrettner@comcast.net
Locality: The Valley/Rockingham County/Keezletown, Virginia
Region: **Valley**
Type of comment: Statewide comment and Rockingham County Comment
Map: HOD map B6; SD map B4; Current House and Senate maps
Topic(s) of interest: Communities of interest, District naming
Community of interest name: Harrisonburg and the surrounding area; Rural Rockingham County
Community of interest description: non-agricultural; agricultural

COMMENTS:

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I have three comments.

The first has to do with the confusion surrounding how we identify our districts. Virginia is divided into 11 Congressional Districts, 40 Senate Districts, and 100 House Districts. Each set of districts is identified numerically starting with the number one. This results in multiple districts with the same name. There are 3 districts for each number 1-11. Likewise, there are 2 districts for each number 12-40.

When a district is referred to by number only, which often occurs, it is hard to know if it is a Congressional, Senate, or House district that is being referred to. It has also resulted in the unfortunate situation experienced by some in Rockingham County that they vote in House and Senate Districts of the same name: House District #26 and Senate District #26.

One very simple solution would be to rename the State districts as follows:

State Senate Districts would be numbered 100-139; State House Districts would become districts 200-299; and Congressional Districts would remain 1-11.

Not only would this system give every district a different name, it would immediately identify the districts as Congressional, Senate, or House, and it would give each category room for expansion.

Obviously, I am presuming the Commission has the authority to change state district names. It seems only logical.

If the Commission can do something as important as change district boundaries, surely it can change district names. If the Commission were to address the confusion inherent in the current naming system by giving each district a distinct name, it would be of great service to the citizens of Virginia.

My second point is that, as much as we like our neighbors to the East, the mountains that separate Rockingham County from Madison, Greene, and Albemarle counties are a natural boundary that put us in different communities of interest. The Shenandoah Valley is distinctly separate from the Piedmont.

A number of the Commission proposed Delegate and Senate maps include a Rockingham County district that would cross the mountains. One of the most recent Commission House of Delegate maps, B6 from October 2, shows district #69 crossing the mountains. Additionally, one of the most recent Commission Senate maps, B4 from October 2, shows District #34 extending over the mountains. The current House and Senate districts of Rockingham County also extend over the mountains. None these districts make sense. Rockingham County and the Piedmont should not be in the same district.

Thirdly, Harrisonburg and the surrounding area comprise one community of interest and the rest of the county comprises another. The Harrisonburg area contains two universities, one college, and numerous K-12 schools. There are tech companies, poultry processing plants, and several breweries and wineries as well as the homes of the people who work in these occupations. Included in this community of interest are the incorporated villages of Bridgewater, Dayton, Elkton, Grottoes, and Mount Crawford; the unincorporated villages of Edom, Keezletown, McGaheysville, Montezuma, Mt. Clinton, Ottobine, Port Republic, and Singer's Glen; and the census-designated areas of Belmont Estates, Massanetta Springs, and Massanutten.

The remainder of the Rockingham County is a rural community of interest that should also be kept together.

Thank you.

DATE: 10/5/2021 6:23:08 PM

Name: Jon Rogers
Stakeholder Type: Private individual
Email: jprogers53@gmail.com
Locality: Augusta
Region: Valley
Type of comment: General comment about the conduct of the Commission

COMMENTS:

Copied below is a letter to the editor in my local paper.

I am strongly opposed to Gerrymandering, specifically using political data when redrawing district boundaries. In November 2020, Virginian voters adopted a state constitutional amendment meant to depoliticize the process by which state House, state Senate, and congressional House district boundaries are drawn after each decennial

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census. By passing the measure, Virginians were expressing their desire to end partisan gerrymandering. Unfortunately, politics are creeping back into the process.

The Redistricting Commission was unable to agree on the hiring of a lawyer so they hired two lawyers, a Republican and a Democrat. They were unable to agree on a firm to redraw districts so they hired a Republican firm and a Democrat firm.

On Aug. 17, the commission voted to eliminate barriers to considering political data when redrawing district boundaries. This would allow the commission to consider the address of incumbents, and past election results, when crafting new districts. This is not what Virginians had in mind. New district boundaries were meant to be based on compact “communities of interest,” not politics.

In a hot mic moment one member assured another not to be concerned about the public reaction to the vote because only a “very small segment” of the electorate cares about redistricting.

Is that true?

If the direction the commission is taking concerns you, you can tell them so by sending an email to varedist@dls.virginia.gov

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virginia.gov

or a letter to Virginia Redistricting Commission, Pocahontas Building, 8th Floor, 900 E. Main St., Richmond, VA 23219.

The commission needs to know we are paying attention, the new boundaries do matter, and we are tired of gerrymandering.

DATE: 9/28/2021 5:19:46 PM

Name: Angelina Clapp
Stakeholder Type: Private individual
Email: clappae@dukes.jmu.edu
Locality: Harrisonburg
Region: **Valley**
Type of comment: General comment about the conduct of the Commission
Topic(s) of interest: Communities of interest
Community of interest name: JMU, GMU, VSU, VCU, NSU, UVA, and VT

COMMENTS:

As a college student at James Madison University, I submit these map proposals for the Commission's consideration. James Madison University, George Mason University, Virginia State University, Virginia Commonwealth University, Norfolk State University, University of Virginia, and Virginia Tech need to be considered as Communities of Interested and kept together. GMU - <https://districtr.org/COI/49691> VSU- <https://districtr.org/COI/50597> VCU- <https://districtr.org/COI/50603> NSU - <https://districtr.org/COI/50608> UVA- <https://districtr.org/COI/50609> VT - <https://districtr.org/COI/50254> JMU- <https://districtr.org/COI/51965>

DATE: 9/20/2021 10:34:03 PM

Name: Annette Cashatt
Stakeholder Type: Private individual
Email: alcashatt@icloud.com
Locality: Rockingham/Broadway
Region: **Valley**
Type of comment: Comment on a map
Topics of interest: Voting rights and political participation, Political neutrality

COMMENTS:

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The map (100 A3 House statewide HOD) which has Rockingham, Harrisonburg, Massanutten, Broadway, Timberville and a couple other small areas like Fulks Run in one region called district 86 is good. It offers better representation to a growing number of independent and blue voters while still giving fair representation to republican and tea party voters. That is a good map for our area.

DATE RECEIVED: Wednesday, August 4, 2021 5:09:48 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: Mark Rathke
EMAIL: mrathke@rockinghamcountyva.gov
REGION: Valley
LOCALITY: Bridgewater

SUBJECT: District Lines Crossing Municipal Boundaries & Boundary Descriptions

COMMENT:
Thanks to the commission for your consideration of our comments. I suggest automatically adjusting Senate & Delegate lines when an annexation is approved by the recognized by the Commonwealth so that each municipality can be wholly within one district or another. It makes it easier to run elections and avoids confusion. There is a current issue in Bridgewater where an annexed portion is bisected between the 26th and 25th HOD districts. Also, with modern mapping applications, I propose we submit a map showing the boundaries in place of a written description of each boundary for our County Districts and Precincts. Thank you again for your consideration.

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, September 6, 2021 8:48:13 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: Paulson and Shirley Kurtz <Kurtzes@hotmail.com>
REGION: Valley
LOCALITY: Broadway

COMMENT:
Dear members,
I write to let you know I am concerned that your work be done fairly. To me, "fairly" means dividing the population into geographical districts without consideration to a particular political party. I look forward to a fair redistricting.
Thank you for hearing my concern.
Paul N. Kurtz
Broadway, VA

DATE RECEIVED: Tuesday, August 24, 2021 4:48:18 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: Claude Simmons <crsimmons@mgwnet.com>
REGION: Valley
LOCALITY: Churchville

COMMENT:
I've been advised the Commission voted 12 – 4 to agree to begin w/ a blank slate to redraw boundaries of Virginia's boundaries for US House of Representatives. I'm pleased to hear the news of your agreement on this matter. I pray it signifies that the Commission appreciates the value of Congressional Districts that reflect as fairly as possible the will of their population. US House of Representatives also should reflect a similar support. Gerrymandering, whether imposed by Republicans or Democrats, destroys our democratic system. It is incumbent on the Redistricting Commission to ensure that Congressional District Boundaries

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fairly reflect the statewide will of our population as closely as possible.

I know you've got a tough job but it's critical to our USA democratic system. Your work is appreciated.

Claude Simmons

Churchville, VA

6th Congressional District

DATE RECEIVED: Thursday, August 19, 2021 7:46:03 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: Stephen Morris <stephenmorris@everyactioncustom.com>
REGION: Valley
LOCALITY: Churchville

COMMENT:

Dear Commissioner All Commissioners,

Thank you for serving on the very first Virginia Redistricting Commission. One of the most important jobs in this role is to listen to public input and consider the needs of communities of interest across the Commonwealth. To that end, I'd like to tell you a little about my community. What does the Redistricting Commission need to know about your community? A friend attended the local Republican meeting and was told by a member of the Electoral Board that I continue to complain about the polling place being Churchville Fire -I was the person who wrote the Department of Justice and they came inspected all the polling places in Augusta County and most if not all FAILED ADA ---Big time -I continue working to get our MY community back into 1 district which will serve the citizens much better --Once again Churchville Fire is in t Pastures District not the North River District where citizens have to vote --this makes NO sense --where these districts can be drew different and this can be CORRECTED --t Pastures -Beverly Manor & North River can be changed to do just this -Let me also point Beverly Manor School is used for a polling place for the Pastures and the County is planning on closing this school in the near future built 2 new middle schools at t High Schools also note its not called Beverly Manor polling its called Cedar Green located in the Pastures not the Beverly Manor -If you all pull Churchville Fire up and look at the parking places -very few NO more then 25 and the poll workers take 4 of them -so not many for 1200 voters -sad that people have to park across the street and walk -being Churchville Ave -Rote 250 which is very UNSAFE -Thanks for any all help with this .

Sincerely,

Stephen Morris

203 Hotchkiss Rd Churchville, VA 24421-2425 stephenmorris@comcast.net

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 9, 2021 10:13:36 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: Lacey Parker <lacey.blueridgeparkers@everyactioncustom.com>
REGION: Valley
LOCALITY: Churchville

COMMENT:

Dear Commissioner All Commissioners,

Thank you for serving on the very first Virginia Redistricting Commission. One of the most important jobs in this role is to listen to public input and consider the needs of communities of interest across the Commonwealth. To that end, I'd like to tell you a little about my community. We are in a rural area of Virginia that is primarily agricultural. We feel left behind on issues of technology and economic development. Our closest city, Staunton, VA, is the main resource for non-agricultural jobs and for shopping, etc. So while we are demographically distinct, this city is really a part of the Augusta County community. It's where we shop, meet up, socialize, and work. We also feel connected to Waynesboro. I don't feel as much of a connection to other local cities like Lexington or

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Harrisonburg as these are not places that people near me generally work or regularly visit/commute to.

The geography that I feel most tied to are those to the west of me (to the border with WV) and east to about Afton mountain.

Sincerely,

Ms. Lacey Parker

124 Parise Ln Churchville, VA 24421-2833 lacey.blueridgeparkers@gmail.com

DATE RECEIVED: Friday, August 6, 2021 7:16:45 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Stephen Morris <stephenmorris@everyactioncustom.com>
REGION: Valley
LOCALITY: Churchville

COMMENT:

Dear Commissioner All Commissioners,

Thank you for serving on the very first Virginia Redistricting Commission. One of the most important jobs in this role is to listen to public input and consider the needs of communities of interest across the Commonwealth. To that end, I'd like to tell you a little about my community. I What does the Redistricting Commission need to know about your community? I live in Augusta County -the North River District Its a shame the way our district is drawn -we were in the Pastures until 1991 when we were put in the North River -1st we had to drive to the North River School to vote which was out of the way BIG TIME -so in 1992 we started voting at Churchville Fire which is in the Pastures -Makes NO SENSE that some citizens continue to drive by 1 polling place to vote at another -some out of there way -divide the citizens when we should ALL be back in the same district -a another question is WHY does the village of Churchville have 2 polling places -Yes I have asked questions about all this but continue being told the code allows -this I do not agree with -ADA started in the early 90's and some polling places were NOT ADA so a law was written to allow a polling place out of district to a polling place that was -this is the way it should be -NO local government should be allowed to do different - when all this can be corrected when redistricting is done this time . Also note the Pastures District has Augusta Correctional Center over 1300 inmates which can not be counted like in the past -have to use the last address of each every inmate so this will effect the way this district is drawn this time -lets hope this is done correct . Thanks for ur time Stephen R Morris 203 Hotchkiss Road -Churchville Va 24421 ----540 280 2568

Sincerely,

Stephen Morris

203 Hotchkiss Rd Churchville, VA 24421-2425 stephenmorris@comcast.net

DATE RECEIVED: Thursday, July 29, 2021 3:47:31 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Stan Farthing <stanfarnew@gmail.com>
REGION: Valley
LOCALITY: Churchville

COMMENT:

Dear colleagues:

I am so pleased that the public has the opportunity to have some input into our redistricting process! Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments.

I think that there are three primary principles that should guide redistricting. In decreasing order of importance, they are:

1. A precinct should never be divided. First, since a precinct is so small, it would be reasonable to say that, by definition, a precinct is all within the same community of interest. Second, it adds

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so much to the possibility for confusion and mistakes if precinct poll workers have to manage multiple ballots. All voters in a precinct should receive the same ballot.

2. A jurisdiction (county, city, even town) should not be divided unless it is absolutely necessary. Some cases of absolute necessity are easy to discern, for example if the jurisdiction has a population greater than the district is supposed to have. If a jurisdiction absolutely has to be divided, then a division based on communities of interest should be apparent. For example, southern Page might go with Rockingham; or the Fort Vally, in eastern Shenandoah, might go with Page. Elsewhere in the state, eastern Goochland might go with Henrico; or the part of Carroll County east of the Blue Ridge might go with Patrick.

3. A media market should not be divided similarly to how a jurisdiction should not be divided. In somewhat the same way, a Congressional district should not be divided among media markets unless absolutely necessary.

A corollary to all this is that if the above puts two incumbents in the same district, then may the better person win!

Another thing comes to mind as a rule of thumb for testing the contiguity and especially the compactness of a district. Draw a circle which includes the whole district; or draw a square which includes the whole district; or draw a rectangle which is not more than twice as long as it is wide and which includes the whole district. If more than about a third of the figure is outside the district, then the district may need reconsideration. Exceptions may be reasonable if the part outside the district is in another state or is water (such as the Chesapeake Bay).

Members of the redistricting commission, I thank you in advance for your work. My guess is that there will be a lot of sqawking and griping about your work, but here's a test of that: if it's coming relatively equally from both sides of the aisle, then that means you've done a good job!

Thanks!

Stan F

Rev. Stan Farthing

Pastor, Zetta Presbyterian Church, Churchville

Vice President, LDA Creations Inc, Dayton

DATE RECEIVED: Wednesday, September 1, 2021 11:34:12 AM GMT-04:00

FROM: Meribeth Kraybill <meribethkraybill@gmail.com>

REGION: Valley

LOCALITY: Harrisonburg

COMMENT:

As a Virginia (Harrisonburg) constituent/voter, I want to register my support for redistricting lines to be drawn to meet the interests of specific communities rather than political agendas. Political gerrymandering does not serve that purpose. Virginia can do better and be a model for other states.

Thank you,
Meribeth

DATE RECEIVED: Wednesday, September 1, 2021 2:29:26 PM GMT-04:00

FROM: Milla Wisecarver <wisecams@yahoo.com>

REGION: Valley

LOCALITY: Harrisonburg

COMMENT:

Thanks to each of you for serving on this commission, which will end partisan gerrymandering that is so harmful to everyone's best interests.

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I am looking forward to the de-politicalization of the process by which state House, state Senate, and congressional House district boundaries are drawn. The boundaries are going to be based on "communities of interest," not politics. That is indeed good news.

The action this commission took on Aug. 17 seems VERY counter to what was intended by the state constitutional amendment. You MUST NOT DO THIS!

I was appalled to learn that a member of the commission seemed to dismiss concern about public reaction to this action because only a very small segment of voters care about redistricting.

First off, I CARE.

But more importantly, the notion that you can get away with this nonsense because so few people "care" is alarming, ludicrous, and frankly simply UNBELIEVABLE.

It's time for all of you to commit to making the changes that voters chose in 2020. That is YOUR JOB, not find a way to revert to past practices.

I look forward to all of you doing the RIGHT THING, not because "no one cares" but because it is THE RIGHT THING.

Milla Wisecarver
Harrisonburg, Va.

DATE RECEIVED: Wednesday, September 1, 2021 11:27:05 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: Esther Stenson <estherstenson@gmail.com>
REGION: Valley
LOCALITY: Harrisonburg

COMMENT:
To the Redistricting Commission:
I am writing with concern upon learning that you voted to eliminate barriers to considering political data when redrawing district boundaries.
So you still want to play political games rather than make voting more fair for everyone? I am appalled and disappointed.
The district I live in, which includes Harrisonburg and other distant communities, is shaped like some kind of monster---which it is. There's nothing fair about it.
Go back and reconsider what you are doing. We want to have confidence that our districts have been re-drawn fairly and honestly.
Sincerely,
Esther Stenson
Harrisonburg, Virginia

DATE RECEIVED: Thursday, September 2, 2021 12:01:11 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Scott French <sierrawhiskeyfox@gmail.com>
REGION: Valley
LOCALITY: Harrisonburg

COMMENT:
I care. Please do your job as directed by the voters of Virginia. The vote results indicate voters do not want your continued political gerrymandering.
Scott French
865 Neyland Dr.

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Harrisonburg VA

DATE RECEIVED: Friday, September 3, 2021 2:11:52 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Ruth Stoltzfus Jost <ruthsjost@gmail.com>
REGION: Valley
LOCALITY: Harrisonburg

COMMENT:

Ladies and Gentlemen,
I object to use of political data, which will distort performance of your job.
You were established to free us of gerrymandering.
Please do your job honestly and draw lines for compact communities of interest, not political boundaries.
Yours,
Ruth Jost
Harrisonburg VA
540.271.4014

DATE RECEIVED: Sunday, February 28, 2021 8:10:53 PM GMT-05:00
FROM: Janet I. Trettner <jitrettner@comcast.net>
REGION: Valley
LOCALITY: Keezletown

COMMENT:

Dear Members of the Redistricting Commission:
Our House, Senate, and Congressional districts are currently labeled in a manner that is very confusing. Each set of districts is numbered beginning with number one. As a result, there are 3 districts 1-11 (House, Senate, and Congressional) and 2 districts 12-40 (House and Senate). Only districts 41-100 are clearly identifiable as House districts.
I respectfully request that once you have established our new districts, you rename them so there is no longer any question which district one is referring to. My suggestion going forward is:
House and Senate districts would be labeled consecutively. If the final plan includes 100 House districts and 40 Senate districts, for instance, the House districts would be labeled 1-100 and the Senate districts would be labeled 101-140. These numbers would be adjusted of course depending on the actual number of districts in the final plan.
Congressional districts would be lettered A-K (adjusted for the actual number of congressional districts in the final plan).
This would make references to the districts so much easier to understand.
Thank you for your consideration of this idea and for the work you are doing,
Very truly yours,
Janet I. Trettner
Keezletown, Virginia 22832

DATE RECEIVED: Tuesday, August 24, 2021 9:46:48 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: Nancy Ernst <neerst@centurylink.net>
REGION: Valley
LOCALITY: Lake Frederick

COMMENT:

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Bravo on your recent decision to start from scratch on the redistricting in Virginia. I am writing you to encourage you to hire an independent auditor to mathematically apply an algorithm to the new districts that are drawn. Many Virginians have worked long and hard to end gerrymandering in this state, and now you have the opportunity to really get it right. My best wishes to all of you in your continuing efforts to make the state of Virginia a model for fair voting districts.

Nancy Ernst
Lake Frederick, VA
Get TypeApp for Android

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, July 26, 2021 10:09:07 AM GMT-04:00
FROM: Terry Fowler <tjfowler11@hotmail.com>
REGION: Valley
LOCALITY: McGaheysville

COMMENT:

The whole process of drawing districts has long been politicized to the point that both parties have abused the system and the public's trust. I believe that you can use the current districts as a basis starting point but adjust them to reflect obvious and common sense natural boundaries. The Commission should insulate themselves and not take into consideration, racial or political makeup of those areas being considered. Strictly base it on geographical delineations, insuring that all areas of the state are fairly represented and the rural areas are not underweighted and under-represented just due to the heavily populated metropolitan areas.

The voice of the whole state needs to be reflected in the final result ignoring special interests and racial/political lines.

Sincerely,
Terry & Gail Fowler
618 Barrows Ct.
McGaheysville, VA 22840

DATE RECEIVED: Tuesday, August 3, 2021 3:05:48 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Robert Spiller <rmsspiller@gmail.com>
REGION: Valley
LOCALITY: Penn Laird

COMMENT:

I support re-districting reform in Virginia. I live and vote in Rockingham County, in the Valley Region. I believe that it is helpful for district boundaries to conform to county and city limit lines, where possible, so that our elected officials will be strongly correlated with local government boundaries. So I suggest that your districts minimize districts that divide counties or cities into separate districts. As you implement the Constitutional requirements of contiguousness and compactness, please make explicit and public the sub-priorities and criteria you use in your re-districting, to increase the confidence and appreciation the public will have for your important work. I suggest that "compactness" of various districts might be objectively compared by calculating the ratio of each district's perimeter to the area included, for instance miles of perimeter to square miles of included habitable area (not including bodies of water or swamps, or areas where people are not allowed to reside, such as cemeteries or parks).

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Please concentrate on existing districts that have narrow “peninsula-shaped” protrusions from their boundaries, and those with many small “wrinkles” in their boundaries, which will inflate their perimeter-to-area ratios. I support reports that you have announced that you will avoid basing district boundary decisions on where particular incumbents or candidates live, and that you avoid basing such decisions on prior voting patterns.

Sincerely,
Robert M. Spiller, Jr.
Penn Laird

DATE RECEIVED: Wednesday, August 4, 2021 5:09:00 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: Lisa Gooden
EMAIL: lgooden@rockinghamcountyva.gov
REGION: Valley
LOCALITY: Rockingham

SUBJECT: Split HOD Districts - ROCKINGHAM COUNTY

COMMENT:
Hello, as the General Registrar/Director of Elections for Rockingham County, I appreciate the opportunity to bring this matter to your attention. While I'm not a gambler, I would bet that this should be one of THE easiest issues that you will face as you gather comments about Redistricting Virginia. :^) The problem at hand is that Rockingham County has a split HOD District (25th/26th) in the Town of Bridgewater, specifically in the 401-West Bridgewater precinct. Some years ago, the town annexed an area which led to the development of the streets that are in the 26th HOD District: Hollen Mill Court (26 voters), Millview Dr. (20 voters), Millstone St. (28 voters) Penstock Ln (1 voter), Turbine Ln (11 voters), all of which are in the 401-West Bridgewater precinct. The remaining 1,402 voters in this precinct, however, are in the 25th HOD District. (For the record, Bridgewater has two precincts: 401-West Bridgewater -- 1,488 total voters) and 406-East Bridgewater -- 2,234 voters and only 401-West Bridgewater has the split HOD District.) As one can imagine, this split precinct for the 25th/26th HOD District makes election management more challenging: ordering two types of ballots for one voting precinct and, on Election Day, making sure that voters receive the correct ballot and fielding phone calls from voters who are confused about 'who' their Delegate is or why they didn't have the opportunity to vote for Delegate " x " because someone else down the street votes for Delegate " x ". Efforts over the years to resolve this situation have failed. There should be no reason that a town is not wholly contained in one House of Delegates District, and it is believed that this was simply a 'mapping error' (Division of Legislative Services) during the last redistricting process. Your consideration in resolving this 'split precinct' (HOD 25th/26th) in the Town of Bridgewater is appreciated. Please feel free to contact me if you have questions.

DATE RECEIVED: Saturday, September 4, 2021 2:14:52 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Lareta Finger <laretafinger@gmail.com>
REGION: Valley
LOCALITY: Rockingham

COMMENT:
To the Virginia Redistricting Commission,
I understand that Virginia voters have adopted a state constitutional amendment to depoliticize the redistricting process.

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION

PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – VALLEY REGION

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I want to assure you that voters are paying attention to this process. The country went to a great deal of effort and expense to do the census count. For something that happens only every 10 years, doing proper, honest, fair redistricting is exceedingly important. I'm sure it is a challenging job, but, if all of you believe in democracy and making every vote count, can't you figure out what is fair without hiring lawyers from each political party to fight with each other?

As a mother of boys and a former grade-school teacher, I know how important fairness is--that each party or person feels that the process has been fair, even though neither side completely got its way.

Gerrymandering has no place in a true democracy.

I can only hope that enough of you in either party have the integrity not only to work conscientiously, but to work so that, by the end, each person and party feels that the results are fair to both.

Lareta Finger

Rockingham, Virginia

DATE RECEIVED: Wednesday, August 4, 2021 2:46:06 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: Susan Pollard
EMAIL: spollard417@gmail.com
REGION: Valley
LOCALITY: Rockingham County

SUBJECT: Redistricting Virginia

COMMENT:

I am the chief election officer for West Bridgewater in Rockingham County. Some of my voters live in the 25th district and some live in the 26th district. It makes it confusing for voters when they want to vote for a certain candidate and I give them the proper ballot for their district and that name is not on their ballot. It would be very helpful to have everyone who lives inside the town limits of Bridgewater to be in the same district. It would also make our jobs as election officers easier and less stressful. Thank you.

DATE RECEIVED: Thursday, September 2, 2021 1:15:39 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Jon Rogers <jprogers53@yahoo.com>
REGION: Valley
LOCALITY: Swoope

COMMENT:

Good afternoon,
I support the non-political redistricting that was approved by the legislature.
I request that you do not consider political data when redrawing district boundaries.
New district boundaries should be based on compact "communities of interest," not politics.
Sincerely,
Jon Rogers,
292 Abbington Road
Swoope Va

DATE RECEIVED: Monday, August 23, 2021 6:04:08 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Stewart Brown <stb199@gmail.com>

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION

PUBLIC INPUT REPORT – VALLEY REGION

October 18, 2021

REGION: Valley
LOCALITY: Winchester

COMMENT:

Bravo on throwing out the old map and starting from a neutral "scratch" position! Best news I've heard all month.
Stewart Brown
Winchester, VA 22601

DATE RECEIVED: Thursday, August 5, 2021 10:34:25 PM GMT-04:00
FROM: Julie Smith <jsmith@dls.virginia.gov>
NAME: Libby Allen
EMAIL: libby0819allen@gmail.com
REGION: Valley/Northern/West Central/Central
LOCALITY: Shenandoah, Spotsylvania, Lynchburg, Richmond

SUBJECT: District Status Quo is Not Acceptable

COMMENT:

I am asking commission members, regardless of party affiliation, to reject political considerations in designing district boundaries. Please utilize planning district boundaries and exclude addresses of General Assembly members in the mapping criteria. The criteria for voting districts should include compactness, contiguity, racial equity, and representation by communities of interest. Past gerrymandering has unfortunate results, for example my area is split into four Senate districts: two including western neighbors in the Shenandoah Valley, and one from Spotsylvania in the East, and Lynchburg to the south. Likewise, our area is split among five House districts, including two from the Valley and Richmond. Our Congressional District stretches from Fauquier to the North Carolina border. Across the state other glaring examples abound where the communities of interest are split up and not truly represented by a common legislator. The 23 existing Planning Districts, which are created by Virginia statute, could be used as the basis for drawing legislative and congressional districts. The counties and cities in these PDs are contiguous, share a common geography, and have collaborated on common interests, such as housing, transportation, economic development, and waste management. Because the Planning Districts are creations of the state government, using their structure as a template for redistricting is most appropriate. Congressional districts could be fashioned by combining some portions of adjacent PDs. To reach the ideal size for congressional districts, some PDs would need to be combined in whole or in part with adjacent PDs