



Senator Bob Rucho  
NC Senate  
300 N. Salisbury Street, Room 300-A  
Raleigh, NC 27603-5925

Dear Senator Rucho:

The League of Women Voters of North Carolina supports redistricting of the Congressional and state legislative districts by apportionment primarily according to population. We believe that districts should be single-member, contiguous and maintain communities of interest. As a whole, a redistricting plan should provide for competitive districts and fully reflect the diversity of the state. Specific standards of fair representation, as required by the federal Voting Rights Act, should be assured.

We applaud the Senate and House Redistricting Joint Committee on its scheduling of 12 state-wide public hearings to receive citizen input regarding how redistricting will impact them and their communities. However, the League is concerned that public hearings on the redrawn district maps by the Joint Committee will not be scheduled. While it is our understanding that the redrawn district maps will be available online for citizen feedback, we feel that the use of this method alone for citizen input diminishes the importance of citizen involvement in the redistricting process.

Under the proposed process, citizens and interested groups will not be provided with an explanation of how the committee arrived at its redistricting decisions. Furthermore, this process would hamper the ability of citizens to ask questions regarding the proposed plans and would also prohibit involvement by the many North Carolinians who lack regular computer access. Finally, it would preclude citizen-offered alternative map plans from the consideration they deserve. Thoughtful consideration of citizen-drawn map proposals can improve the redistricting process because it increases public involvement, deepens leaders' understanding of the communities they represent, and can help strengthen proposed plans so that they may better withstand legal challenges.

We understand the constraints upon the committee members' time, the limited time allotted for approval of the redistricting plan by the US Justice Department, and the need to have the districts defined by the end of the year, if not sooner. However, the League requests that you allow full citizen involvement in the redistricting process from beginning to end by holding public hearings on the Joint Commissions' redrawn district maps prior to their legislative approval.

Best regards, Kathleen Balogh

Kathleen Balogh, President League of Women Voters, North Carolina