



907 Glenwood Ave. • Raleigh, NC 27605 • 919-836-0027

August 1, 2017

Dear members of the Joint House and Senate Redistricting Committee:

We are encouraged by the committee's interest in an impartial, nonpartisan redistricting process, reflected by the fact that you chose to share the draft legislative maps that were produced during an exercise overseen by Common Cause earlier this year. And we hope that exercise will inspire your committee to adopt its own impartial criteria when creating new legislative districts to comply with the federal court order.

Since the maps were included in your packet at the committee meeting on Wednesday, July 26, 2017, we thought it proper to provide additional context about those sample, unofficial plans.

We recently conducted an exercise to better understand how nonpartisan redistricting can work in drawing state legislative voting maps.

As part of that exercise, we tasked law students at Campbell University in Raleigh with drawing legislative voting districts following the strict nonpartisan criteria outlined in House Bill 200.

The sample maps produced by the law students were then reviewed by a bipartisan panel of former legislators that included Republicans Charles Jeter and Carolyn Justice, Democrats Tony Foriest and Rick Glazier, and independent Paul Tine.

Our intent was not to offer these district plans as an official alternative to the current court-ordered redistricting, but rather to highlight that a nonpartisan process for redistricting can work, with those House and Senate plans being but one example of what maps might look like if created under such a system.

We strongly encourage this committee to adopt a nonpartisan process, including the exclusion of voter registration data, past election results and incumbents' addresses and assigning redistricting responsibility to an independent body, when drawing new plans as required. If the committee does not pass a remedial redistricting plan following such a process, then we will call on the court to draw new district plans itself with a nonpartisan process and criteria.

Since a majority of the joint redistricting committee has supported impartial redistricting in the past, we urge you to adopt a nonpartisan system for moving forward on new district plans.

Sincerely,

Bob Phillips, Executive Director
Common Cause North Carolina