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HOUSE STAFF CONGRESSIONAL PROPOSAL ALTERNATIVE 1, LWVSC TESTIMONY

December 29, 2021

The "Alternative 1" Congressional plan before the House Ad Hoc Committee today is a racial and partisan gerrymander that should be rejected by this body. In most respects, the map you propose today is very similar to that initially proposed in the Senate, although the Senate subcommittee has so far wisely chosen not to act on that map. This alternative map scores worse on competitiveness, proportionality, compactness, and splitting than the first map considered by this House committee and much worse than the League proposal.¹ The plan also scores badly when considering efficiency gap (20.61%) and rank-votes declination (45.87%).² The ideal figure in both cases is 0.00.³

Further, the total percentage of the population of the state affected by county splits is increased, not decreased, by Alternative 1. Two more counties are split than in the previous House plan and four more counties are split than in the League proposal. In your earlier hearing we were criticized because our map splits a small county. However, the League map has county splits affecting only 23% of the state's population, while county splits in your new map affect about more than twice as many, over 46% of the population, which is up from 44% in your initial proposal.

As in the Senate plan, in your current map District 2 cuts through northern Richland County, cracking substantial Black communities in a way that significantly dilutes minority influence. Black communities are also cracked around Sumter. In addition, you violate major communities of interest by sending District 5, dominated by the Charlotte suburbs, far into the interior of the state.

However, the most obvious racial gerrymander is in the Lowcountry. Dividing Charleston County and even the City of Charleston as you have serves principally to ensure a low Minority population in CD 1 so that White occupants of the lower Charleston peninsula, Mt. Pleasant, Seabrook and Kiawah can dominate that district. This plan reduces the BVAP in CD 1 to 16% from 21% in your initial plan. The League plan, which keeps Charleston County whole, shows a BVAP of 23% for CD 1.

We are aware that some public testimony at the last hearing focused on keeping Beaufort County in CD 1, although over the past several months other members of the public have expressed considerable concern about the fragmentation of the Charleston area. There are other options in how the map can be drawn, but if the question was whether it is more important to keep North Charleston with Charleston or Beaufort with Charleston, the answer should be obvious. North Charleston and Charleston share a much greater number of economic and social interests with one another than Beaufort and Charleston do. I could add that Charleston and Beaufort are sometimes in competition with respect to important economic issues with federal

¹ First House map at <https://davesredistricting.org/maps#ratings::7d5faa6d-9847-4f8b-9529-e17d0167f0d8> and Alternate 1 at <https://davesredistricting.org/maps#ratings::90c19ba8-c50f-4824-a3c8-6d5ec3c1b271>

² <https://davesredistricting.org/maps#analytics::90c19ba8-c50f-4824-a3c8-6d5ec3c1b271>

³ Marion Campisi, Andrea Padilla, Tommy Ratliff, and Ellen Veomett, "Declination as a Metric to Detect Partisan Gerrymandering," December 17, 2018, <https://arxiv.org/pdf/1812.05163.pdf>.

implications, for example Jasper Port development, but your map puts the Charleston shipyards in CD 6, to be represented by a congressman whose district is dominated by inland areas in the Midlands. Clearly keeping the coast zone “whole” has not been a priority in drawing your maps, a point also illustrated by CD 7 on the northern coast.

We ask that you revisit the League proposal. It is narrowly tailored to respond to minority needs as required by the Voting Rights Act, without cracking or packing minority communities. It is far more faithful to legitimate communities of interest and traditional redistricting criteria than either of the plans that the House has presented.

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APPENDIX

Partisan lean figures are based on Dave's Redistricting App (DRA) composite of statewide races from 2016-2020. Competitive districts are very generously defined as those having a $\pm 5\%$ partisan margin.

PARTISAN LEAN PERCENTAGES

Districts	Current			LWVSC			House Alt 1		
	Rep	Dem	Gap	Rep	Dem	Gap	Rep	Dem	Gap
1	54.46	43.19	11	49.26	48.31	1	55.74	42.00	14
2	56.50	41.29	15	60.29	37.67	23	55.57	42.17	13
3	67.98	30.19	38	68.19	29.96	38	67.92	30.25	38
4	60.81	36.96	24	59.97	37.79	22	59.92	37.84	22
5	57.51	40.58	17	58.85	39.3	20	58.30	39.79	19
6	31.45	67.08	36	35.43	62.95	28	33.61	64.77	31
7	58.54	40.08	18	59.76	39.74	20	58.56	40.06	19

DRA RATINGS

	Competitiveness	Proportionality	Splitting	Compactness	Minority
Current Map	9	0	30	38	50
LWVSC	20	25	78	42	50
Senate Staff	6	0	30	38	50
House Staff	14	8	47	40	50
House Alt 1	8	0	31	36	50

DRA COMPETITIVE DISTRICT ASSESSMENT

	Rep Lean	Dem Lean	Number in $\pm 5\%$ Competitive Range
Current Map	6	1	0
LWVSC	5	1	1

Senate Staff	6	1	0
House Staff	5	1	1
House Alt 1	6	1	0

COUNTY AND PRECINCT SPLITS

	County Splits (6 splits needed for almost exactly equal population)	Precinct Splits (6 splits needed for almost exactly equal populations)	% Population affected by County Splits
Current Map	12 counties are split a total of 12 times: Beaufort (1), Berkeley (1), Charleston (1), Colleton (1), Dorchester (1), Florence (1), Greenville (1), Newberry (1), Orangeburg (1), Richland (1), Spartanburg (1), and Sumter (1).	65	46.49%
LWVSC Map	6 counties are split a total of 5 times: Barnwell (1), Berkeley (1), Edgefield (1), Greenville (1), Marlboro (1), and Spartanburg (1).	23	22.59%
Senate Proposal	13 counties are split a total of 13 times: Beaufort (1), Berkeley (1), Calhoun (1), Charleston (1), Colleton (1), Dorchester (1), Florence (1), Greenville (1), Jasper (1), Orangeburg (1), Richland (1), Spartanburg (1), and Sumter (1).	10	52.06%
House Staff	8 counties are split a total of 8 times: Berkeley (1), Charleston (1), Colleton (1), Dorchester (1), Florence (1), Greenville (1), Richland (1), and Spartanburg (1)	26	43.86%
House Alt 1	10 counties are split a total of 10 times: Beaufort (1), Berkeley (1), Colleton (1), Dorchester (1), Florence (1), Greenville (1), Jasper	7	46.49%

	(1), Richland (1), Spartanburg (1), and Sumter (1). No counties have more people than a district. Altogether, these splits affect 42.17% of people in the state. To achieve almost exactly equal district populations, six precincts may also have to be split, and five are.		
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STATISTICAL GERRYMANDER MEASURES

RANK-VOTES DECLINATION (PACKING AND CRACKING) AND EFFICIENCY GAP (RELATIVE TWO PARTY DIFFERENCE IN WASTED VOTES)

	Declination	Efficiency Gap
Current Map	48.06	20.28%
LWVSC Proposal	25.48	15.38%
Senate Staff Proposal	48.29	20.88%
House Staff Proposal	41.27	18.80%
House Alt 1	45.87	20.61%