

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
LEGISLATIVE REAPPORTIONMENT COMMISSION

In re: Public Meeting of the Legislative
Reapportionment Commission

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Stenographic report of hearing held
in Hearing Room No. 1, North Office
Building, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

Friday
January 14, 2022
11:00 a.m.

MARK A. NORDENBERG, CHAIRMAN

MEMBERS OF LEGISLATIVE REAPPORTIONMENT COMMISSION

Sen. Kim Ward	Rep. Kerry Benninghoff
Sen. Jay Costa	Rep. Joanna McClinton

Also Present:

Robert L. Byer, Esq., Chief Counsel
G. Reynolds Clark, Executive Director
Dr. Jonathan Cervas, Redistricting Consultant
Leah Mintz, Assistant Counsel
G. Carlton Logue, Esq. Deputy Counsel, Senate Majority Leader
Chad Davis, Research Analyst, Senate Republican Policy Office
C.J. Hafner, Esq., Chief Counsel, Senate Democratic Leader
Ronald N. Jumper, Esq. Deputy Chief Counsel, Senate Democratic
Leader
Lora S. Schoenberg, Director, Senate Democratic Legislative
Services
Rod Corey, Esq., Chief Counsel, House Republican Caucus
James Mann, Esq., Senior Deputy Chief Counsel, House
Republican Caucus
Katherine Testa, Esq., Senior Legal Counsel, House
Republican Caucus
William R. Schaller, Director, House Republican District
Operations
Michael Schwoyer, Esq., Special Counsel, Deputy Chief of
Staff for Legislation and Policy, House Democratic Caucus

Reported by:
Ann-Marie P. Sweeney
Official Reporter

Also Present:

Justin Klos, Director, House Democratic Office of
Demographic Analysis
David Brogan, Esq., Director, House Democratic Legislation
and Policy
Andrew McGinley, Esq., General Counsel, House Democratic
Government Oversight Committee

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1 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Good morning, everyone. My
2 name is Mark Nordenberg. As Chair of the Pennsylvania
3 Legislative Reapportionment Commission, it is my privilege to
4 call this meeting to order and to welcome all who are joining
5 us either here in person in the State Capitol, or by
6 livestream. I extend those greetings on behalf of the entire
7 Commission, which includes Majority Leader Kim Ward, from the
8 Senate; it includes Majority Leader Benninghoff, from the
9 House of Representatives; Democratic Leader Joanna McClinton,
10 from the House of Representatives; and joining us up on the
11 big screen, Senator Jay Costa, the Democratic Leader of the
12 Senate. Omicron is taking its toll. Senator Costa is
13 quarantining at home after a positive diagnosis. Our
14 Executive Director, Renny Clark, is quarantining at home after
15 his wife had a positive diagnosis, and our Chief Counsel, Rob
16 Byer, is quarantining at home because when I went to pick him
17 up this morning he was not feeling up to par and just didn't
18 want to take any chances. But we're glad that through the
19 wonders of modern technology, everyone can be with us today.

20 I also want to kind of balance out the less than
21 entirely positive news with some great news: Today is
22 Majority Leader Benninghoff's birthday.

23 (Applause.)

24 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Twenty-ninth birthday.

25 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: Did you say 29th

1 birthday?

2 (Laughter.)

3 REPRESENTATIVE McCLINTON: Happy Birthday, Kerry.

4 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Representative Rothman, who has
5 served as a Deputy for the Majority Leader in one past
6 hearing, told me that he was ready to stand in again today,
7 but Representative Benninghoff said there was nothing he would
8 like better than to spend most of his birthday in hearings
9 with his friend Mark Nordenberg.

10 (Laughter.)

11 CHAIR NORDENBERG: And I feel the same way, so if
12 we keep going until July, then maybe I'll have the chance to
13 return the favor.

14 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: I'd be glad to have
15 the hearings go until July.

16 (Laughter.)

17 CHAIR NORDENBERG: After today's sessions are
18 over, and this is a busy day for us - we've got two hours of
19 hearings beginning right now; we've got three hours of
20 hearings this afternoon; we've got three hours of hearings
21 tomorrow morning - we will have had 15 hearings and 7
22 meetings. We will have heard from 156 witnesses, some of them
23 invited witnesses because of their expertise, most though
24 citizen witnesses who have come to express their views on the
25 reapportionment process. We also continue to receive record

1 numbers of submissions to our website portal. I got an update
2 just a few moments before I came into the meeting. We now
3 have received 3,777 submissions, exactly 3,000 of which have
4 come in since we released our preliminary plan. And I know I
5 can say on behalf of the Members of the Commission, as well as
6 the Commission staff, that we're grateful for those
7 submissions, both because of the interest in the process that
8 they reflect, and also because they are genuinely educational.
9 I can say they're all being read. In fact, our Executive
10 Director, Renny Clark, has read every one of them himself.
11 He's up to about 3,501 right now, so he's got 200 or so to
12 catch up. Leah Mintz, who is here at the table, has read
13 almost all of them and has organized them for us in a way that
14 makes them accessible. And most of the rest of us have read a
15 fair number of them.

16 I should say that, in terms of the Commission
17 staff, I have think I'm the only member who wasn't born in
18 Pennsylvania, and I now have lived in Pennsylvania for more
19 than 45 years. We've lived in urban, suburban, and rural
20 settings. Our Executive Director was both a mayor and a
21 longtime chief of his volunteer fire department. We feel as
22 if we have a reasonably good feel for the State, but nobody
23 can possibly know as much as the people who live in different
24 municipalities or regions, and so getting the kind of input
25 that we have been receiving really is valuable.

1 Now, 3,777 is a large number, 3,000 is a large
2 number. There are two other large numbers that I want to
3 mention from the outset. One is 2,560. That's the number of
4 municipalities in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, where we
5 rank third in the nation. The other number is 203, the number
6 of Members of the House of Representatives, where we rank
7 second in the nation. And if you think about 2,500
8 municipalities and you think about 200 Members of the House of
9 Representatives and another 50 in the Senate, there are a lot
10 of lines to be drawn. And it is literally an impossibility to
11 think about drawing those lines without separating some
12 municipalities from their adjacent neighbors. And so we are
13 really doing our best to move toward well-reasoned choices in
14 terms of where the lines go. But there are going to be lines,
15 and there are going to be separations, and it's impossible to
16 create maps that do anything different. And so, again, we're
17 working toward making the best decisions that we can, and we
18 appreciate your help.

19 And before we hear from the first witnesses today
20 -- well, first, let me ask if there are any Members of the
21 Commission who have opening statements they'd like to make.

22 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: I think at this point
23 you summarized things pretty well.

24 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you.

25 SENATOR K. WARD: Can I add one number? I think

1 like, what, 12.5 million people in Pennsylvania we're trying
2 to accommodate.

3 CHAIR NORDENBERG: There's a big number.

4 Before we begin hearing from witnesses, let me
5 offer a couple comments or requests.

6 First, because this is going to be a busy day, or
7 day and a half, we all would be grateful if you stuck to your
8 time limits.

9 Second, we would be grateful if all of the
10 testimony is directly related to the matters that are before
11 the Commission, which are the reapportionment of the State
12 Senate and the State House of Representatives. We have
13 nothing to do with congressional districts, we have nothing do
14 with pending legislation, we have nothing to do with
15 amendments to the Constitution. It really is the plan that
16 includes the reapportionment maps for the House and Senate
17 that are our business.

18 And third, particularly as we get toward the later
19 stages of the process, I would just say do everything you can
20 not to personalize your remarks. I think everybody who is
21 working on this, everybody who is coming to testify, even if
22 we have different views on things, we should assume everybody
23 else is operating in good faith, too. And that will help us
24 keep our focus, again, on the business at hand rather than
25 drawing us into extraneous matters.

1 And I have to say, that for a person concluding
2 remarks on decorum, it is a particular pleasure to say that
3 our first witness today will be Senator Pat Vance, who has
4 been a model of decorum in every setting in which I have seen
5 her, and she and I were remarking before the hearing began
6 that this was a turning of the tables for the two of us,
7 because many, many times I was sitting down at that table and
8 she was up here receiving testimony from me. Today, it's a
9 real privilege to have you back in the Capitol and to have you
10 kicking off this session with your comments.

11 Welcome, Senator.

12 HON. VANCE: Mr. Chairman and Members of the
13 committee, I'm very happy to be here today, and I'm really
14 going to concentrate primarily on the Senate seat in
15 Cumberland County. We have waited for so long to have a
16 Senator, our own Senator, from Cumberland County. When I saw
17 the final 13 million people in Pennsylvania, the ideal
18 district would be 260,000, Cumberland County now has 259,500,
19 and that was the 2020 Census, so it's way over that. We are
20 booming. And we have the fastest growing county in the State,
21 but I thought, oh, good, we will be rewarded. But the present
22 plan that's showing has Cumberland County having four Senators
23 -- please, strike that -- four counties, not four Senators.
24 That is to the benefit of no one. I think if you think about
25 it, you realize that to have that kind of growth, and it

1 continues, at least 1 percent a year, maybe more, it is
2 growing like crazy. And so it presents problems, good kind of
3 problems, but infrastructure, education, schools, healthcare
4 is a big problem. We need someone who is able to concentrate
5 just on that and nothing else.

6 I was kind of surprised to see that the suggested
7 plan shows that it's part of York, only part of Cumberland,
8 this fast-growing entity, all of Perry County and northern
9 Dauphin County. Northern Dauphin County is a wonderful area,
10 but it has absolutely nothing, nothing in common with
11 Cumberland County.

12 My biggest concern is, first of all, it would be
13 difficult to be a Senator from that area and do a good job.
14 It's just you have such vastly different people, and you're
15 trying to meld them together, distance wise too. There's no
16 easy way to get to northern Dauphin County from Cumberland
17 County. But having said that, it's not about who the Senator
18 would be, it's about who would really care about the people
19 that are involved. The areas of upper Dauphin County are so
20 dissimilar from anything that Cumberland County has. It would
21 put a strain on their resources. I don't know how one could
22 do a good job. And it would take away that strong voice that
23 is going to be needed for Cumberland County that has so many
24 new people coming in, not just necessarily from around the
25 corner, but from other parts of the Commonwealth and from

1 other States. It is a real assimilation, and it's going to
2 take skills to do it.

3 The original plan showed Cumberland County whole,
4 and that is still possible, to have one Senator in the county
5 and represent it well who already understands the county. It
6 would not cross school districts. It would be contiguous.
7 It's almost like the perfect fit. And yet at this point, it
8 doesn't appear that that's what's being proposed. Hopefully,
9 people will realize that it's probably the best thing to do
10 for everyone to give representation to the people who need it.

11 The growth continues, the schools are pressed in
12 Cumberland County as it is now. If you stretch it out and
13 look at it, what they call the river communities, those
14 communities are against the Susquehanna River, are starting to
15 change a little bit with their influx from Dauphin County.
16 And then you get into the middle of Cumberland County, and you
17 have so many housing developments. So housing has become a
18 huge problem. First of all, it's almost not affordable for
19 many people. There's not a whole lot of affordable housing
20 there, but there are developments after developments. We are
21 fortunate that we have good schools, some better than others,
22 but all good. With proximity to a lot of places, it has
23 become a very popular place to move. If one goes past
24 Carlisle, we still have some rural, but that is changing
25 dramatically. It is a county in the midst of change, and we

1 need to have adequate representation. And, hopefully, that
2 would be one Senator for all of Cumberland County.

3 I have six seconds. Thank you very much.

4 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you very much, and we
5 know you know a lot about providing good representation, so
6 it's nice to have you here today.

7 HON. VANCE: Thank you.

8 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you.

9 Our second witness today is someone I have
10 identified in the past as Pennsylvania's most famous mapper,
11 Amanda Holt, who is here to offer suggestions for improvement
12 to our preliminary plan.

13 MS. HOLT: Thank you. I appreciate the
14 opportunity to present exceptions to the preliminary Senate
15 and House plans. It is of paramount importance that in any
16 redistricting plan the voice of the people be protected in the
17 redistricting process. There are restraints designed to
18 prevent the political process from diluting our voice. There
19 are standards designed to maximize the voice minorities can
20 have in the elective process. The exceptions I will present
21 today and have previously submitted describe how the plans
22 repeatedly subordinate these protections in favor of
23 extraneous considerations.

24 The standard established in Bartlett v. Strickland
25 appears clear: A majority-minority district is one in which

1 the minority group must be 50 percent plus 1 of the VAP of a
2 district. The preliminary House plan created 12 districts
3 which met the standard, yet testimony submitted shows there
4 could be 18 such districts. Has the standard changed? Was
5 the failure to reach the majority-minority standard used to
6 try and expand minority influence by creating more coalition
7 districts? It does not appear so. The preliminary plan
8 contained 25 districts in which the minority voting age
9 population collectively forms the majority, yet submitted
10 testimony shows there could be 27 such districts.

11 The preliminary Senate and House plans both raise
12 concerns when examined in light of the constitutional
13 criteria. On the surface, over 70 percent of the
14 discretionary splits in each preliminary map appear
15 unnecessary to meet constitutional and Federal legal
16 requirements. They were not absolutely necessary to create
17 districts which are compact, contiguous, of equal population,
18 and comply with the Voting Rights Act. The courts have
19 acknowledged that plans can incorporate other considerations
20 beyond those outlined in the Constitution.

21 The Senate plan appears to try and achieve the
22 following goals: To create a Hispanic-opportunity district
23 with no incumbent, avoid contest between incumbents, place
24 incumbents in districts in which they have a reasonable
25 opportunity to win, give both parties a path toward the

1 majority. The House plan appears to try and achieve the
2 following goals: To give both parties a path toward the
3 majority, create districts with a strong minority presence but
4 no incumbent, and limit contests between incumbents.

5 I am not here to dispute the appropriateness or
6 value of these goals. The Commission has the right to
7 establish priorities as it sees fit, provided they stay within
8 the legal framework. So the question remains, is it possible
9 to incorporate these other considerations without violating
10 the Constitution? The remedies presented to this Commission
11 explore these possibilities.

12 In the Senate plan, I found that with six ward
13 divisions required to create a Hispanic district with a voting
14 age population of 41.4 percent that has no incumbent, I
15 believe creating this district, while not legally required,
16 would be in keeping with the spirit of the Voting Rights Act.
17 The remedy creates one contest between Senators not already
18 proposed, one division would eliminate this contest. The
19 remedy creates districts that either favor the party of the
20 incumbent or fall within the competitive range, except in one
21 instance, and the remedy appears to give both parties a path
22 toward the majority, because the fractional portion of
23 Democratic seats is about 25.

24 In the House plan, the remedy shows how to create
25 the same number of opportunity districts for minorities with

1 no incumbent. The remedy appears to give both parties a path
2 toward the majority, the fractional portion of Democratic
3 seats is about 103, with 81 districts leaning Republican, 87
4 districts leaning Democratic, and the remainder in the
5 competitive range. And the remedy shows how to limit contests
6 between incumbents.

7 Even with divisions to accommodate these goals,
8 each plan could still reduce the number of divisions by at
9 least 68 percent. I make this point not to support additional
10 divisions that needlessly do violence to the Constitution.
11 This simply illustrates that the primary reason for the
12 proposed discretionary divisions do not appear to be
13 justified. The Pennsylvania Supreme Court underscored the
14 danger of doing violence to constitutional restraints in favor
15 of political considerations. The introduction of the free and
16 equal election clause as a consideration in the redistricting
17 process has not yet changed this assessment. The Pennsylvania
18 Supreme Court found that in that case the neutral criteria
19 were subordinated to political considerations. The court
20 reiterated how neutral criteria provide basic protection
21 against the dilution of a person's vote. Political and
22 partisan considerations are allowed, but not when they damage
23 the floor protection afforded by the Constitution and by case
24 law.

25 I've submitted over 70 pages of testimony to this

1 Commission discussing these exceptions. I ask that you take
2 the next 30 days to address these grievances against the voice
3 of the people.

4 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you very much, and I
5 should underscore the fact that Ms. Holt has provided more
6 material to the Commission than her presentation this morning
7 relies on.

8 Are there any questions for the witness?
9 Leader Benninghoff.

10 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: Ms. Holt, I just want
11 to say thank you for your intense work. You've put a lot of
12 time into it, and the Commissioners up here understand that
13 distinctively.

14 And I share your concerns, because I think we can
15 do better. I'm speaking predominantly in the House, the
16 majority-minority districts. I do not want to, after the
17 testimony we've heard day in and day out from multiple groups
18 across the Commonwealth really highlighting the population
19 changes and the dramatic growth, predominantly in the Hispanic
20 community, that our ultimate final map should reflect that
21 better. And I appreciate you also raising that as a citizen.

22 Thank you.

23 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Any other comments or
24 questions?

25 (There was no response.)

1 CHAIR NORDENBERG: If not, how many times have I
2 thanked you already in the last six months? Thank you, again.

3 MS. HOLT: You are welcome, and I'm available, if
4 you think of something afterwards. I know it's a lot of
5 material I submitted. So I'm available by phone and email, if
6 you have any additional questions for me.

7 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you, again.

8 Our third witness this morning is William Walker.
9 He is the Township Manager of Horsham Township, and we have
10 become kind of email pen pals.

11 MR. GILDEA-WALKER: Yes.

12 CHAIR NORDENBERG: So welcome, sir.

13 MR. GILDEA-WALKER: Thank you, and good morning,
14 Mr. Chairman and Commission Members. And thank you for
15 allowing me to speak this morning.

16 It is my pleasure to serve as the Manager of
17 Horsham Township in Montgomery County. What I'd like to do
18 this morning is tell you our unique challenges. I think we
19 have very unique challenges in Horsham Township that any other
20 township in the Commonwealth is not going through at this
21 time. So Horsham Township and its residents, we do face very
22 unique and great challenges as I said that I don't believe any
23 other township in the Commonwealth is facing. We are actively
24 pursuing the redevelopment of an 862-acre parcel that was
25 formally the Willow Grove Naval Air Station Joint Reserve

1 Base, which is almost 10 percent of the land area in our
2 township. In order to accommodate the growth that
3 redevelopment will bring, our township needs to make many
4 difficult decisions, including decisions on traffic
5 improvements to State highways necessary to accommodate the
6 impact of the redevelopment of the base. There are limited
7 resources at both the local and State level to assist with
8 those improvements.

9 The preliminary redistricting map for the House
10 divides the township in half, with the State roads adjacent to
11 the east side of the base in one legislative district, and the
12 roads adjacent to the base on the west in a different
13 legislative district. We need one Representative to work with
14 us to prioritize the allocation of scarce traffic improvement
15 resources in a manner which benefits the whole of Horsham
16 Township. My fear is that each legislator will advocate for
17 his or her own district, diluting the imperatives of the
18 improvements necessary for the successful redevelopment of the
19 base.

20 The second unique and challenging thing our
21 township is going through is PFC contamination. It is in our
22 ground water, resulting from years of the United States Navy
23 using firefighting foam on the base. Our community has been
24 poisoned. Our residents have health issues, to include cancer
25 that most likely was from the PFC contamination. Our

1 township, our water and sewer authority, the Horsham Land
2 Redevelopment Authority, have been working with the Navy for
3 almost seven years to remediate the contamination which came
4 from the base. Having a single legislator during this process
5 has been invaluable. We are achieving great success in
6 remediating the contamination, in large part because our
7 legislator has fought to secure funds which are used to
8 provide clean water in the whole of Horsham Township.

9 Again, my fear is that if the preliminary
10 redistricting plan is made final, Horsham Township will have
11 two legislators, each advocating for funding for his or her
12 own district, thus defeating our efforts to resolve these
13 issues together as one community. While working together with
14 one legislator, we have been able to provide public drinking
15 water to the whole of Horsham Township at undetectable levels
16 of PFCs. We have also extended public water lines to provide
17 safe drinking water to many families on private wells. There
18 is much work to be done, and we urge you to allow Horsham to
19 continue to benefit from working with a single legislator.

20 We are also fortunate in Horsham Township in the
21 current 151st as a whole to host two large communities of
22 interest, that being the Korean American and Indian American
23 communities. There are several Korean American churches, one
24 of them is the largest in southeast Pennsylvania in Horsham
25 Township. These churches not only serve a religious purpose,

1 but a cultural one, too.

2 The preliminary redistricting map would dilute the
3 voice of these communities, which currently are well-served by
4 a Democratic Senator and a Republican legislator. The
5 Constitution requires the municipalities not be divided unless
6 absolutely necessary. We are facing these challenges that are
7 unique and require a single voice in the House.

8 Horsham Township supports the House maps submitted
9 by Fair Districts PA, which keeps Horsham whole. You have
10 received over 220 comments on your website regarding Horsham
11 and to please keep Horsham whole. We are facing these
12 monumental tasks, this redevelopment of a Navy base, 1,000
13 acres, 10 percent of our township, the PFC contamination, as
14 well as all the other challenges a municipality normally
15 faces. We are asking for your help. Our people are asking
16 for your help to keep Horsham whole.

17 Thank you for your time today, and please keep
18 Horsham whole.

19 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you, sir.

20 Are there comments or questions for Mr. Walker?

21 Leader Benninghoff.

22 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: Thank you, Mr.
23 Chairman.

24 I think your testimony kind of solidifies why
25 we're here and having these hearings subsequent of these maps

1 being produced. I would be remiss to say that your legislator
2 has probably talked about this issue every day for the last 7
3 years, or at least every day of the 2 1/2 years I've been
4 Leader. So, you're well represented.

5 My question to you, has this township been
6 divided, to your knowledge, in any other legislative
7 redistricting maps in the past several decades?

8 MR. GILDEA-WALKER: Yes. We were divided for the
9 House about 10, 20 years ago. We were represented by a
10 little, little section of the 152nd, and then the rest was the
11 151st. Congressionally, I know we're not talking about that
12 today, but we're divided three times. Now we're down to two
13 congressionally. But in the last 10 years, we've been one
14 Representative, one Senator in Pennsylvania.

15 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: The community,
16 obviously, wanted to bring that back together?

17 MR. GILDEA-WALKER: We worked hard to do that.

18 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: Well, thank you. We
19 know you have a very, very big challenge in that project. And
20 thank you for being here today.

21 Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the time.

22 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you.

23 Other questions or comments?

24 (There was no response.)

25 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you very much.

1 And both Leader Benninghoff and Mr. Walker have
2 referred in glowing terms to the Representative who has done
3 so much for Horsham Township, and he is here today. Our next
4 witness, I guess batting cleanup this morning, is
5 Representative Todd Stephens.

6 REPRESENTATIVE STEPHENS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman,
7 Members of the committee. Mr. Chairman, thank you for the
8 kind words. Although to be fair, it's a team effort, and
9 everybody up there on that dais understands that. All four
10 Leaders of all four Caucuses that are present here today voted
11 for the legislation which has helped provide the funding
12 necessary in Horsham. So that was a bipartisan effort, and
13 everyone is owed the credit there.

14 You know, as the State Representative for the
15 151st Legislative District, I want to begin by just laying out
16 a core principle that I think is critically important as we
17 draw these maps. These districts should be drawn for the
18 benefit of the people who live within them and not for the
19 benefit of, or detriment of, any one person. State
20 Representatives are only elected for two years, but these maps
21 and the impact that they will have, some of which you heard
22 from the previous speaker, will last for at least a decade,
23 maybe generations. And so with that core principle in mind,
24 I'm going to move quickly through the next three slides,
25 because I don't want to belabor the points about unnecessary

1 splits and the constitutional criteria of compact, contiguous,
2 and nearly equal population, other than to highlight that last
3 sentence on that slide, "Unless absolutely necessary, no
4 county, city, incorporated town, borough, township or ward
5 shall be divided."

6 So moving forward to the current district, just to
7 give you a quick flavor--and I'm sorry I'm moving so quickly,
8 I appreciate your fast fingers on the machine--the current
9 151st Legislative District is made up of two whole
10 municipalities, Horsham Township and Montgomery Township.
11 They are very similar to one another, demographically,
12 economically, culturally, they really share a lot of the same
13 attributes. There are two municipal splits. The district
14 also has part of Upper Dublin Township and part of Lower
15 Gwynedd Township. Interestingly, all four townships, each are
16 in a separate school district. So, there are four different
17 school districts that are part of the current 151st - the
18 Hatboro-Horsham, North Penn, Upper Dublin, and Wissahickon
19 School Districts. As was noted earlier about Horsham
20 Township, the greater 151st Legislative District has about a
21 13.9-percent Asian population, according to Dave's
22 Redistricting. I hesitate to use the word, one broad category
23 of Asian, because Asia is a big continent. Predominantly, in
24 this area, in the 151st, it's Korean Americans and Indian
25 Americans.

1 So I want to move on to, if I could, just skip
2 ahead with me, if you do not mind, a couple of slides to the
3 preliminary LRC map. That map also has two full
4 municipalities, Montgomery Township and Ambler Borough, and
5 then it has two split municipalities still, part of Upper
6 Dublin and part of Horsham. It also maintains four school
7 districts. These are things that can be corrected. When you
8 look at that map, countywide has six municipal splits in
9 Montgomery County. The countywide Reock is .36, and the
10 countywide Polsby-Popper is a .34, terms which I was totally
11 unfamiliar with until about a month ago. And the Asian
12 population is about 14.5 percent, predominantly again, Korean
13 and Indian.

14 But that district, as was mentioned, splits
15 Horsham Township, and if you just bear with me and move back
16 two slides, you'll see a picture of the Willow Grove Naval Air
17 Station as it sits today and is vacant. And you heard many of
18 the trials and tribulations. Just to summarize that briefly,
19 currently, Horsham Township is working with the Pennsylvania
20 DEP on clean water issues, the Pennsylvania Department of
21 Health is conducting a cancer study and a health study
22 regarding PFA exposure and contamination in our community, the
23 Department of Community and Economic Development will be
24 essential to drawing top notch, high-calibre employers to this
25 base once it's eligible for redevelopment, and the Department

1 of Transportation, you can see the roads surrounding this
2 base, they're State roads, so the Pennsylvania Department of
3 Transportation is going to be an essential partner in dealing
4 with these issues moving forward. This township has too much
5 at stake. As was mentioned, it's 10 percent of the township.
6 To split this township would be devastating for the people of
7 Horsham.

8 Moving on to the next slide, some of the problems
9 that we'll encounter in Horsham Township. I just listed some
10 of the shared services that are township-wide. We have one
11 Horsham Council, one Horsham Water and Sewer Authority, one
12 Horsham Land Redevelopment Authority, one Horsham Police
13 Department, one Horsham Fire and Ambulance Department--by the
14 way, there's two fire houses; they would each be in different
15 legislative districts if the Commission's map were adopted--
16 one Horsham Library, and then a plethora of youth sports
17 organizations - Horsham Soccer, Little League, Hawks, Hoops,
18 lacrosse, wrestling. If there were two State Reps, what would
19 their priorities be? Each one would only have about 20
20 percent their district as Horsham Township. So
21 understandably, 80 percent of their district would be outside
22 of Horsham. If there are two State Reps with conflicting
23 priorities, what do you do? Where there's a road project in
24 one district and a road project in the other, whose wins?
25 What do they advocate for? You have competing priorities, and

1 it would be devastating for the advancement of Horsham
2 Township and the people that live in Horsham Township.

3 The good news is, if we move ahead two slides--I'm
4 sorry for the disjointed slides there. I'll try to correct
5 them. But Dr. Kuniholm testified last week, January 6, and
6 she did a terrific job summarizing some of the issues that
7 could be corrected, and she very capably noted that overall
8 the public response to the House map has been in most areas
9 very positive. There are areas where addressing the local
10 concerns could make the map even stronger. It should be
11 possible to make small improvements without significant impact
12 on overall metrics. As you can see, her map has just one
13 municipal split. It joins Horsham Township and Montgomery
14 Township, which are currently joined, and then adds about half
15 of Hatfield Township. Most notably, it also cuts down the
16 number of school districts to two, the Hatboro-Horsham School
17 District and the North Penn School District. So countywide,
18 it has five municipal splits, the countywide Reock is a .42,
19 and the countywide Polsby-Popper is a .38, and a greater Asian
20 population at 15.8 percent.

21 Moving on to the next slide, you'll see -- there
22 was some conversation about competitiveness. David Thornburgh
23 was here and he discussed competitiveness last week, and his
24 comment was, if you were able to, in fact, squeeze a few more
25 competitive districts into the process, so this is at least as

1 good as the current map, that would be one suggestion. Well,
2 what happens to the 151st Legislative District is important to
3 this analysis.

4 If you move to the next slide, you'll find
5 something very interesting. While I am a Republican State
6 Representative representing the 151st Legislative District,
7 *The Philadelphia Inquirer* has labeled the current 151st
8 District as a safe Dem district. Now, you might ask, how can
9 that be? Well, the fact of the matter is, since 2016, the
10 following people have won the 151st Legislative District:
11 President Biden; Governor Wolf, twice; Secretary Clinton;
12 Senator Casey; Katie McGinty; Congresswoman Dean; State
13 Senator Maria Collett; every Democratic candidate running
14 district-wide, Josh Shapiro won it twice. So, you know, it's
15 hard. I don't know where these labels come from. It's a safe
16 Dem district, according to the *Inquirer* and Dave's
17 Redistricting at this point.

18 So the LRC preliminary map actually reduces the
19 competitiveness, while Dr. Kuniholm's map maintains the same
20 competitiveness, roughly, that the current 151st Legislative
21 District has. Mr. Chairman, I can assure you, the 151st
22 Legislative District is incredibly competitive. It is
23 probably if not the most, the first or second most competitive
24 House district in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania today.

25 So the next slide sums up both maps, and it

1 compares them side by side. So Dr. Kuniholm's district has
2 one less municipal split; two less school districts;
3 countywide, it has one less municipal slit; it's higher on the
4 countywide Reock; it's higher on the countywide Polsby-Popper;
5 and it's higher in the Asian population. So I respectfully
6 submit to this Commission that you could improve your
7 preliminary maps by adopting Dr. Kuniholm's revisions that she
8 submitted on January 6 to the Montgomery County portion of the
9 map.

10 I would be remiss if I didn't mention, on the next
11 slide, the elephant in the room. I get it. Four of the five
12 Members of this Commission are Leaders of their party
13 Caucuses. I understand, and we heard from Ms. Holt, that
14 politics may enter these conversations at some point. But it
15 can't do so at the expense of the Constitution, or even more
16 importantly, or maybe as importantly, the people, the people
17 that live in these communities. You've heard about the impact
18 on the people in Horsham Township.

19 I just want to relate, we're all friendly. I view
20 my friends on the other side of the aisle sometimes as
21 competitors, and one of my good friends is a member of the
22 Democratic Leadership team, and he and I break bread,
23 breakfast, lunch, I'll leave it at that for now, very often.
24 And, you know, he's been very candid with me. Look, if you
25 make it through these elections, we're going to take you out

1 in redistricting. To survive, you're going to have to perform
2 the triple lindy, which is the famous dive from the movie *Back*
3 *to School*. You know, you're going to have to win in the Trump
4 mid-term in '18, the Trump re-elect in 2020, and then survive
5 redistricting. And that's all well and good, right? Because
6 we are friendly competitors, I understand. In the course of
7 politics, I may be a target, and that's okay. But the people
8 of Horsham should not be. They should not be made to suffer
9 because of any type of political agenda or political effort.
10 And I don't say that to malign anybody, because I get it, it's
11 the unfortunate part of the reality of our positions. But it
12 shouldn't adversely affect an entire community like Horsham
13 Township.

14 Finally, I'll close by saying, let's play
15 basketball. You know, you got out on the court, you play
16 hard, you know, every now and then somebody might get a bruise
17 here or there, you get bruised up a little bit, but you go out
18 afterwards, you have a beer together, you enjoy the comradery,
19 and you get ready for the next contest. What you don't do is
20 take your battle on the court into the stands and start
21 throwing chairs around and hurting innocent spectators.
22 That's what you don't do.

23 So let's keep the game on the court, let's have a
24 fair competition and deliver a free and equal map for the
25 people of Pennsylvania. Mr. Chairman, I would just urge you

1 to consider adopting Dr. Kuniholm's revisions. I think she
2 did a very thoughtful job of presenting a map which meets all
3 the constitutional criteria and also doesn't disadvantage or
4 disenfranchise an entire community like Horsham.

5 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you very much for your
6 presentation.

7 Are there questions?

8 Majority Leader Ward.

9 SENATOR K. WARD: Thank you.

10 How many -- I may have missed this, what is the
11 population of Horsham?

12 REPRESENTATIVE STEPHENS: We're about 26,000
13 people. 27,154, according to the Township Manager.

14 SENATOR K. WARD: Not overly huge that it would
15 need to be split.

16 REPRESENTATIVE STEPHENS: No. It certainly does
17 not need to be split based on the population.

18 SENATOR K. WARD: I just want to add, that's very
19 presumptive of your friend on the other side of the aisle to
20 assume that he'd be able to take you out in redistricting.

21 REPRESENTATIVE STEPHENS: As I said, it's friendly
22 competition. I wasn't in any way upset by it. It's banter
23 that we engage in, and we have a good time. And he's still my
24 friend, and I still have no problem breaking bread with him.
25 It's, like I said, it's an unfortunate part of our reality, I

1 think, in politics these days.

2 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Any other questions or
3 comments?

4 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: Just one.

5 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Leader Benninghoff.

6 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: Representative
7 Stephens, it's a good presentation and very well laid out, and
8 I think you really exemplify what a lot of our constituents
9 would like to have, a little bit more of collegiality between
10 parties. We can have personal and political differences, but
11 I appreciate that presentation and appreciate the service that
12 you give us.

13 REPRESENTATIVE STEPHENS: Thank you.

14 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you, again, very much.

15 REPRESENTATIVE STEPHENS: All right. Thank you
16 for your service to all of you. I appreciate the work you're
17 putting in.

18 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Our next witness will take us
19 to a different part of the Commonwealth. It is Deborah
20 Hinchey, from Better for Pennsylvania, who is going to talk
21 about the Senate maps. Welcome.

22 MS. HINCHEY: Before I get started, I just want to
23 say, I did time this many times, and it's going to run over
24 about 40 seconds, so I just wanted to set clear expectations.

25 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Forty seconds will not get you

1 into the penalty box.

2 MS. HINCHEY: I was wondering.

3 Hello. My name is Deborah Rose Hinchey, and I'm
4 the Executive Director of Better PA, and I'm a lifelong
5 Pennsylvanian. I want to start by thanking this Commission
6 and the staff of the body for what has become a tireless and
7 tedious set of work to give Pennsylvania a fair and equitable
8 set of maps. You all are in the final leg of a long and
9 arduous process and are still taking the time to listen to as
10 much feedback and sometimes critique as you're able to fit in.
11 Thank you for making this process transparent, accessible in
12 the ways you could in the midst of a global pandemic. Between
13 an easily navigable website with a comment section that is
14 clearly read by the Commissioners and its staff, many hearings
15 for public testimony with an option for virtual participation,
16 it is obvious to all that have been paying attention to this
17 Commission that you took it seriously, and you took its
18 promise to provide the citizens with the redistricting process
19 they deserve.

20 Chairman Nordenberg, thank you so much for
21 approaching this work with thoughtful consideration and a
22 commitment to create fair and balanced maps for our State. It
23 shines through, sir. As you weather an onslaught of critique
24 that sometimes seems given in bad faith, know that the
25 majority of Pennsylvanians who are paying attention see the

1 way that you have approached this work and are deeply grateful
2 for it.

3 Leader McClinton, you've done everything in your
4 power to give Pennsylvania a set of maps that reflect the
5 State we actually live in, and most importantly, the people
6 who reside within it. You've also withstood some bad faith
7 attacks and some malicious actions in this process and have
8 responded with brilliance and grace every time. You showed up
9 in this work and did absolutely everything you said you were
10 going to do in your opening statement at that first Commission
11 meeting. Thank you so much.

12 I'd like to start by talking a little bit about
13 the preliminary House map, which as many before me have said,
14 is far better of the two proposed maps. It begins to correct
15 decades of Republican gerrymandering. It is clearly designed
16 to reflect the communities of Pennsylvania as they actually
17 are. It does the hard work of keeping communities together
18 through less splits of counties and municipalities, though we
19 do recognize there are still splits in counties and
20 municipalities. It gives candidates of color a chance to
21 represent their own communities by creating more
22 majority-minority districts, and it does all of this while
23 still keeping most of its incumbents in their home districts.
24 In short, this map does reflect the Pennsylvania that we
25 actually live in and not the makeup of a State that this once

1 was.

2 Leader Benninghoff and other Republicans have
3 attacked this map and called it a Democratic gerrymander. On
4 its face, that critique is ridiculous because Chairman
5 Nordenberg and other nonpartisan experts have been very, very
6 clear that this map still favors Republicans. There have been
7 attempts to show specific districts of proof of that
8 gerrymander, even when the districts shown are heavily
9 Republican. It doesn't seem like State Republicans are very
10 interested in fair maps. They're interested in maintaining
11 their power at all costs. It doesn't matter that this map
12 still favors their party. That's not enough for them. They
13 are now going so far as to attempt to dissolve this Commission
14 in favor of one that they would control. That's just a fact.
15 Their desperation for power, regardless of the diverse needs
16 of Pennsylvania communities, is so transparent.

17 In regard--

18 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Can I say again--

19 MS. HINCHEY: Yeah.

20 CHAIR NORDENBERG: --we're are not involved in--

21 MS. HINCHEY: Okay.

22 CHAIR NORDENBERG: --constitutional amendments
23 and--

24 MS. HINCHEY: Absolutely.

25 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you.

1 MS. HINCHEY: Thank you, sir.

2 I do urge this Commission to continue to operate
3 with the fearlessness and attention to detail that it has
4 consistently shown throughout this process.

5 In regards to the Senate map, it clearly makes an
6 attempt to address some of the issues that are harming
7 community representation, but it doesn't go as far to the same
8 attempt to rectify these issues as the House map does. There
9 are key places where that effort is accurately reflecting
10 communities as seen, one of which is Harrisburg and its
11 suburbs, where the districts are clearly drawn with the
12 communities who live there in mind.

13 However, there are some key places where that is
14 not the case. There are areas that are clearly drawn to
15 protect the incumbents who hold those seats. The people who
16 will suffer because of that are the residents of those
17 districts. There is no reason to cut Allentown down the
18 middle except to protect incumbents. There's no reason to
19 divide up the communities of interest in Lancaster and its
20 suburbs except to protect incumbents.

21 And lastly, as a kid from Delaware County, I can't
22 go without saying that it's very clear that the attempt in the
23 Senate map to dilute the voting power of the collar counties
24 in Philadelphia is kind of obvious. This is the fastest
25 growing and the most highly populated region in the State, and

1 the preliminary Senate map makes a clear attempt to curb that
2 influence. How is that done? Nearly all the districts in
3 Allegheny County and southwestern PA are far below the ideal
4 population for a Senate district, therefore, requiring more
5 districts to represent them. Nearly all the districts in
6 Philadelphia, Delaware, Montgomery, Chester, and Bucks County
7 are far above the ideal population for a Senate district,
8 therefore, requiring less districts to represent them. The
9 outcome of this is to make up for losses of population in
10 southwestern PA at the expense of these five highly populated,
11 incredibly diverse counties. Once again, it feels like this
12 was done to protect incumbents.

13 The changes needed to the Senate map are not
14 small, but they are able to be done in time, Chairman, and are
15 very necessary so that it accurately reflects the communities
16 of Pennsylvania in the same way that the proposed Senate map
17 does. The residents of our State deserve the full, undiluted
18 power of their vote, and they deserve to be heard both in the
19 voting booth and by those who represent them.

20 I hope this Commission hears my testimony and all
21 the similar feedback with the good faith in which it is
22 intended and makes these crucial adjustments. I once again
23 want to thank this Commission for the time it takes to hear
24 from so many Pennsylvanians, including myself, and the effort
25 that has clearly gone into creating a set of maps that reflect

1 the State we do live in. These new maps will change
2 Pennsylvania's voting landscape for years to come. Should
3 these proposed changes be made, the impact will be positive
4 and it will be immense. This is undoubtedly important and
5 tedious work. Necessary though it is, it should not be
6 thankless and it should not be unseen. And I want it to be
7 very clear that the work is not unseen. Please stay diligent
8 in your efforts and true to the values that you've already
9 shown us.

10 Thank you very much, and I am happy to take
11 questions.

12 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you very much.

13 Are there questions or comments for Ms. Hinchey?
14 Majority Leader Benninghoff.

15 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: I have a question,
16 Mr. Chairman, and a statement, if I may, briefly.

17 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Pardon me?

18 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: I have a question and
19 a statement.

20 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Please.

21 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: Ms. Hinchey, you made
22 a comment in the early part of your testimony that kind of
23 raised my eyebrow. It says the LRC map is far better than the
24 two proposed maps. I'm just curious, have you seen those two
25 proposed maps submitted by the two respective Caucuses?

1 MS. HINCHEY: The LRC -- could you be more clear?

2 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: The ones presented by
3 the two respective Caucus.

4 MS. HINCHEY: Are you talking about the
5 preliminary Senate and House maps?

6 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: I'm curious what
7 you're talking about. You said that the LRC map is better
8 than the two proposed maps, and I'm assuming the maps proposed
9 by each respective Caucus.

10 MS. HINCHEY: I'm sorry if I was unclear. What I
11 was saying was that the House map is significantly better by
12 several metrics than the Senate map. That's what I was
13 saying. I'm so sorry for not being clear.

14 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: No, I just wanted to
15 clarify, because I had not seen the Democratic submitted map,
16 and I was curious how you did.

17 MS. HINCHEY: No. I'm so sorry if I misspoke.

18 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: Very good.

19 The other question is, you made mention of the
20 Senate map having splits in Lancaster, but you make no mention
21 of the splits in the House map in Lancaster. So, I just duly
22 note that.

23 And, finally, I just want to say, Republicans want
24 truly fair and competitive maps, and I think we heard that in
25 some of the previous conversations. Our Members don't mind

1 competing in balanced and competitive maps, and that's what
2 we're working towards.

3 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

4 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Other comments or questions?

5 (There was no response.)

6 CHAIR NORDENBERG: If not, thank you very much--

7 MS. HINCHEY: Thank you, Chairman.

8 CHAIR NORDENBERG: --for coming today.

9 MS. HINCHEY: Thank you, all.

10 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Our next witness is George
11 Tyson, who is the President of the East Pennsboro Township
12 Board of Commissioners.

13 Welcome, sir. The floor is yours.

14 MR. TYSON: Greetings, Mr. Chairman and fellow
15 Members of the Commission, and thank you for the opportunity
16 to speak today. My name is George Tyson. I moved to Camp
17 Hill from Baltimore in 1969 with my parents, and moved to East
18 Pennsboro in 1984, almost 38 years ago to the day. I've been
19 an East Pennsboro Township Commissioner for nine years, and
20 currently serve as President, and I also serve as a member of
21 the Cumberland County Planning Commission. I'm here today to
22 provide comment in opposition concerning the proposed
23 redistricting of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives
24 representation of the township of East Pennsboro.

25 The first official action of the newly reorganized

1 Board of Commissioners of East Pennsboro Township on January
2 3, 2022, was its unanimous and bipartisan adoption of
3 Resolution 2022-1 in opposition to the proposed redistricting
4 of the township of East Pennsboro, Cumberland County. The
5 proposed Pennsylvania House District 103 would consist of the
6 city of Harrisburg and the Cumberland County communities of
7 East Pennsboro Township, boroughs of Camp Hill, Lemoyne, and
8 Wormleysburg.

9 East Pennsboro Township has been known for many
10 years as a community that developed around the Enola rail
11 yard. Today, our township is bustling in a diversified 21st
12 century community. It's located on the eastern edge of
13 Cumberland County, with its area generally referred to as the
14 West Shore. East Pennsboro Township combines older and newer
15 residential neighborhoods with outstanding parks and
16 recreation facilities, and a vibrant commercial and economic
17 base, along with educational components which include public
18 and private schools, a private college, and a trauma level 2
19 certified hospital.

20 In 1998, East Pennsboro Township became the only
21 Pennsylvania municipality in modern times to successfully
22 implement a voter-approved merger with a neighboring
23 municipality. The merger of the former borough of West
24 Fairview with East Pennsboro Township was initiated by West
25 Fairview citizens in the pursuit of greater cost-

1 effectiveness, efficiency, and improvement in the delivery of
2 local governmental services. Recently, our township has
3 undertaken efforts to address aging infrastructures and to
4 stimulate redevelopment throughout the township, with the
5 redevelopment areas within the older parts of the township to
6 include the village of West Fairview. These efforts were
7 undertaken with various transportation funding and
8 allocations, Community Development Block Grant programs, and
9 legislative set-aside appropriations and prioritization of
10 those funds to the township's direct benefit.

11 Prior to the pandemic, Cumberland County was
12 identified as the fastest growing county in the Commonwealth.
13 Article II, Section 16, of the Pennsylvania Constitution
14 clearly requires that unless absolutely necessary, no county,
15 municipality, or ward is to be divided in the forming of
16 districts. Natural boundaries is also a key factor, they're
17 to be contiguous and compact. It would be extremely
18 beneficial for the LRC to identify the criteria and list of
19 details and items that have been identified as being
20 absolutely necessary within the creation of this proposed map.

21 E-commerce has greatly impacted the growth of
22 Cumberland County. The pandemic has and will continue this
23 growth. Sixty-plus percent, I'm going to say that again,
24 60-plus percent of the U.S. population can be reached within
25 10 driving hours from Cumberland County. And 80-plus percent

1 can be reached in two days, which will assure such continued
2 growth in Cumberland County. This occurs because Interstate
3 81 and Route 76 intersect in Carlisle. Product traveling via
4 trucks will not be diminishing in the future. Continued
5 studies of these corridors are ongoing to meet such challenges
6 of continued growth.

7 I don't have this written in my comments, but
8 since Cumberland County was identified, a big player in
9 e-commerce, Amazon, they have instituted their own group of
10 delivery services and trucks. So now in many cases an
11 individual will have a FedEx, a UPS, and an Amazon truck in
12 their driveway.

13 In fact, with a population of 259,500 residents,
14 and an average House district of 64,000 residents, Cumberland
15 County can fit four House districts solely within its borders.
16 East Pennsboro's population is 20,910, which is the third
17 largest community in the county, according to figures from the
18 2020 Census. The city of Harrisburg is the county seat of
19 Dauphin County and is the capital city of the Commonwealth of
20 Pennsylvania. Because of the concentration of government
21 entities in the city, the government-owned buildings result in
22 a decreased tax base due to the significant number of Federal,
23 State, and county properties within the city of Harrisburg.
24 This need is very different than the needs of East Pennsboro
25 Township, and the proposed new House district would, in fact,

1 set the city of Harrisburg's interest in direct conflict with
2 the township of East Pennsboro by the way of possible
3 legislative efforts to subsidize a decreased tax base caused
4 by the concentration of government-owned buildings in the city
5 of Harrisburg and Dauphin County.

6 East Pennsboro has significantly different
7 interests from the city of Harrisburg, which does not have the
8 growth in population or jobs as East Pennsboro Township. How
9 can representation for the legislative demands of the city,
10 which often siphon the limited State resources to programs
11 which support the city's needs and which would not equally
12 support the township of East Pennsboro, be effective?

13 It's been several weeks since the proposed maps
14 have been presented, and there has been no outreach from the
15 representation in the 103rd District to answer questions or
16 demonstrate how the merging of these four communities would be
17 mutually beneficial. This causes great concern. If this is
18 an example of such representation that may take place, should
19 the next Representative follow suit, it puts an exclamation
20 point on our opposition.

21 When this information is shared with fellow
22 residents, most are not aware that such a proposal is even on
23 the table. When informed, they take a step back in utter
24 astonishment and disbelief. None, none have been in favor of
25 this redistricting proposal.

1 In summary, this is simply a bad idea. This map
2 needs corrected to fairly represent our unique interests and
3 needs of East Pennsboro Township and our three neighboring
4 communities.

5 Thank you.

6 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you, Mr. Tyson.

7 Are there are questions or comments for the
8 witness?

9 (There was no response.)

10 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you very much for being
11 here.

12 We have three witnesses from Juniata and Mifflin
13 lined up to be next. I'm sorry that our friends from Horsham
14 left, because they were proud of the number of written
15 submissions we've received about Horsham. I think we've
16 received at least as many, and probably more, on Juniata and
17 Mifflin.

18 The first witness will be Mark Partner, who is a
19 Juniata Commissioner.

20 Welcome, sir.

21 MR. PARTNER: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman and
22 Members of the Commission. I am Mark Partner, a Juniata
23 County Commissioner, and I'm presenting here relative to the
24 preservation of the 82nd Legislative District. And I speak
25 today on behalf of the citizens of Juniata County, with the

1 support of my fellow Commissioners Gray and Graybill, and the
2 three Commissioners from adjacent Mifflin County, one of which
3 is scheduled to speak following me here today.

4 I do wish to respectfully request that the 82nd
5 Legislative District remain intact as it is currently
6 positioned. This important request is derived from a basic
7 understanding of the composition of our county and its
8 communities. Juniata County is one of the many rural counties
9 in the Commonwealth. Residents must travel to their jobs, and
10 most every other service including doctor visits, groceries,
11 pharmacies, banking, worship, and schools. The proposed
12 legislative realignment would only serve to increase the need
13 to travel even further for the assistance and services that
14 are valuable and available through their legislative district
15 offices.

16 Juniata, and Mifflin County as well, both have a
17 substantial productive agricultural heritage. And it's
18 increasingly in need of timely and accessible legislative
19 contact due to the ever-increasing number of cumbersome
20 regulatory proposals affecting agriculture. It is imperative
21 that our agribusiness community can have worthwhile access
22 during the limited time they have available to be away from
23 their farming operations.

24 A large senior population exists in Juniata County
25 and across the 82nd Legislative District. Our elderly

1 population will certainly not benefit from having to travel,
2 or in many cases find transportation, as they do not drive, to
3 other opportunities to gather forms and the important
4 assistance that is available at our legislative district
5 offices. And I would note here, while it's not in my
6 comments, that Juniata County does not have public
7 transportation access.

8 A short time ago, I touched on and mentioned the
9 necessity of our residents traveling for work. I'd like to
10 note that the majority of our working population does travel
11 outside of the county for their job. My point simply is this:
12 Residents are leaving home early and they're returning home
13 late at the end of the day after business hours, not to
14 mention then possibly additional travel distance required on
15 secondary roads to get to a legislative field office in either
16 of the districts proposed to serve Juniata and Mifflin
17 Counties. The reapportionment proposal will prevent them from
18 having reasonable, again, and timely access to district office
19 services.

20 Additionally, an understanding of the longtime
21 historical relationships between Juniata and Mifflin Counties,
22 which Mifflin County Commissioner Postal will address in more
23 detail following me, will further help the Commission to
24 understand our position on the reapportionment plan. Based on
25 one of the principles guiding the Commission, and that being

1 to maintain the geographical and social cohesion of the
2 communities where people live and conduct the majority of
3 their day-to-day affairs, I truly feel the proposed
4 reapportionment plan clearly ignores these existing and
5 historical relationships involving Juniata and Mifflin
6 Counties.

7 And in conclusion, I do wish to extend my
8 appreciation to you, Mr. Chairman and the Members of the
9 Commission, for the opportunity to speak and, more
10 importantly, to be heard today.

11 Thank you very much.

12 CHAIR NORDENBERG: It's good to have you here.
13 Thank you.

14 Questions or comments?

15 (There was no response.)

16 CHAIR NORDENBERG: If not, we have two more
17 Juniata/Mifflin people lined up. On my list, the next speaker
18 is Allison Fisher from Mifflin/Juniata Human Services.

19 Welcome.

20 MS. FISHER: Hi. My name is Allison Fisher. I am
21 the Human Services Director for Mifflin and Juniata Counties,
22 and I want to thank you for the opportunity to be here. I
23 bring you the voices of the people that I represent, the
24 children, the elderly, and the disadvantaged of the 82nd
25 District.

1 In my 18 years of service in this position, I've
2 been witness to many attempts to combine the services in our
3 counties with other outside entities. And quite frankly, very
4 few of those attempts have benefitted the residents of our
5 communities, and I envision this process having the same
6 result, just more disenfranchised voices. Some past examples
7 of redrawn lines in the human services sector include in 2018
8 funds for childcare services being removed from local agencies
9 and placed into newly devised early learning resource centers.
10 On paper, that process sounds wonderful. The State website
11 promises connections to additional services and a single point
12 of contact for families. In reality, what that
13 decentralization did was take away the ability of families
14 already disadvantaged by income to apply for services in their
15 home counties and instead required that single point of
16 contact that was on average over an hour away for our folks.
17 And you heard our Commissioner talk about the lack of public
18 transportation in our county. Transportation is a real issue
19 for our residents.

20 This also removed regular local collaborative
21 meetings, as well as the ability for local childcare providers
22 to have a consistent voice in the process. Only through the
23 advocacy of local agencies were we able to gain the ability
24 for consumers to apply locally. And this change affected on
25 an average of 300 families a month. The monthly collaborative

1 meeting that used to happen no longer does, and so the end
2 result did not benefit the taxpaying working families of our
3 community.

4 In 2018, Community Service Block Grant funds were
5 taken away from Mifflin and Juniata Counties and awarded to a
6 larger, multicounty organization in an effort to regionalize
7 services. Under the former funding, CSBG funds served as many
8 as 5,000 residents through a joint county system. After the
9 new regional approach, at last report, Juniata County had seen
10 zero people served by this organization, and Mifflin had less
11 than 100 served. So despite various attempts to get answers,
12 nothing has been achieved there either. Once again, it's the
13 disadvantaged who are suffering.

14 And I could continue with more examples of lost
15 opportunities, but the story is the same over and over. Large
16 multicounty agencies see the opportunity for more dollars,
17 State funding agencies see economy of scale, and local
18 counties lose services. Those are our hard-earned tax
19 dollars. And as voters, we expect and deserve a voice in the
20 services we receive. Our county, our country was founded on
21 the shout of no taxation without representation, and quite
22 frankly, it feels like we're sliding backwards out here in the
23 82nd District.

24 This redrawing of lines is nothing new in our long
25 history. My roots run deep in these two counties. I've

1 researched my ancestors, and I've seen the impact of changing
2 lines. To dig back over 260 years for records on a plot of
3 land, I have to travel to courthouses in over five counties to
4 do that. Every Thanksgiving I sit down at a table on land
5 that one of my ancestors settled in Juniata County in the
6 early 1800s, and my 81-year-old father still plows land that
7 another ancestor warranted in 1762 in Mifflin County. After
8 college and graduate school and 10 years of living in other
9 States, I made a choice to come back to raise my family on
10 land that's never moved but has existed in five different
11 counties over 260 years. So when I'm asked how will these
12 lines being drawn differently impact you? In reality, the
13 answer is, I'm going to have to travel further to do business,
14 but the people I serve won't travel at all.

15 But you know what, we're used to inadequate
16 resources out here in rural Pennsylvania. It just makes us
17 more determined and more creative. Diminished access,
18 diminished lines, they do not diminish people. What is
19 diminished is your ability to hear our voices.

20 And so I would ask you, what is it that you hope
21 the time and expense of redrawing these lines is going to
22 accomplish for you? Because if we've learned nothing else in
23 the last two years, I would hope that it would have been that
24 a voice diminished does not go unheard. All too often, all it
25 does is make those voices shout. Please do not make us shout.

1 Work with us with systems that already work for us to listen
2 to our voices. The voice of a little girl whose mother isn't
3 home to read her a bedtime story because she's working three
4 jobs to make ends meet. She can't travel anymore to her local
5 Rep's office, or the voice of the elderly veteran who can get
6 a ride to his local office, but not the one two counties over.
7 Those are the voices that echo daily in my ears, and they
8 should in yours as well, because I promise you, wherever you
9 draw your lines, we will not be diminished. The only thing
10 that will get diminished by the changing lines is the voices
11 participating in the conversation.

12 So you can choose to work with us or not, but out
13 here in Mifflin and Juniata Counties, we'll still be here
14 working side by side, getting the job done no matter where you
15 draw your lines. You are the only ones who lose by silencing
16 our voices, the voices of the children, the elderly, and the
17 disadvantaged of the 82nd District. I know they can count on
18 me to still be listening. I hope they can count on you.

19 Thank you.

20 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you.

21 Any comments or questions?

22 Leader Benninghoff has a question.

23 LEADER BENNINGHOFF: Just a comment, it's not a
24 question.

25 I just want to say that as probably the only rural

1 Commissioner up here, it is important to hear the voice of
2 rural Pennsylvanians. If you look at our geography, a large
3 portion of the State is rural. You did a nice job on that,
4 and I appreciate your comments and obviously working for the
5 citizens efficiently.

6 MS. FISHER: Thank you. I'm not sure that folks
7 that have access to public transportation every day understand
8 what a challenge it is just to get to an office to get a form
9 or to get a paper. And I know that we've done a lot to try,
10 during the pandemic, to put things online, but the reality is
11 that the majority of our folks don't have internet access
12 that's reliable, or printers in their homes, so it's still an
13 issue.

14 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: And/or an Uber system
15 that works.

16 MS. FISHER: Or one that exists at all.

17 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: Correct.

18 MS. FISHER: Yeah.

19 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: Thank you.

20 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you, again.

21 Our next witness is Robert Postal, who is a
22 Commissioner from Mifflin County.

23 Welcome, sir.

24 MR. POSTAL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good
25 afternoon to the Commission. As you noted, I am a

1 Commissioner from Mifflin County, and my fellow Mifflin County
2 Commissioners Sunderland and Kodish concur with my remarks, as
3 well as the Commissioners from adjacent Juniata County. We
4 already heard from Commission Partner.

5 Mifflin County is a sixth class county with a
6 little over 46,000. Juniata County is a seventh class county
7 with about 23,500 people. And today we're joined by the 82nd
8 District. As Commissioners, we realize that smaller rural
9 counties such as ours, with a combined population of about
10 69,000, could deliver services most effectively and
11 efficiently by joining resources. Consequently, to realize
12 economies of scale, we have organized and jointly govern
13 through our intermunicipal agreements a number of agencies and
14 services. But I'd like to focus my time here today on one of
15 this Commission's guiding principles, and that is, quote,
16 maintain the geographical and social cohesion of the
17 communities where people live and conduct the majority of
18 their day-to-day affairs, unquote.

19 This proposed redistricting would sever Mifflin
20 and Juniata Counties and indeed ignore historical and existing
21 relationships with major institutions such as our hospital and
22 healthcare agencies, and our major industrial and commercial
23 employers. And the Commission's proposal would shift 26
24 percent of Mifflin County's people and 23 percent of Juniata
25 County's population, and again, this very important economic

1 footprint of our hospital and major employers to the east to
2 become part of the proposed 85th District. As an example of
3 this fracture, the five municipalities to be shifted to the
4 proposed 85th are considered part of the Geisinger Lewistown
5 Hospital's western region, which includes all of Centre,
6 Mifflin, and Juniata Counties. The western region has no
7 identification or connection with Snyder and Union Counties to
8 the east. The hospital's service area recognizes that the US
9 322 highway, which joins Mifflin and Juniata Counties, is the
10 major commutation route that connects patients for healthcare
11 services for the citizens of our counties.

12 The US 322 corridor also connects our industrial
13 parks and commercial centers, as well as the major commutation
14 route between our labor markets. As a comparison, the north/
15 south route of US 522, which would join Mifflin and Juniata
16 communities to Snyder and Union Counties in the proposed 85th,
17 is not a major corridor because of the distances between our
18 towns and economic centers. So shifting five municipalities
19 with about 25 percent of our combined population and our major
20 economic institutions is indeed contrary to the Commission's
21 principle of maintaining the social cohesion of the
22 communities where people live and conduct the majority of
23 their daily affairs.

24 And let me say from a personal standpoint, I live
25 in a township that is proposed to be in the new 85th. And I'm

1 sure my new Representative is a very able legislator, but my
2 day-to-day affairs, my working, my shopping, my recreating, is
3 the Lewistown/Mifflintown corridor, certainly not the
4 Mifflinburg/Lewisburg center, which is 50 to 60 minutes away
5 to the east by way of a two-lane US 522.

6 To be fair to the Commission, and believe me, I do
7 not envy you guys. It's, I'm sure, very interesting, but I
8 don't want to be in your shoes. But Mifflin County, to be
9 fair, is going to be improved. We'll end up with two
10 Representatives, and this is an improvement. Right now,
11 today, with only 16 municipalities, we're divided among three
12 districts. So again, the revisions to the 171st is a welcome,
13 and thank you, Commission, for that recommendation. But I
14 respectfully suggest that by retaining the existing 82nd, with
15 perhaps some adjustments to accommodate the newly proposed
16 171st can be accomplished with minimal disruption to the
17 historical and existing socioeconomic cohesion between Mifflin
18 and Juniata Counties.

19 Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Members of
20 the Commission.

21 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you, Mr. Commissioner.
22 Questions or comments?

23 (There was no response.)

24 CHAIR NORDENBERG: If not, thank you again.

25 And we are now going to switch to a succession of

1 Zoom presentations. Our first witness in this format is Paige
2 Cognetti, who is the mayor of Scranton.

3 Welcome, Mayor.

4 MS. COGNETTI: Hi. Thank you so much for having
5 me.

6 CHAIR NORDENBERG: The floor is yours.

7 MS. COGNETTI: My name is Paige Gebhardt Cognetti.
8 I am the Mayor of Scranton. First, I'd like to thank the
9 Legislative Reapportionment Commission, Chairman Nordenberg,
10 esteemed Members, and staff. Thank you for all of the work
11 that you are putting in for all Pennsylvanians.

12 As mayor of one of Pennsylvania's many great
13 midsized and smaller cities, I'm here today to make the case
14 to ensure that these new maps give our larger communities the
15 representation we deserve in Harrisburg. We have spent much
16 time considering the plight of Pennsylvania's midsized and
17 smaller cities. Cities like Scranton are often cited in
18 national media and academic circles as examples of changing
19 economic dynamics in the United States. The situation that
20 Scranton has faced through the years and through changing
21 economics is not different than that of many other
22 Pennsylvania cities - York, Erie, Lancaster, Reading,
23 Pittsburgh years ago. As local leaders, our job is to push
24 our communities forward into the future, fostering
25 environments for economic growth and pursuing aggressively

1 opportunities to attract employers and family-sustaining jobs.
2 We don't sit around reading those news stories about how our
3 cities have faced hardship; we fight for our communities, just
4 like the generations of hard workers before us did to keep
5 food on the table when the coal mines closed and the textile
6 factories moved overseas. Many of our cities have seen
7 business closures and disinvestment for decades, but today
8 we're seeing clear glimmers of hope.

9 There's a renewed desire for people from larger
10 urban centers to move to our smaller cities, and it's critical
11 we take advantage of this moment to make sure we've got the
12 representation we deserve so that we have a voice in
13 Harrisburg. Now is the time that our communities need to make
14 sure that we're not suffering from continued
15 underrepresentation in Harrisburg, make sure that we have an
16 opportunity that our cities can thrive and drive economic
17 growth across the Commonwealth.

18 To make sure that our cities have a seat at the
19 table and get the resources we need, I urge the adoption of
20 the State House map developed by the Commission. For decades,
21 our representation has been limited because of gerrymandered
22 legislative districts. Our communities have been packed
23 together or cut to minimize the number of Representatives from
24 cities. For the first time, the Commission's House map
25 recognizes the importance of our cities, our residents, and

1 our economic potential. We have an opportunity now to be
2 properly represented in Harrisburg with more people who can
3 carry our concerns and needs with them to office.

4 There is still work to do, and I know you all are
5 doing it tirelessly. The Senate map continues many of the
6 previous problems in redistricting. Lancaster is diluted by
7 cutting it with rural areas, and Allentown is drawn in an
8 unusual way with special account taken for incumbents. These
9 are areas of improvement where I hope that the Commission can
10 continue to direct their focus.

11 With the House map as drawn, and with improvements
12 to the Senate map, we'll be able to improve our economic
13 performance in midsize and smaller cities and make sure we
14 have the tools to grow and contribute to the greater economy.
15 Many of Pennsylvania's cities have adapted and become more
16 dynamic over the past several years, despite the challenges we
17 faced in Harrisburg. New residents and immigrants have
18 boosted the vibrancy and population of places like Scranton,
19 Allentown, and Lancaster. We have new and growing businesses,
20 residents, and institutions for the first time in decades.
21 Now we have the opportunity to speed our recovery by making
22 our communities have a stronger voice when the most important
23 decisions are being made, and it won't just help our cities.
24 Economic strength in our smaller cities means economic
25 strength for all of Pennsylvania. The Commission's

1 preliminary House map recognizes our cities and metropolitan
2 areas as driving population and economic growth. We should
3 adopt the Commission's House map that increases our
4 representation and takes our communities to the next steps of
5 revitalization.

6 Thank you all for all the work you're doing, and
7 thank you for your consideration.

8 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you very much for your
9 testimony.

10 Are there questions or comments from Members of
11 the Commission?

12 (There was no response.)

13 CHAIR NORDENBERG: If not, Mayor, I thank you
14 again and wish you good luck.

15 MS. COGNETTI: Thank you all very much.

16 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Our next speaker will be Rick
17 Gray, who is the former mayor of Lancaster.

18 MR. GRAY: Good morning.

19 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Welcome, sir.

20 MR. GRAY: I should preface my remarks. Winston
21 Churchill once said that if he could speak for an hour, he
22 didn't need any notes. If he had to speak for five minutes,
23 he had to read his speech. With five minutes, I'm going to
24 try to limit myself to what I've written, so I'm going to just
25 read the speech.

1 Thank you for this opportunity to provide comment
2 on the Legislative Reapportionment Commission's preliminary
3 redistricting map. I bring to this discussion the perspective
4 of a three-term mayor who served the city of Lancaster from
5 2006 through 2018. I began my legal career as a staff
6 attorney with Neighborhood Legal Services on the north side of
7 Pittsburgh, and then 50 years ago moved to Lancaster to direct
8 Legal Services for York, Lancaster, Reading, and Harrisburg,
9 prior to going into private practice. On the State level, I
10 served for 12 years on the Pennsylvania Municipal League's
11 board, one year as chair. In that context, my testimony will
12 focus on the proposal for Senate redistricting.

13 Today, I ask the Commission to consider adjusting
14 the preliminary map to revise the 36th Senate District to
15 include Lancaster city and suburban municipal neighbors.
16 Doing so would, one, reflect communities of interest; two,
17 provide a stronger voice for minority voters; and three,
18 create a badly needed competitive district which encourages
19 bipartisanship by placing an emphasis on the general election
20 and not just the primary. During my three terms as mayor,
21 there was a dramatic shift in the views of our suburban
22 neighbors. With the help of the private sector and the State
23 and county governments, we developed Lancaster through green
24 infrastructure, code enforcement, economic development, and
25 the arts. Our neighbors began to view the city as theirs.

1 Our efforts in Lancaster were recognized by *New York Times*
2 columnist and author Thomas Friedman, citing Lancaster city as
3 an example of complex adaptive coalitions that proves that
4 government can successfully solve problems. Today, people who
5 reside in municipalities outside the city now see Lancaster as
6 an asset to their communities.

7 There are 60 municipalities in Lancaster County,
8 the city having the largest population. Population growth has
9 transformed Lancaster County from a rural agricultural
10 community to a county that is rural with a thriving urban and
11 suburban core. More than two decades ago, quote, "To address
12 the challenges and concerns in central Lancaster County," end
13 quote, the city and its suburban neighbors formed a council of
14 government, the Lancaster Intermunicipal Committee. These
15 cities, boroughs, township members of the intermunicipal
16 committee viewed the health of the city and its related
17 suburbs as interrelated and recognized that common problems
18 are best solved by mutual cooperation, as developed in the
19 committee's comprehensive plan, *Growing Together*. On a
20 broader level, Lancaster County's comprehensive plan has
21 designated much of this area as a, quote, "urban growth," end
22 quote, area. The Lancaster Intermunicipal Committee serves as
23 a good model for establishing the composition of an urban/
24 suburban senatorial district. In doing so, the Commission
25 would acknowledge the differences in Lancaster County's rural

1 and urban characters.

2 Over the course of this past half-century, we've
3 witnessed dramatic changes in both Lancaster City and the
4 surrounding suburbs. The area became far more culturally and
5 ethnically diverse, with an urban core compromised of roughly
6 40 percent Latino and 15 percent African American residents.
7 The diversity of Lancaster city and, to a lesser, but
8 measurable extent, the surrounding municipalities have both
9 enriched and challenged our communities to proactively work
10 for greater inclusion and more equitable representation.
11 Towards this end, I urge the Commission to build Senate
12 districts around urban, suburban population clusters to most
13 accurately indicate how people identify. Doing so will help
14 strengthen regional relationships, uniting in pursuit of
15 common goals rather than dividing into competing interests.

16 In summary, I ask the Commission to consider
17 moving Lancaster city, Lancaster Township, and Millersville
18 into the 36th Senate District, with the county's other largely
19 suburban communities where they're located right now, most of
20 the suburbs in the 36th District. Also moving the mainly
21 rural communities of West Earl, Ephrata Township, Ephrata
22 Borough, Akron, Warwick, Lititz, Elizabeth Township, Penn
23 Township, and Manheim Borough from the 36th District to the
24 almost completely rural 13th District. In doing so, Lancaster
25 County would have a primary urban/suburban district, and a

1 rural district. Each of our current Senators would remain in
2 their district, and the influence of minority voters would be
3 enhanced.

4 Finally, it's vital that we work as a Commonwealth
5 to strengthen and support the success of our cities as
6 regional population centers and provide expanded child and
7 educational opportunities. I continue to believe in the
8 future of Pennsylvania's midsized cities. Still, experience
9 has taught me that public-private partnership, cooperation,
10 coordination, consensus, and hard work are the foundation for
11 building and growing a community and improving a region. A
12 revised 36th Senatorial District would go a long way towards
13 improving and strengthening Lancaster County and give real
14 voice to those who we seek to serve.

15 That's my comments, Mr. Chair.

16 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you, Mayor.

17 Are there any questions or comments for the
18 witness?

19 (There was no response.)

20 CHAIR NORDENBERG: If not, thank you again, sir,
21 for being with us and sharing those thoughts.

22 MR. GRAY: Well, thank you and for the work you're
23 doing. Thank you.

24 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Our next witness will be Erika
25 Almiron, who is from Philadelphia, and who is going to talk

1 about Latino perspectives on the House map.

2 Welcome.

3 MS. ALMIRON: Thank you, Chairman, and good
4 afternoon, and I thank everybody else also for allowing me to
5 join. I'm also going to read my statement, if that's okay.
6 And I'm also in my car in a Petco parking lot waiting for my
7 dog to be done with his haircut.

8 I will start with my name is Erika Almiron. I am
9 born and raised in Pennsylvania, and I have seen the real
10 impact of underrepresentation my whole life. I saw very few
11 people who looked like me represented in positions of power
12 and influence, so I have worked most of my life to try and get
13 communities of color a fair representation and a seat at the
14 table. Given this, I have seen firsthand the real impact of
15 gerrymandering and the intentional effort of politicians to
16 diminish representation of communities like mine.

17 When I was the Executive Director of Juntos in
18 Philadelphia, I served immigrant and first-generation Latino
19 families across the State. I handled thousands of cases for
20 families who needed help over the years, ranging on issues
21 from language access, utility shut-offs, to panic calls about
22 police interaction, deportations, and evictions. As a
23 bilingual organization well known in the Latino community, we
24 often became a constituent services clearinghouse for people
25 who didn't know where else to turn. Under better

1 circumstances, most of these requests would have been handled
2 by the person's State legislator, or a member of Congress.
3 But because of the severe underrepresentation in the current
4 maps, most of our elected officials don't look like me, do not
5 have bilingual staff, nor do they prioritize the needs of my
6 community.

7 Communities like mine deserve policies that
8 reflect our needs, and my years of work at Juntos was about
9 building the power of the people to get those changes. But we
10 also need equal representation in the halls of power, because
11 being underrepresented politically is equally as damaging. If
12 those on the inside have not gone through what we have, how
13 will they ever know what we need or fight for the policy
14 changes that we deserve? That is why I also ran for
15 Philadelphia City Council at-large in 2019.

16 Gerrymandered districts across the State aim to
17 silence the voice of our communities and have had a negative
18 impact on the families who have lived there for decades. This
19 has not been by accident. Harrisburg has, for decades,
20 gerrymandered the maps to diminish the influence and voice of
21 Latinos and people of color across the State. But I do see an
22 opportunity today. Latinos have seen the fastest and largest
23 population growth in Pennsylvania over the last 10 years, more
24 than any other community during that time. With more people,
25 it makes sense that we need to have more representation.

1 While we always have more work to do, today we have the
2 possibility to pass a Pennsylvania House map that can give us
3 more seats at the table and get us closer to real
4 representation in Harrisburg.

5 The preliminary House map undoes the nefarious
6 work of Republicans over the decades by creating nine
7 districts, including three open seats with no incumbent
8 Representatives, that could elect Latino candidates. We
9 currently only have 3 Latinos serving in the House, and with
10 the amount of Latinos that are in the State, in order to be
11 equitable, we actually need closer to 16.

12 In places such as Allentown, Lancaster, and
13 Reading, where Latino communities are driving a renaissance
14 and contributing to newly migrant neighborhoods, the problem
15 of underrepresentation in the legislature is even greater.
16 The preliminary House map creates new seats in all of these
17 communities so we can have a seat at the table in Harrisburg
18 when decisions are being made.

19 Allentown, the third largest city in the
20 Commonwealth, is a majority Latino city. Yet, it has no
21 Latino representation. The new LRC maps create a majority
22 Latino seat, along with a Latino plurality of seats, and it
23 adds an additional seat for the city, bringing the total
24 number to three. Certainly, a fair amount for the third
25 biggest city in Pennsylvania. Reading maintains one Latino-

1 majority district, creates a new Latino-opportunity district,
2 and sees another district increase its Latino population by 10
3 percent. And in Lancaster, Latino population growth has
4 helped the city get a new seat, which is a Latino-opportunity
5 district with no sitting incumbent.

6 And there's more work to do. The preliminary
7 Senate map diverges from the progress made in the House map.
8 While the House map undoes decades of gerrymandering, the
9 Senate map needs some serious work. The Senate protects
10 incumbents at the expense of the Latino community. There is
11 not one Latino Senator in the State, and in places like
12 Lancaster and Allentown, the Senate map takes strides to cut
13 up communities to protect incumbents and dilute the power of
14 the city's growing Latino population.

15 The Latino community is driving growth across
16 Pennsylvania, but our needs are not prioritized politically or
17 structurally. Representation matters. We need people who
18 understand what our families go through and who build up
19 offices that can tend to our needs. We must have people who
20 look like me in the halls of power to fight for the issues
21 that matter to us. Only then will we be able to say that we
22 are finally starting to address the structural and political
23 inequities in Pennsylvania.

24 Thank you.

25 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you very much.

1 Are you moving in your car, or just sitting there?

2 MS. ALMIRON: No, no. I'm just sitting here
3 waiting. Don't worry.

4 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Are there any questions or
5 comments for the witness?

6 SENATOR K. WARD: Can I make a comment?

7 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Yes.

8 SENATOR K. WARD: Thank you for your testimony. I
9 just always have to go after the Lancaster comments because we
10 can try, but the highest Latino we can get in a population in
11 a Senate district is 13 percent. It may be there in 10 years,
12 but right now it's not there. It's 13 percent.

13 Thank you.

14 MS. ALMIRON: I disagree, respectfully.

15 SENATOR K. WARD: Okay.

16 MS. ALMIRON: And I also think that like the
17 numbers that I stated are very clear that the Senate needs to
18 have at least four seats in the long run for Latinos to be
19 represented, and there's not one Latino Senator currently
20 right now. So I can't imagine that it's okay to hear it's
21 just not possible, or it's not there.

22 SENATOR K. WARD: So I agree that we need to do
23 that, and that's what we are trying to do in the 14th
24 Senatorial District, is make that a real shot there for a
25 Latino, because I agree. It's obvious, your population is

1 growing, and you should have representation.

2 Thank you.

3 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Majority Leader Benninghoff.

4 MS. ALMIRON: I'm looking forward to the changes.

5 Thank you.

6 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: Thank you, Mr.

7 Chairman.

8 Very quickly, I listened to all your testimony and
9 appreciate you being here on that. I'm curious if you've
10 looked at the actual voting age of these populations in these
11 districts, while creating opportunity districts does not
12 necessarily guarantee that more Hispanics have a greater
13 opportunity to be elected. From my calculations in the
14 Latino-majority districts, majority-minority, pardon me, the
15 overall voting age of Hispanics actually goes down in three of
16 those four. That should probably be a concern to you as well.
17 So you can create more districts that have the appearance of
18 having some Latino population in there, but if they aren't
19 proportionally good enough or large enough, you may never get
20 a Latino member elected to the House, and I think, I mean, I
21 personally share that, and we've had a lot of good comment
22 about that. I would just encourage you to go back and look at
23 all those numbers, because there are a lot of variables that
24 we look at when we make these districts.

25 MS. ALMIRON: I mean, I would say that I disagree

1 and that I think that even if you are a young person or a
2 child, that you deserve representation, one. And also, I
3 think that we do have a serious problem of underinvestment,
4 not in just social services for Latino communities, but also
5 in investment in voter registration and being able to pull out
6 the electorate, and in also being able to have resources to
7 get people like me elected into office. And so I think this
8 is a much broader conversation, but I will still end that the
9 Senate deserves to have four Latino seats, however you get
10 there.

11 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: Well, I actually
12 agree with your disagreement part on that, because I, too,
13 believe that people of whatever age have the opportunity and
14 should have the opportunity. I was just pointing out, you
15 know, at the end of the day, you want to have people of age to
16 be able to vote, and those are one of the considering factors.
17 I would just encourage you to relook at those types of things,
18 because I do want to see better Latino representation both in
19 the House and in these maps, in the House portions of the
20 maps.

21 So thank you very much for taking your time and
22 taking the question.

23 MS. ALMIRON: Yep. I look forward to the changes.

24 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Majority Leader Ward has
25 another comment.

1 SENATOR K. WARD: I just want to clarify. The 13
2 percent, that number that I used, was voting age population,
3 Latino. It wasn't the overall population.

4 Thank you.

5 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you, again, for your
6 testimony.

7 SENATOR COSTA: Mr. Chairman.

8 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Oh, Senator Costa is heard
9 from.

10 SENATOR COSTA: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

11 I just want to comment as it relates to the
12 Lancaster conversation. I know this witness talked about the
13 Latino population there and voting age population. And as
14 Senator Ward indicated, it's not as high as it would need to
15 be to create that district. But I think the argument from the
16 Lancaster seat, I would argue, is not necessarily about a
17 Latino district, but more importantly as we heard from the
18 mayor, the previous testifier, that you've got the city of
19 Lancaster surrounded by the suburban communities that have a
20 strong community of interest. That's really important to that
21 conversation. So I don't want folks to think that the only
22 argument for a Lancaster seat is centered around a Latino
23 seat, but rather one that is a community of interest, as was
24 expressed by the mayor who previously testified.

25 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

1 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you, and Majority Leader
2 Ward, we're back to you.

3 SENATOR K. WARD: Are you tired of saying my name?

4 CHAIR NORDENBERG: No, I am not.

5 SENATOR K. WARD: So as for the mayor's comment
6 about Lancaster and making an urban seat, we could do that in
7 Chester County. We could do that in a lot of counties. We
8 could put, you know, just the urban area and what surrounds
9 them together. So that doesn't stand alone. And also, as for
10 a Latino seat, you know, Reading has a very high Latino
11 population right now. I think it's in the high 20s for the
12 voting age population that we could possibly make stronger if
13 that would ever occur to be an opportunity.

14 Thank you.

15 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you, again, for your
16 testimony. Obviously, you sparked a lot of interest, and
17 we're grateful.

18 Our next witness is Neil Makhija, who is from
19 IAImpact in Penn Valley, and he is going to talk about Asian
20 representation in the maps.

21 Welcome, sir.

22 MR. MAKHIJA: Thank you very much. I want to just
23 thank you, the entirety of the Commission really, and Chairman
24 Nordenberg, for allowing me to testify.

25 My name is Neil Makhija. I'm Executive Director

1 of IAImpact, Indian American Impact, we refer to as IAImpact,
2 and we're a national organization, but I am born and raised
3 here in Pennsylvania, Carbon County originally, and now live
4 in Montgomery County. I know it's an immense project that you
5 have undertaken to redraw these legislative maps. I've been
6 paying close attention nationwide, and I will say that, you
7 know, for the first time, it seems that Pennsylvania has had a
8 process that is truly transparent, open, and has allowed
9 voices like mine and others who have spoken today. So I thank
10 you for creating this process and this forum for communities
11 like ours to engage.

12 It's a huge undertaking to redraw the maps any
13 year, but this cycle is even more difficult for one reason
14 above others, which is that Pennsylvania is changing. The
15 2020 Census shows that our Commonwealth is becoming more
16 diverse, and that people of color and immigrants have driven
17 that population growth. While that population has changed
18 across the board, across the Commonwealth, our elected
19 representation largely has not. Ninety percent of
20 Pennsylvania's legislature is white, and nearly 75 percent is
21 male, whereas people of color are 25 percent of the
22 population, and women, of course, are in the majority. Among
23 metropolitan States, Pennsylvania's legislature is among the
24 least diverse.

25 So first, why does representation matter? One,

1 it's an indicator that communities and groups that have been
2 historically excluded as a matter of law still to this day are
3 not fully included, involved, and engaged in the legislative
4 process in determining our own future. And that's not just to
5 the detriment of these groups or individuals themselves, but
6 it's to the detriment of the Commonwealth, because it means
7 that if we lack representation, we're not drawing on the
8 talent and energy of all of these communities and what they
9 bring to the Commonwealth.

10 So for most of our Commonwealth's history, our
11 growth has been due to immigration, going back to immigrants
12 from Europe in the coal and manufacturing regions, but today
13 we're seeing that growth in Spanish speaking communities,
14 Asian American populations across the Commonwealth, many
15 places that you don't expect in many industries and many
16 backgrounds as well. That goes for the capital region, Lehigh
17 Valley, Reading, Lancaster, as has been discussed today, but
18 also Philadelphia and the suburbs. Everything that we once
19 thought of the suburbs is wrong, as one recent *New York Times*
20 op-ed said. The suburbs are a growing diverse place, and that
21 is a significant area where we've seen Asian American
22 communities and populations grow.

23 Now, while this has happened, the 2010 map has
24 locked into place patterns that were created based on patterns
25 decades ago and largely to favor incumbents. What I want to

1 say today is that the House map, at least, breaks loose that
2 stagnation and really gives these communities a chance to have
3 influence and a say in their representation and in their own
4 future. So I applaud the entire Commission, Chairman
5 Nordenberg, for proposing this House map, because while, you
6 know, there are many wrong ways to do this, including by
7 certain legal standards, there are actually many right ways to
8 do this. And while there could be other adjustments and, you
9 know, exceptions that are corrected, the proposed House map is
10 one right way to do this. It meets the standards set under
11 the Pennsylvania Constitution and under the Voting Rights Act,
12 and it also increases very clearly our chance, for example,
13 Asian American communities to have influence in a number of
14 districts. There are six districts that this map creates that
15 would be above 15 percent for Asian American communities, and,
16 of course, as was discussed for Latino communities, we have
17 genuine opportunity districts specifically in the Lehigh
18 Valley, in Reading, House Districts 127, 126, 134, 22, and
19 129, in particular. These are districts where there's a
20 genuine chance for diverse representation.

21 I'm trying to stay very close to the timeframe,
22 which is why I'm talking faster, going through some of what I
23 wanted to say. But I think, you know, overall, the big
24 picture is this, that this map is really leaps and bounds
25 above where we were a decade ago and prior, and by passing the

1 proposed maps, we're giving a chance for growing, diverse
2 communities to have representation, and that's going to be
3 better for those communities, and it's also going to be better
4 for the Commonwealth as a whole.

5 So thank you.

6 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you very much, sir.

7 Are there any questions or comments from within
8 the Commission?

9 Representative Benninghoff.

10 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: One quick one.

11 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Majority Leader Benninghoff.

12 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: I don't know if
13 you've been listening to the rest of the testimony today?

14 MR. MAKHIJA: I heard some of it, but go ahead.

15 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: There was reference
16 to a township being split down in the Philadelphia suburbs of
17 Horsham--

18 MR. MAKHIJA: Right.

19 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: --which has a
20 significant American Asian population. I was just curious
21 what your thoughts were on that. The Fair Districts Map
22 actually was able to do that, actually put a pretty simplistic
23 holistic map together.

24 MR. MAKHIJA: I did hear that, but I would say,
25 and I think it's important for the long run that, you know, we

1 have districts that leach, you know that have influence and
2 gain influence. I think it is importantly noted that it's not
3 a monolith -- the Asian American community is not a monolith,
4 but there are many within that that you would consider
5 communities of interest, and as a whole, we could create a
6 coalition district.

7 But, for that district as a whole, it's also
8 important to note two things. One, I haven't looked at the
9 Fair Districts Map specifically, so I don't know what
10 population they're taking away, but it could be that they're
11 just shifting from one to the other. So I would look into
12 that. And second, to really have representation, and this
13 goes to the Senate map, which I'm not fully prepared to talk
14 about today, but it does seem, for example, in Allentown that
15 clearly incumbency was an overriding factor in drawing these
16 districts. And even if you create, you know, a better
17 district on the whole, if you have incumbents in office, and
18 it seems that they're going to be there indefinitely,
19 Pennsylvania has the largest full-time legislature, which
20 makes incumbency much more powerful than it is in other
21 States, it's very hard to make the argument that making a
22 1-percent adjustment is really a benefit to the community.

23 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: I thank you, and I
24 would encourage you to look at that. I think it was the 151st
25 District, which only encompasses two townships. So if you get

1 a chance to take a look at it and look at what Fair Districts
2 put together, I'm just curious if your perspective makes that
3 better or does not improve it.

4 MR. MAKHIJA: Sure. I'm happy to follow up on
5 that.

6 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: Thank you, sir.

7 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

8 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you very much.

9 Our next witness is Antonio Pineda, who is a
10 Lehigh County Commissioner and is here to talk about the
11 Senate map in the Lehigh Valley.

12 Welcome, sir.

13 MR. PINEDA: Thank you. Good afternoon. Thank
14 you, Mr. Chairman. First, I want to thank the Commission for
15 all the time, effort, and thought they have put into the maps,
16 and thank you for the opportunity to give testimony on the
17 matter. My name is Antonio Pineda. I am a lifelong resident
18 of Lehigh County, having lived in the Fullerton area of
19 Whitehall Township since I was 5 years old, and I lived in the
20 city of Allentown prior to that.

21 I am here to voice my support for the proposed
22 State Senate map as it pertains to the Lehigh Valley. In
23 particular, the proposed 14th Senate District. I am a newly
24 elected Lehigh County Commissioner, and I am the first Latino
25 Lehigh County Commissioner, and the second in the entire

1 State, with Michael Rivera in Berks County being the first.
2 He was elected in 2019. There has never been a Latino State
3 Senator in Pennsylvania. The proposed 14th District provides
4 a great opportunity for the first Latino State Senator to be
5 elected and for the Latino community to have more
6 representation in government. There is currently no incumbent
7 Senator drawn in the boundaries of the district, which makes
8 the possibility even more likely. As a future constituent of
9 the 14th State Senate seat myself, I am excited about the
10 possibility of my community electing the first State Senator
11 of Hispanic descent in Pennsylvania.

12 Also I want to note, I disagree with some opinions
13 that splitting Allentown into two separate districts, and
14 Bethlehem as well into two separate districts, will have an
15 adverse effect on the area's representation. Allentown is the
16 third largest city in Pennsylvania, and Bethlehem is the
17 seventh. Having two State Senators represent each of these
18 cities would benefit the constituents in them. Both of these
19 cities are large enough where there's value in having multiple
20 State Senators to represent them. Having 2 out of 50 advocate
21 for the needs of the cities would give both Allentown and
22 Bethlehem residents a stronger voice in their government, in
23 my opinion.

24 I want to make it clear and known that I have no
25 intentions of running for the 14th State Senate seat in this

1 next election cycle. My reason for testifying today is that I
2 feel strongly that the current State Senate map in the Lehigh
3 Valley does the best job of appropriately representing the
4 needs of our community and giving the strongest voice to our
5 constituents. Not for any personal gain whatsoever.

6 Thank you for your time, and thank you so much for
7 all the work you've put into this map.

8 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you, sir.

9 Are there questions or comments?

10 Majority Leader Ward.

11 SENATOR K. WARD: I just want you to know, the
12 Chancellor says my name before he even looks at me, because he
13 knows.

14 So I agree, that's a very good map. It could be,
15 would you support -- it could be stronger if we pull in the
16 rest of Bethlehem city. We split Bethlehem city.

17 MR. PINEDA: If you want to maximize the Latino
18 population in a State Senate seat, yes, that would maximize
19 it.

20 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Any other questions or
21 comments?

22 (There was no response.)

23 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you very much, sir. We
24 really appreciate it.

25 MR. PINEDA: Thank you.

1 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Our next witness is Melissa
2 Wright, who is from Philadelphia, and is going to talk about
3 the Philadelphia districts.

4 Welcome, the floor is yours.

5 MS. WRIGHT: Thank you. Greetings, Mr. Chairman,
6 and distinguished Members of the Commission. My name is
7 Melissa Wright, and I'm the Vice President for the League of
8 Women Voters of Philadelphia, which is a nonpartisan
9 grassroots civic organization that encourages informed and
10 active participation in government, and the League is
11 committed to insuring that maps are drawn fairly and
12 accurately with all voices considered and equitably
13 represented.

14 Let me just start off by saying that we appreciate
15 the time and effort that has been devoted to creating fair
16 maps for the people of Pennsylvania. In particular, the House
17 map is a vast improvement from the previous version. It
18 maximizes representation for minority communities and removes
19 some of the longstanding bias that has existed in past
20 versions. We know that demographic and population changes
21 since the last Census have been taken into account by creating
22 three new House districts without incumbents, including one in
23 Philadelphia.

24 Pivoting to the Senate's map, while it is an
25 improvement from its previous iteration, it doesn't provide

1 quite the same quality as the House map, and there are some
2 glaring and critical places for improvement. As has been
3 mentioned multiple times, we know that Pennsylvania has
4 experienced minority growth since 2010, particularly in the
5 Latino population, and the proposed Senate map does little to
6 extend that minority representation. It splits growing
7 populations in both the Lehigh Valley and in Philadelphia,
8 making it unlikely that Pennsylvania will see a Latino Senator
9 before the next Census.

10 And finally, Philadelphia and the collar counties
11 show deviations above the ideal number, diminishing the voices
12 from people in the region. As I mentioned previously, the
13 League is a nonpartisan organization. We have no stake in a
14 partisan advantage in this process, and our only goal is fair
15 maps that secure fair representation for the people of the
16 Commonwealth.

17 I want to thank the Commission for the opportunity
18 to provide this feedback and to work alongside you on a task
19 whose importance cannot be understated for its impact on a
20 free and fair democracy.

21 Thank you.

22 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you, Ms. Wright.

23 Are there any questions or comments for the
24 witness?

25 (There was no response.)

1 CHAIR NORDENBERG: We thank you, again, very much
2 for your work and your being here today.

3 Our next witness is Oliver Truong, from Lancaster,
4 who wishes to talk about the Lancaster map.

5 Welcome, sir.

6 MR. TRUONG: Thank you very much. Thank you for
7 the opportunity to speak about my experience in Pennsylvania.
8 In addition to speaking about Lancaster, I also want to speak
9 about the challenges facing people of color who seek higher
10 office in our Commonwealth. I'd like to thank Chairman
11 Nordenberg and the Members of the Legislative Reapportionment
12 Commission, along with all the staff, who have dedicated their
13 time and efforts to drawing new State legislative maps. I'm a
14 Pennsylvania native, born and raised in Lancaster County, who
15 has worked in business and tech. I left Pennsylvania for a
16 time but came back because I saw an opportunity in the region
17 that gave my family hope when we first arrived. My parents
18 are Vietnamese refugees who settled in the Lancaster area and
19 built a family and life. Pennsylvania has welcomed immigrants
20 dating back more than a century, and we are part of a recent
21 movement of immigrants to our Commonwealth.

22 I was drawn back to my home State, to my hometown,
23 to try and make an impact. I do work recruiting people of
24 color to run for office. I'm uniquely positioned to
25 understand the importance of representation in these new maps.

1 I've met potential candidates and community leaders, and they
2 need a lot of reassurance that despite the unfair makeup of
3 our current legislative districts, they should still run and
4 offer their voice to the political conversation. People will
5 see the current lines and see the odds stacked against them.
6 They can do the math, and they see how districts have been
7 drawn to diminish their voices in their communities. Decades
8 of redistricting that takes pains to make it difficult for
9 people of color to get elected in office in Harrisburg has
10 done real damage to the willingness of new people to even
11 consider being part of the electoral process.

12 This gerrymandering has occurred at a time when we
13 should be seeing an explosion in new representation by people
14 of color. We're seeing a divergence in population trends in
15 Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania's population growth has been
16 driven by immigrants and people of color, while other
17 demographics have seen not just stagnation but a decline.
18 Because of past redistricting, we have a population that is
19 shrinking overrepresented in Harrisburg, while a vibrant
20 population of new Pennsylvanians are systematically
21 underrepresented. This underrepresentation manifests itself
22 in less power for cities like Lancaster, Allentown, and
23 Reading, despite an outsized influence on our Commonwealth's
24 economy and population growth. Underrepresentation
25 discourages participation and suppresses new leaders from

1 stepping forward and helping lead Pennsylvania into the 21st
2 century. Instead, we're stuck with stagnant debates that
3 should have been resolved years ago.

4 There are still improvements to be made,
5 specifically to the Senate map. The first ring of Lancaster
6 suburbs are very similar, and the Senate map breaks them apart
7 to protect two incumbents. This dilutes the city of Lancaster
8 and breaks apart communities of interest that share
9 similarities down to the types of school districts. Instead,
10 the Senate map puts the inner-ring suburbs with rural parts of
11 the county. We need to take another look at the Senate maps
12 and make sure they reflect the values and priorities expressed
13 in the House map. I encourage you to give voice to more
14 Pennsylvanians, help us move into a position of leadership in
15 our changing country, and pass the LRC's preliminary House
16 map, and give additional considerations to the Senate map.

17 Thank you very much.

18 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you very much.

19 Questions or comments?

20 (There was no response.)

21 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you, again, for your
22 testimony.

23 Our next witness is Alejandro Escamilla. He is
24 from Whitehall, and he wants to talk about the Senate map in
25 the Lehigh Valley.

1 Welcome, sir.

2 MR. ESCAMILLA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

3 Good afternoon to you and the committee. I would
4 like to thank you for your hard work, your patience, and the
5 opportunity today to give my testimony. I just listened to
6 another testimony about the new 14th District that made me
7 compelled today to give my opinion. I am a pastor on the
8 south side of Allentown and have been working in this
9 community for 13 years. And as you said when you started the
10 meeting, it's impossible to have a perfect map, and it's
11 impossible to have everybody in agreement. But I heard things
12 like the maps needs to be changed, specifically for Lehigh
13 Valley for the 14th District. And I have a question, it has
14 to be changed for who?

15 And another opinion that I heard is that the map
16 needs to be fair. And I ask myself, again, to be fair for
17 whom? I mean, right now I believe that we have a real
18 opportunity for our community to have representation in the
19 Senate. An opportunity that I felt very grateful, and I think
20 can be a huge impact in the Spanish community in Allentown and
21 Bethlehem. As a pastor, I have a growing congregation.
22 Actually, years ago, the Lutheran Church donated us the
23 building because of the demographic change around the city of
24 Allentown. So they gave us away the building. We have people
25 from Pottstown, we have people from Easton, we have people

1 from Bethlehem, we have people obviously from Allentown, and
2 some of the comments want to portray us as Allentown and
3 Bethlehem to be a different community. I totally disagree
4 with that. We are one, a strong community that not only
5 shares the language but the values and the dreams about a
6 better future for us and our kids, new generations. And I
7 think that the 14th District is going to be a great
8 opportunity to have somebody that is from our community and
9 really knows what happens here in Allentown and in Bethlehem,
10 too.

11 I really encourage you to support the 14th
12 District, because right now, right now is our best shot to
13 have somebody that is part of here, who knows Seventh Street,
14 Second Street. Who knows the west side of Bethlehem, who
15 knows Bethlehem. I mean, we live here. We have families
16 here, and we need somebody that is part of this culture and
17 the Spanish community, and I would say just I'm really
18 thankful for having this and to recognize the Hispanic
19 community, the valor that we have, the strength that we have,
20 the passion that we have to not only help the city of
21 Allentown and Bethlehem, but the State of Pennsylvania.

22 Thank you.

23 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you very much.

24 Are there any questions or comments for the
25 witness?

1 (There was no response.)

2 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you, Pastor.

3 MR. ESCAMILLA: You're welcome.

4 CHAIR NORDENBERG: It is great to have you here.

5 MR. ESCAMILLA: God bless you.

6 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Our final witness for this

7 session is Kadida Kenner, who is from the New PA Project.

8 She's from Chesterbrook, and she would like to testify about

9 the House map in Chester County, perhaps among other things.

10 Welcome.

11 MS. KADIDA: Thank you.

12 Good afternoon, Chairman Nordenberg and

13 Commissioners. I'd like to thank you all for allowing me to

14 speak here today and provide my testimony this afternoon. I'd

15 also like to commend you on your work thus far in this

16 process. Yours is a thankless job, but is one of the most

17 important processes that is done at the State level that

18 directly impacts every single resident in the Commonwealth.

19 My name is Kadida Kenner. I was born in

20 Monroeville, Allegheny County. Both of my parents are Pitt

21 graduates. I'm the outcast. I'm a proud Temple Owl. I grew

22 up in West Chester, Chester County, historical home to the

23 Underground Railroad and my civil rights icon, Bayard Rustin.

24 I recently moved after living here in Susquehanna Township in

25 Dauphin County for five years, and so I now reside one mile

1 away from Valley Forge National Park.

2 I am the founding Executive Director of the New
3 Pennsylvania Project. The New Pennsylvania Project is a
4 voting rights organization operating statewide, with the
5 primary purpose of voter registration. It is our mission to
6 register as many of the 1.1 million Pennsylvanians who are
7 eligible to vote yet not registered to vote in the
8 Commonwealth, and to mobilize these folks to vote in every
9 single election. We canvass neighborhoods, knock on doors,
10 listen to concerns about housing, economic justice, and fairly
11 funded public schools, in often ignored and underrepresented
12 communities, particularly communities of color. We register
13 these folks to vote and encourage their participation to
14 actually cast their ballots. We believe that participation in
15 our democracy is foundational to the American experience, but
16 for far too long, that participation has not been reflected in
17 those who represent us.

18 In Pennsylvania, our growth is driven by people of
19 color: Black, brown, Latinx, and AAPI residents. That's not
20 my opinion. That's an absolute fact, and these emerging
21 populations are choosing to live in vibrant smaller cities
22 within the State such as Lancaster, Allentown, Scranton, and
23 Erie. Our Commonwealth is at a point of crisis due to
24 underrepresentation. If our State legislature were truly
25 representative of the State's population, then at least one of

1 every four State legislators would be a person of color.

2 Instead, we have a General Assembly that, others have noted,
3 is 90-percent white. This is due in part to decades of
4 elected officials picking their voters, and not the other way
5 around.

6 I'd like to provide a little perspective for
7 anyone wondering why this matters so much to us. When someone
8 who is a native Spanish speaker living in Reading and in need
9 of help calls on their State Representative or Senator looking
10 for information about the LIHEAP program, but no one in that
11 office speaks Spanish, or no one in that office thought to
12 hire someone on their staff that speaks Spanish who could
13 effectively help that constituent get the help that they need
14 to help their home, that's a representation issue. So a Black
15 woman from Chambersburg faces unjust discrimination in the
16 workplace for wearing her hair naturally the way it grows out
17 of our heads, but finds herself unprotected because there are
18 no laws on the books or proposed legislation for her elected
19 officials, whose job it is to represent all of their
20 constituents, that's a representation issue.

21 In many cases, the current maps carve people of
22 color out of their own communities to make way for safe
23 incumbent seats, or pack people of color together to limit
24 their influence and minimize opportunities for maximum
25 candidates of color. This is no way to govern, and it insures

1 that communities of color stay underrepresented in the
2 building in which I currently appear today.

3 What makes me hopeful for the future is that the
4 LRC has proposed a House map that corrects the injustices of
5 past maps. The proposed map improves on the current map by
6 every good government redistricting standard there is. It
7 gives opportunity for new voices to rise and lead. It opens a
8 door that was previously inaccessible and bolted shut.

9 I strongly urge the Commission to adopt the
10 proposed House map and give communities of color a chance to
11 elect leaders that look like them, value what they value, and
12 experience life in Pennsylvania as people of color do. Change
13 is hard. It can feel uncomfortable, even oppressive, but our
14 legislative maps must change as population changes. There is
15 a reason we go through the reapportionment and redistricting
16 process every 10 years after a new Census, and, unfortunately,
17 when the maps are as skewed as the current maps are, any
18 effort to correct them will feel like an affront on those
19 feeling as though they're losing power, but we must pursue
20 fairness even when it is difficult.

21 I want to commend the work of the Chairman and the
22 Commissioners and staff for keeping this process moving in a
23 fair and nonpartisan fashion, and I'm happy to answer any
24 questions.

25 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you very much.

1 Are there any questions or comments?

2 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: One quick comment.

3 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Majority Leader Benninghoff.

4 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: I know the hour is
5 getting late. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

6 I'm just curious a little bit about your
7 organization.

8 MS. KENNER: Sure.

9 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: I didn't hear you
10 say, is it a nonpartisan organization, did you say, or a
11 bipartisan organization?

12 MS. KENNER: We're a nonpartisan as it relates to
13 our voter registration activities, yes.

14 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: And I was curious,
15 how far out of the Chester area do you reach, your New
16 Pennsylvania Project?

17 MS. KENNER: We're a statewide organization, and
18 so we have folks that are helping us to register those who are
19 unregistered all over, from the Allegheny suburbs to Bucks
20 County to the collar counties of Philadelphia, the capital
21 region. The SEPA cities are very important to us in this
22 moment as well.

23 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: Well, you're probably
24 a good leader, considering you've lived in multiple places
25 across the State.

1 MS. KENNER: I'm trying to cover this map, and
2 maybe one day I'll get to Centre County. Who knows.

3 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: Thank you very much.

4 MS. KENNER: Thank you for your time.

5 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: Thanks for being
6 here.

7 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Please say hello to your
8 parents, and tell them we were impressed with their Temple
9 Owl.

10 MS. KENNER: All right. Well, thank you. I was
11 going to wear yellow today, but you know, I bleed green, so Go
12 Eagles.

13 CHAIR NORDENBERG: This, unless there are comments
14 that any Commission Member would like to make, brings this
15 hearing to a close. We are scheduled to reconvene at 2 p.m.
16 for a different kind of hearing. I apologize for depriving
17 most of you of lunches. I have a Kind bar in my pocket that
18 I'd be glad to share with anyone.

19 This hearing is adjourned.

20 (Whereupon, the proceedings were concluded at 1:15
21 p.m.)

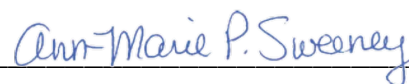
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1 I hereby certify that the proceedings and evidence
2 are contained fully and accurately in the notes taken by me
3 during the hearing of the within cause, and that this is a
4 true and correct transcript of the same.

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9 

10 ANN-MARIE P. SWEENEY
11 Official Reporter
12 Legislative Reapportionment
13 Commission
14

15 THE FOREGOING CERTIFICATION DOES NOT APPLY TO ANY
16 REPRODUCTION OF THE SAME BY ANY MEANS UNLESS UNDER THE DIRECT
17 CONTROL AND/OR SUPERVISION OF THE CERTIFYING REPORTER.
18
19

20 ANN-MARIE P. SWEENEY
21 Official Reporter
22 Legislative Reapportionment Commission
23 P.O. Box 203079
24 Harrisburg, PA 17120
25

EXHIBITS

Agenda

Hearing #14

Pennsylvania Legislative Reapportionment Commission

January 14, 2022

11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

North Office Building, Hearing Room 1

Comments on Preliminary Plan

1. Call to Order and Opening Remarks
2. Comments from Interested Citizens
3. Closing Remarks and Adjournment

Testimony – January 14, 2022
Submitted by: Todd Stephens

Good morning Chairman Nordenberg and members of the Redistricting Commission. My name is Todd Stephens and I live in Horsham Township, Montgomery County. Thank you for the opportunity to testify here today. I am here to respectfully request you adopt the Montgomery County revision of the Commission's Preliminary Map that was submitted by Dr. Carol Kuniholm, Executive Director of Fair Districts PA, and supported by her oral and written testimony on January 6, 2022.

I want to begin by thanking you for your commitment to ensuring Pennsylvania has free and equal legislative elections for the next 10 years. Thanks as well for creating easily accessible and efficient methods for the people of Pennsylvania to offer comments for your consideration through the website or in person. Chairman Nordenberg, I read your comments in the Philadelphia Inquirer and appreciate your interest in understanding all the details and nuances of every community across Pennsylvania. That is why I'm here - to help you and your fellow Commission members better understand the communities within, and around, the 151st Legislative District and the challenges they face.

While I am the current State Representative of the 151st Legislative District, I want to be clear, I believe these districts should be drawn for the benefit of the people who live within them and not for the benefit of, or detriment of, any one person. State Representatives are elected to serve for only two years, but these maps and their impact will be felt for a decade or longer.

LEGAL STANDARDS

I watched the October 25th, 2021 hearing wherein your Counsel, Judge Byer, ably presented the legal standards delineated in Art. II, Section 16 of the Pennsylvania Constitution and the PA Supreme Court's clear holding in the recent case, League of Women Voters v. Commonwealth of PA, 178 A.3d 737 (Pa. 2018).

As Judge Byer noted, our Constitution requires districts to be compact, contiguous, and as nearly equal in population as practicable. Further, the Constitution prohibits dividing counties, cities, towns, borough, townships, or wards "Unless absolutely necessary." Importantly, Judge Byer explained that "Political Subdivision and Ward Boundaries would appear to be the most significant criterion under Article II, Sec. 16 noting the language – 'Absolutely

Necessary’”. He further noted that the 2018 League of Women Voters case provided, “The principal method of assessing whether a redistricting plan violates the Free and Equal Elections clause is the extent to which the plan adheres to traditional redistricting criteria – compact and contiguous territory, as nearly equal in population as practicable, and which do not divide political subdivisions or wards “except where necessary to insure equality of population.”

151st LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

Currently, the 151st Legislative District is comprised of two whole municipalities, Horsham and Montgomery Townships and two split municipalities, Lower Gwynedd and Upper Dublin. Notably, each of the four municipalities is in a different school district, Hatboro-Horsham, North Penn, Wissahickon and Upper Dublin respectively.

While the district is predominantly white, there are large Korean and Indian populations in Horsham and Montgomery Townships. Horsham is home to several Korean churches, while Montgomery Township is home to Assi Plaza, where an international grocery store specializing in Korean food is located along with a Korean restaurant. Leaders in the Korean community from Horsham and Montgomery Townships led the significant effort to locate a Korean War Memorial and Peace Park in Montgomery Township. Many members of the Indian community from Horsham and Montgomery Townships worship at Bharatiya Temple in Montgomery Township which serves as not only a religious center but also a cultural center offering language and cultural training for everyone from young children to seniors. Both townships have several Korean and Indian owned businesses and restaurants as well.

Horsham Township had been the home to an 860-acre military base until it was decommissioned by the Navy effective September 2011. While a Redevelopment Authority has been established to redevelop land that equates to nearly 10% of Horsham Township, that process has been delayed because, in 2014, it was discovered that the activities on the base contaminated the public water system in Horsham Township and the groundwater in surrounding areas with chemicals that have been linked to cancer.

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection has been working extensively with Horsham Township and the Horsham Water and Sewer Authority to eliminate the chemicals from the public water system. The

Pennsylvania Department of Health has conducted a cancer cluster review in Horsham Township and is now conducting a comprehensive health study of the long and short-term health effects of ingesting these chemicals for Horsham residents.

The Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development will be a critical partner in attracting the high-caliber businesses a significant tract like this in suburban Philadelphia can support.

As most of the roads surrounding the base are state-owned, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation will be essential to ensuring the infrastructure is in place to support the eventual redevelopment of this large project.

In sum, Horsham Township is facing serious issues requiring extensive state support. These issues threaten the health and well-being of every Horsham resident and are of paramount concern as evidenced by the large number of comments sent to the Commission's website.

PA LEGISLATIVE REDISTRICTING COMMISSION (LRC) PRELIMINARY MAP

In the Commission's Preliminary Map, the 151st Legislative District is still comprised of two whole municipalities, Montgomery Township and Ambler Borough and two split municipalities, Horsham and Upper Dublin. Again, each of the four municipalities is in a different school district, Hatboro-Horsham, North Penn, Wissahickon and Upper Dublin.

This proposal does not improve the number of municipal splits or school district splits and it would have a devastating impact on the people of Horsham Township by "cracking" them into two different legislative districts. If this map were to be adopted, each part of Horsham Township would constitute a small portion of two different legislative districts. By splitting Horsham Township, the people facing the most serious state issues would be left to compete with each of their representatives' larger constituencies to have their voice heard and prioritized in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives.

In addition to the problems that splitting Horsham creates for all Horsham residents, the Commission's preliminary map would "crack" the Indian and Korean communities as well. As discussed, these sizable and thriving communities would be split and dispersed to two different State House Districts diminishing their voice in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives.

Dr. CAROL KUNIHOLM'S REVISIONS TO THE LRC PRELIMINARY MAP

On January 6th Dr. Carol Kuniholm of Fair Districts PA testified before the Commission and submitted written testimony as well as a map with important revisions to improve the LRC Preliminary Map. As she explained in her written testimony, "While public response to the House map has been in most areas very positive, there are areas where addressing local concerns could make the map even stronger. It should be possible to make small improvements without significant impact on the overall metrics. The proposed revision offers some adjustments for consideration or inclusion." Her written testimony and map revisions addressing the issues involving the 151st Legislative District are the only recommendation in Montgomery County.

The map Dr. Kuniholm created and recommended for the 151st Legislative District includes two whole municipalities, Montgomery Township and Horsham Township and only one split municipality, Hatfield Township. In addition to eliminating a municipal split, her proposed map only includes two school districts in the 151st Legislative District, Hatboro-Horsham, and North Penn.

By including Hatfield in the 151st Legislative district Dr. Kuniholm further increases the population of Indian residents as reflected in the larger Asian population counts as compared to the LRC's Preliminary Map. As mentioned earlier, many Indian residents worship and attend Bharatiya Temple in Montgomery Township but adding Hatfield Township would add BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir to the places of worship and Indian cultural centers in the 151st Legislative District.

By restoring Horsham, Dr. Kuniholm ensures that the people of Horsham have a single unified voice to advocate for them on the many serious and, in some cases, life-threatening, issues they face. In addition to the health and quality of life issues, because of the size and scope, the success of the redevelopment project there is critical to the people of Horsham Township.

In addition to reducing split municipalities and school districts, restoring the Korean and Indian populations and Horsham Township, Dr. Kuniholm's map scores higher in both compactness evaluations – the Reock and the Polsby Popper - and is well within the population deviation permitted by the PA Supreme Court.

COMPETITIVENESS

While it's not one of the Constitutional criteria, there has been considerable testimony about the competitiveness of the districts from David Thornburgh of the Committee of Seventy and others. In his testimony on January 6, 2022, Mr. Thornburgh explained that the Commission's map was less competitive overall than the current House maps and said, "If you were able to, in fact, squeeze a few more competitive districts into the process so this is at least as good as the current map that would be one suggestion."

The 151st Legislative District is currently one of the most competitive districts in Pennsylvania. Nobody can properly claim the 151st District was drawn to favor Republicans. In fact, since 2016, the following candidates have won the 151st Legislative District – President Biden, Secretary Clinton, Governor Wolf (twice), US Senator Bob Casey, Attorney General Josh Shapiro (twice), Congresswoman Dean, State Senator Maria Collett and every other Democrat who runs districtwide. By way of further example, the Philadelphia Inquirer recently evaluated every State House seat and labelled the current 151st a "Safe Dem" seat. According to Dave's Redistricting, Dr. Kuniholm's map is more competitive than the LRC's Preliminary Map and nearly matches the competitiveness of the current 151st Legislative District.

Importantly, because of the competitiveness of the 151st Legislative District my good friend in House leadership on the other side of the aisle has consistently remarked that they would use the redistricting process to beat me if I survived the elections. At one point he commented that in order to continue in the House I'd have to complete the "Triple Lindy" – the daringly difficult dive with three moves from the movie Back to School – by winning during the Trump midterm in 2018, the Trump re-elect in 2020 and surviving redistricting. More pointedly he told me "The road to the majority runs through the 151st my friend." While I don't believe it should play a role in these decisions, in a process where four of the five members of a Commission are party leaders of their respective caucuses, I understand politics could very likely become a part of some discussions. I accept that as an unfortunate reality of my chosen profession and understand all too well the old adage that "politics ain't beanbag" but political motivations in this area can never supersede the Constitution or so severely impact an entire community. I understand there's always the possibility that I may be a casualty of Constitutional provisions of the redistricting process or any even year election and that's the risk I willingly assume as a State Representative but the people in

Horsham did not. Splitting Horsham simply to remove me would unfairly harm the very people this Constitutional process is supposed to protect – the people living in communities with serious issues like Horsham.

CONCLUSION

In light of the facts delineated above, it is clear that splitting Horsham is not “absolutely necessary” as required by the Pennsylvania Constitution and as delineated by the PA Supreme Court’s Opinion in the League of Women’s Voters case. Further, splitting a township facing so many serious issues would be disproportionately detrimental to the residents of Horsham and negatively impact the Korean and Indian Communities. These districts should be drawn for the benefit of the people who live within them and not for the benefit of, or detriment to, any one person. **Because it reduces split municipalities, school districts and communities of interest, is more compact and maintains competitiveness, I respectfully suggest the Legislative Redistricting Commission adopt the Montgomery County revisions to the Commission’s Preliminary Map as recommended by Dr. Carol Kuniholm.**

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Pennsylvania Legislative Redistricting Commission

Todd Stephens

January 14, 2022

CORE PRINCIPLE

These districts should be drawn for the benefit of the people who live within them and not for the benefit of, or detriment of, any one person. State Representatives are elected to serve for only two years, but these maps and their impact will be felt for a decade or longer.

Pennsylvania Requirements

Pa. Const. Art. II § 16 – Traditional redistricting criteria

- Compact
 - Contiguous
 - As nearly equal in population as practicable
- &
- “Unless absolutely necessary, no county, city, incorporated town, borough, township or ward shall be divided. . .”

Political Subdivision and Ward Boundaries

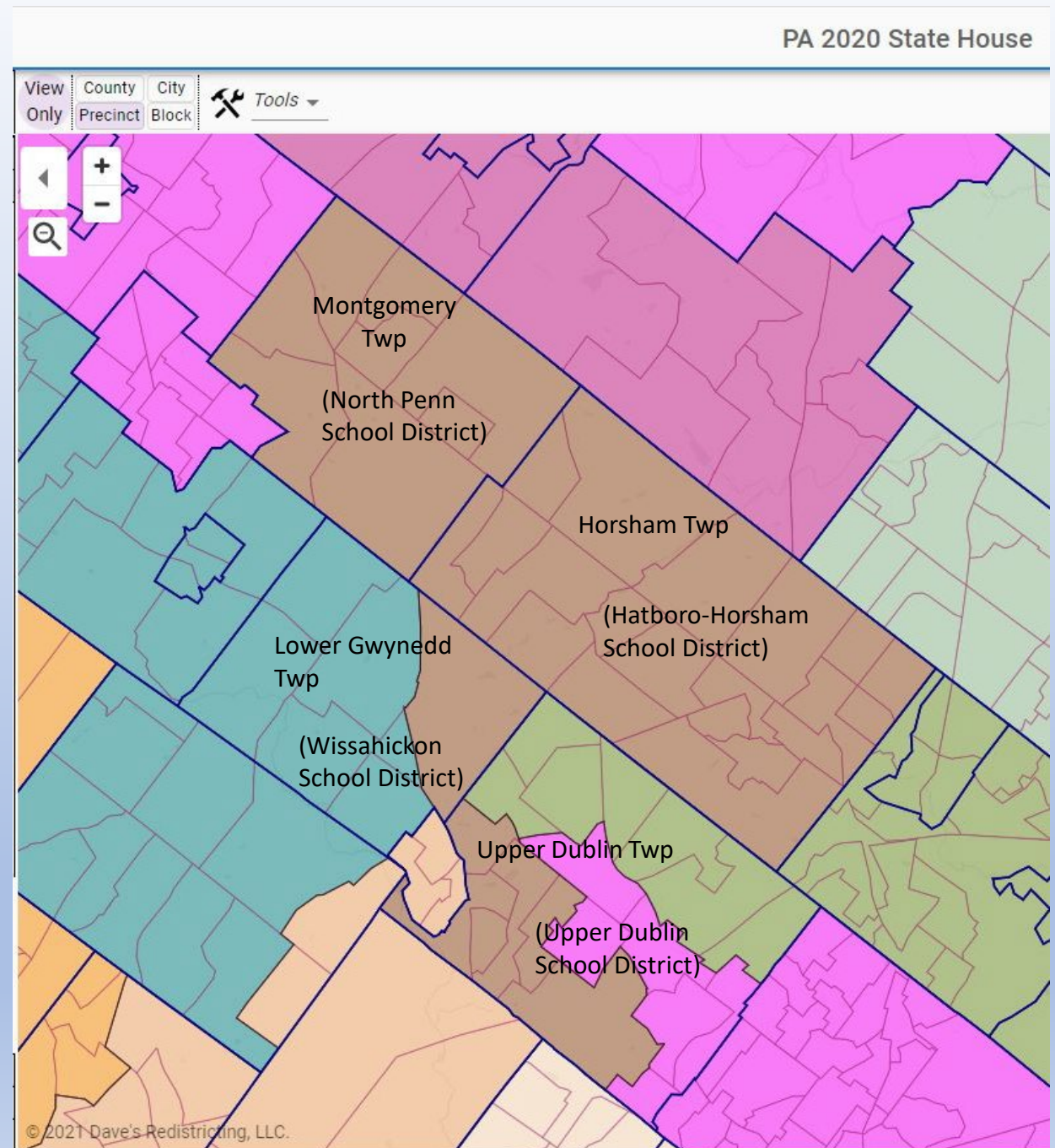
- Would appear to be the most significant criterion under Article II, § 16 – “Absolutely necessary”
- Pa Supreme Court has discussed necessity for purpose of achieving population equality
- Pa Supreme Court also has recognized that population deviations could be increased in order to avoid dividing political subdivisions

League of Women Voters v. Commonwealth

- Recognizes that other factors have historically played a role in redistricting, including: preservation of prior district lines; protection of incumbents; or maintenance of the political balance that existed after the prior reapportionment
- “However, we view these factors to be wholly subordinate to the neutral criteria of compactness, contiguity, minimization of the division of political subdivisions, and maintenance of population equality. . . . These neutral criteria provide a ‘floor’ of protection for an individual against the dilution of his or her vote in the creation of such districts.”

Current 151st Legislative District

- Horsham & Montgomery Townships
- Two Municipal Splits
 - Part of Upper Dublin Township
 - Part of Lower Gwynedd Township
- Parts of Four School Districts
 - Hatboro-Horsham
 - North Penn
 - Upper Dublin
 - Wissahickon
- Asian 13.9%/13.4%
(Predominantly Korean and Indian)



Horsham Township State Issues

Horsham is dealing with many, very serious state issues stemming from the former military base

2011 - 800+ acre (10% of Horsham Township former military base closed

EPA found PFAS has contaminated the public water system

Base remains vacant today while the cleanup continues

- PA has funded \$10's of millions in water filters/cleanup
- PA DEP working to clean water in Horsham since 2014
- PA DOH did a cancer cluster study, is now conducting a PFAS health study
- PA DOT has issued millions in grants and a recent study says they'll need to do \$100's of millions more in road improvements to support the redevelopment of the base
- PADCED will be involved to help promote the redevelopment efforts
- One of the largest redevelopment projects in Southeastern Pennsylvania

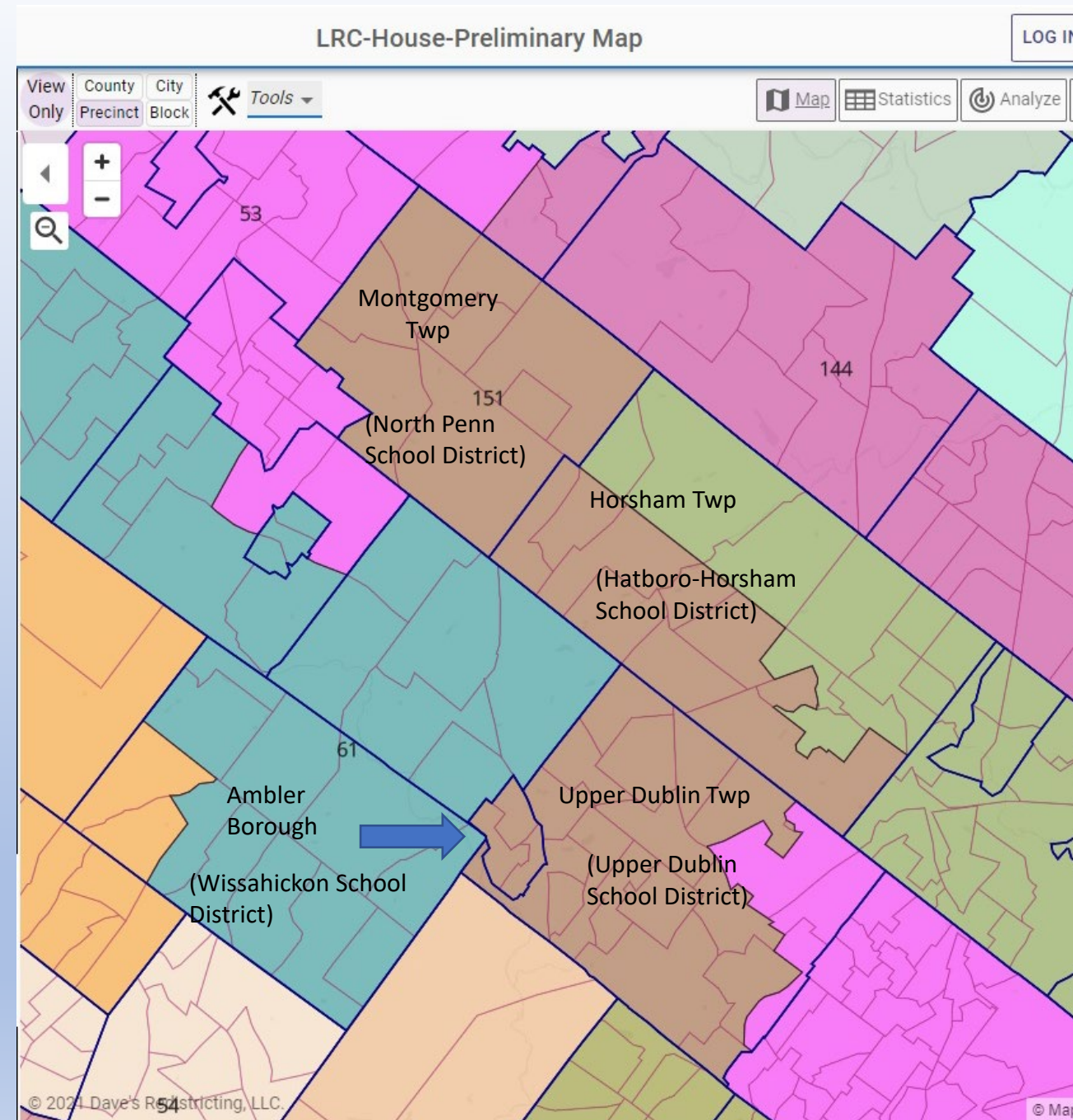


Problems With Splitting Horsham

- Townshipwide Services – Would need to advocate with two different State Representatives
 - Horsham Council
 - Horsham Water and Sewer Authority
 - Horsham Land Redevelopment Authority
 - Horsham Police
 - Horsham Fire & Ambulance (Firehouses split)
 - Horsham Library
 - Horsham Soccer, Little League, Hawks, Hhoops, Lacrosse, Wrestling
- Two State Representatives with other priorities
 - If Horsham is only 20% of their district, where will they focus their attention?
- Two State Representatives with conflicting priorities
 - Should we clean up stormwater runoff or groundwater?
 - Should we focus on Horsham Road and Limekiln Pike or Route 611 and County Line Road?

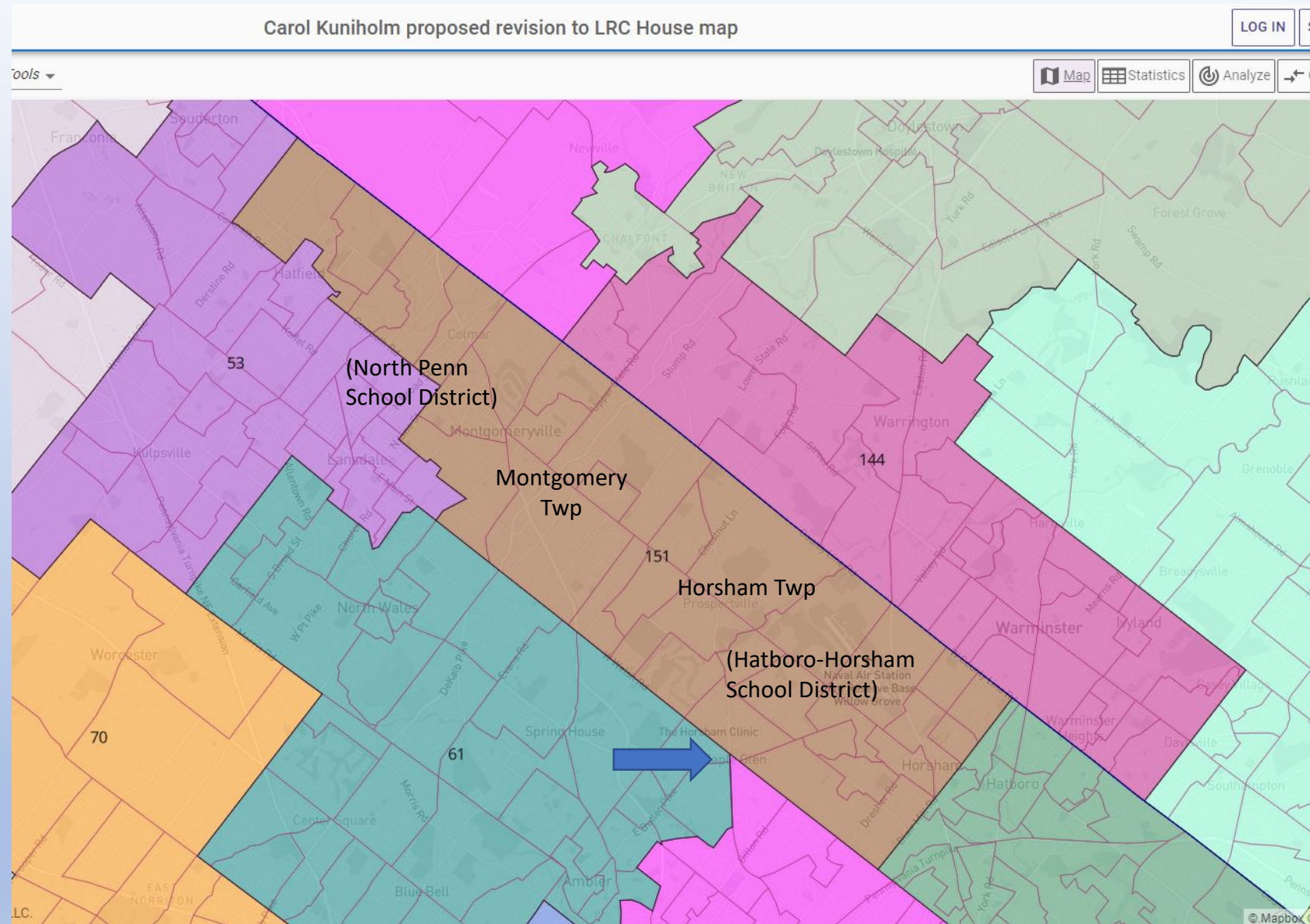
Preliminary LRC 151st Leg. District

- 151 = Two Municipal Splits
 - Montgomery Township & Ambler Borough
 - Part of Upper Dublin Township
 - Part of Horsham Township
- Parts of Four School Districts
 - Hatboro-Horsham
 - North Penn
 - Upper Dublin
 - Wissahickon
- Countywide = 6 Municipal Splits
- Countywide Reock = .36
- Countywide Polsby-Popper=.34
- Asian 14.5%/14.0%
(Predominantly Korean & Indian)



Dr. Kuniholm's 151st Leg. District

- 151 = One Municipal Split
 - Montgomery & Horsham Townships
 - Part of Hatfield Township
- Parts of Two School Districts
 - Hatboro-Horsham
 - North Penn
- Countywide = 5 Municipal Splits
- Countywide Reock = .42
- Countywide Polsby-Popper = .38
- Asian 15.8%/15.3%
(Predominantly Korean & Indian)

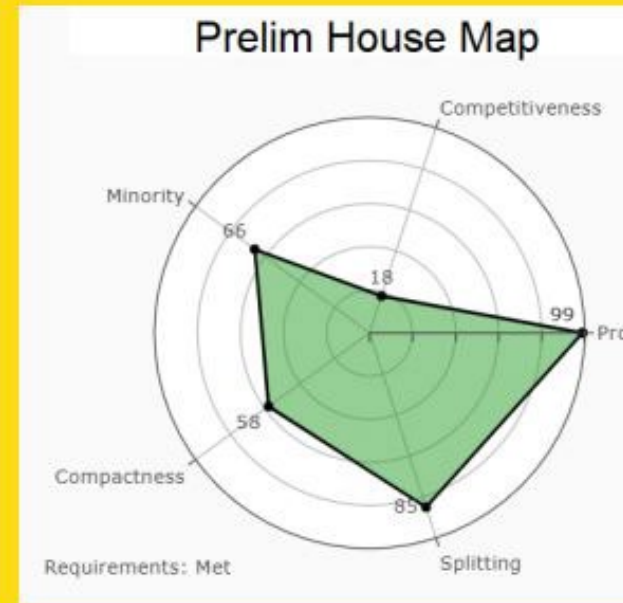
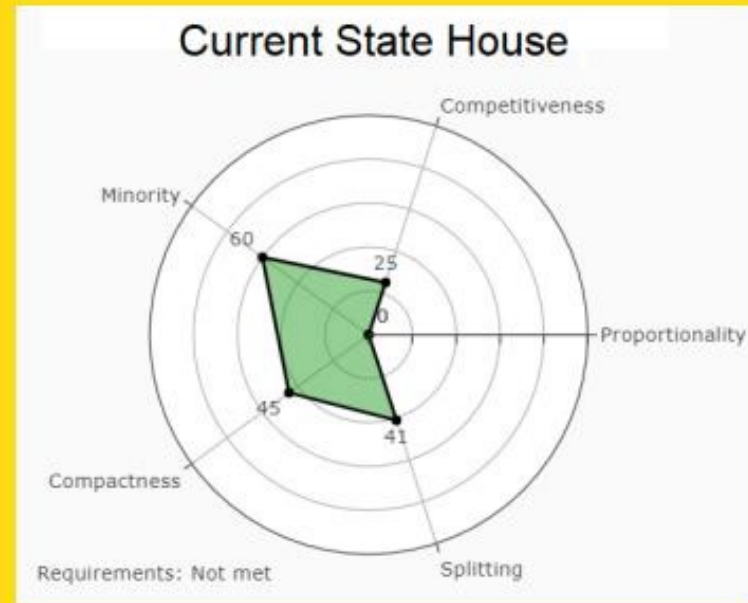


Competitiveness

- David Thornburgh Testimony
January 6, 2022

“If you were able to, in fact, squeeze a few more competitive districts into the process so this is at least as good as the current map that would be one suggestion.”

Is the preliminary House map better?



Current 151 is “Safe Dem”

Current 151 is one of the most competitive districts in the state.

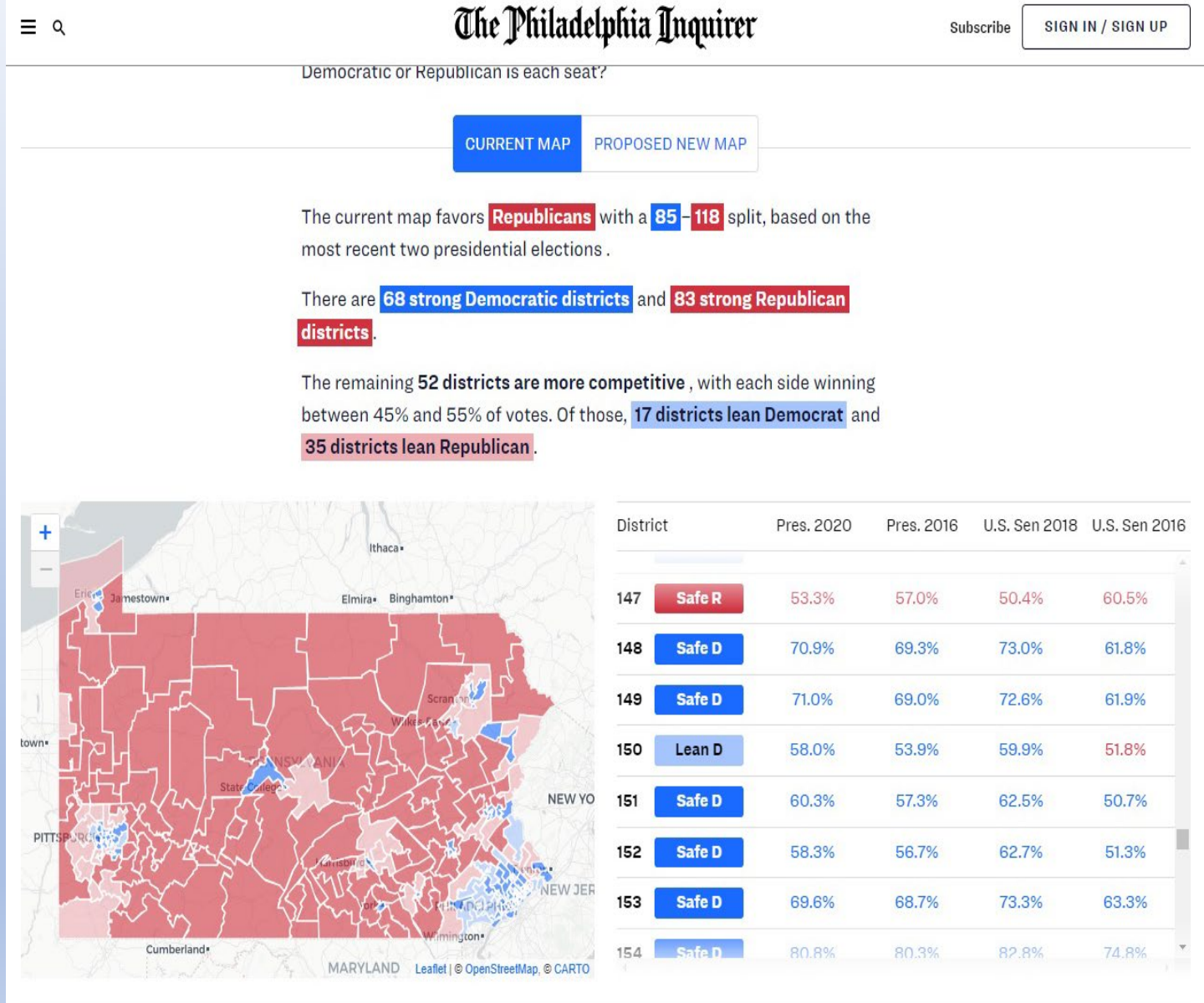
Nobody can claim the district is drawn to favor a Republican

Since 2016, the following people have won the 151st Legislative District:

- President Biden
- Governor Wolf (Twice)
- Secretary Clinton
- Senator Casey
- Katie McGinty
- Congresswoman Dean
- State Senator Collett
- Every Democratic candidate running districtwide

The LRC Preliminary House Map reduces the competitiveness

According to Dave’s Redistricting Dr. Kuniholm’s map is as competitive as the current 151



Dr. Kuniholm's Map Improves All The Constitutional Criteria

LRC Preliminary 151st Leg. District

- 151 = Two Municipal Splits
 - Montgomery Township & Ambler Borough
 - Part of Upper Dublin Township
 - Part of Horsham Township
- Parts of Four School Districts
 - Hatboro-Horsham
 - North Penn
 - Upper Dublin
 - Wissahickon
- Countywide = 6 Municipal Splits
- Countywide Reock = .36
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- Asian 14.5%/14.0%
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Dr. Kuniholm's 151st Leg. District

- 151 = One Municipal Split
 - Montgomery & Horsham Townships
 - Part of Hatfield Township
- Parts of Two School Districts
 - Hatboro-Horsham
 - North Penn
- Countywide = 5 Municipal Splits
- Countywide Reock = .42
- Countywide Polsby-Popper = .38
- Asian 15.8%/15.3%
(Predominantly Korean & Indian)

The Elephant In The Room

I understand politics may enter these discussions, especially with a Commission where 4 of the 5 members are the party leaders from the four legislative caucuses.

Friendly Competitors

“Triple Lindy”

“The road to the majority runs through the 151st, my friend.”

I assumed the risk that the redistricting process may eliminate me through Constitutional provisions or otherwise.

The people of Horsham did not.

They should not be collateral damage in a political effort to eliminate me.

Let's Play Basketball



CORE PRINCIPLE

These districts should be drawn for the benefit of the people who live within them and not for the benefit of, or detriment of, any one person. State Representatives are elected to serve for only two years, but these maps and their impact will be felt for a decade or longer.

**Legislative Reapportionment Commission
January 14, 2022**

Exceptions To Preliminary House Plan

Submitted by Amanda Holt

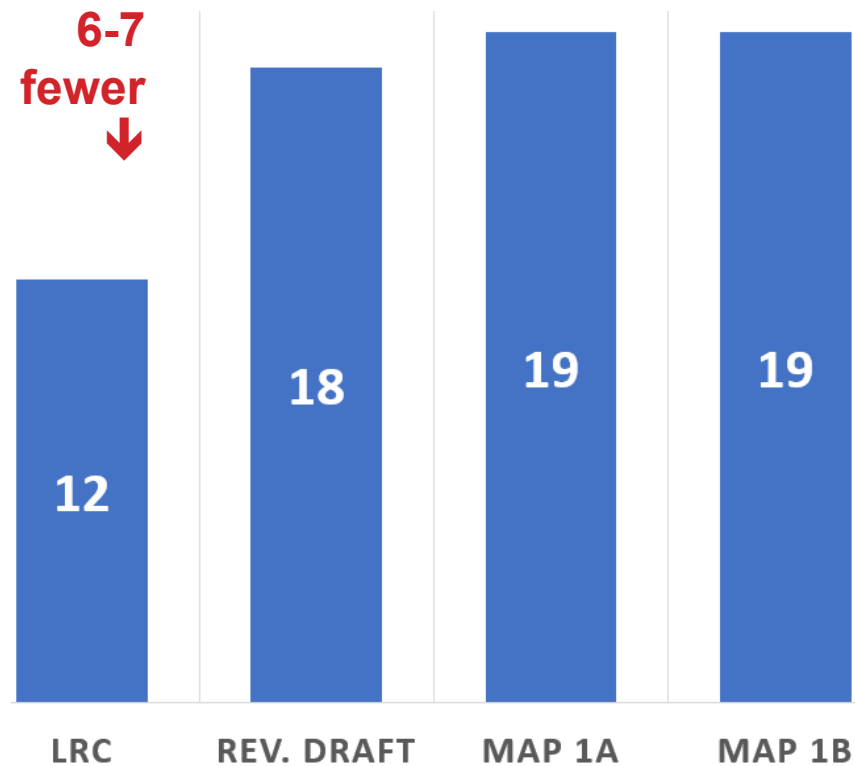
Protections for the voice
of the people.

Protection #1

**Standard to maximize
Minority votes:**

50% plus 1
of voting age population.

Majority Minority Districts (House Plan)

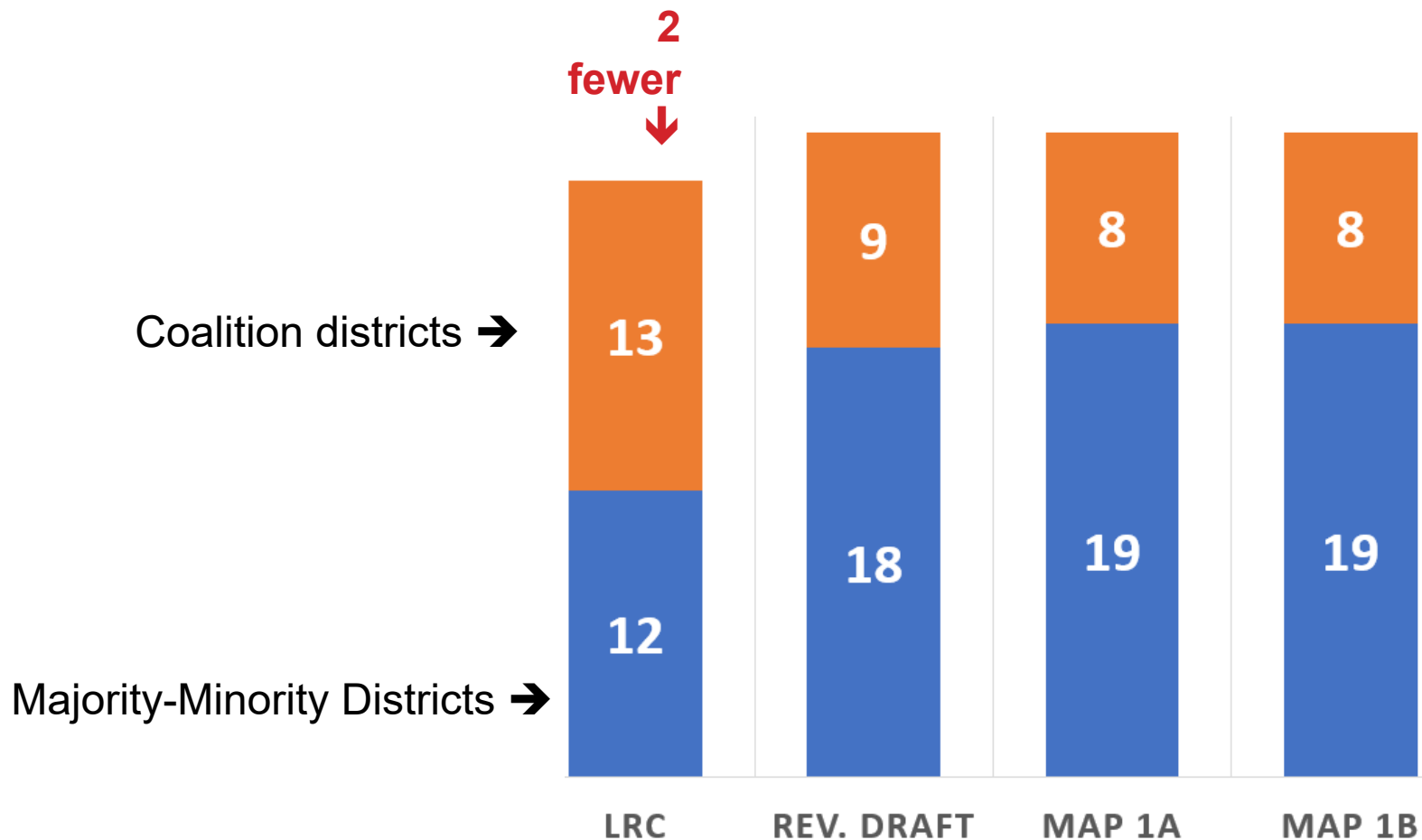


Expand Minority Influence with Coalition Districts?

(where voting age population
of two or more minority groups
is 50%+1 of district.)

Districts where Minorities form a Collective Majority

(House Plan)



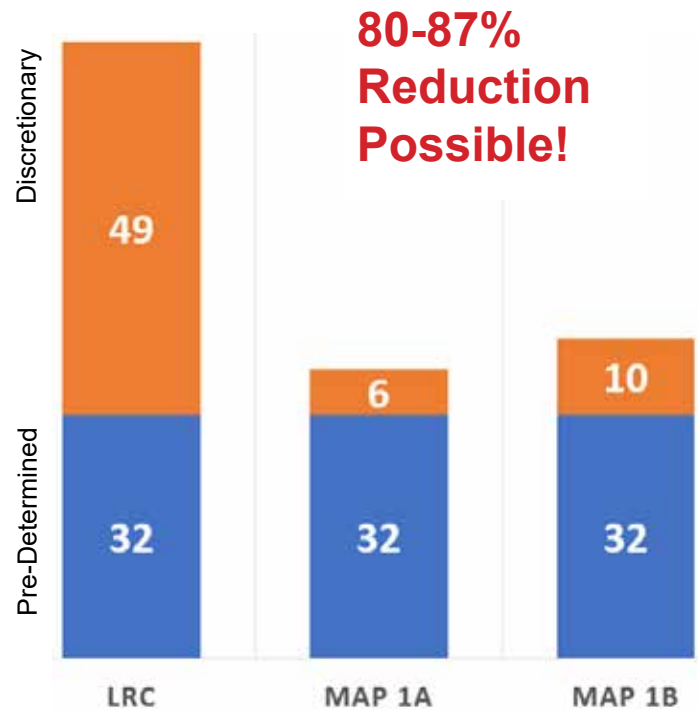
Protection #2

Restraint of Constitutional Criteria

- ☒ Equal Population
- ☒ Contiguous Districts
- ☒ Compact Districts
- ☒ Minimized Divisions

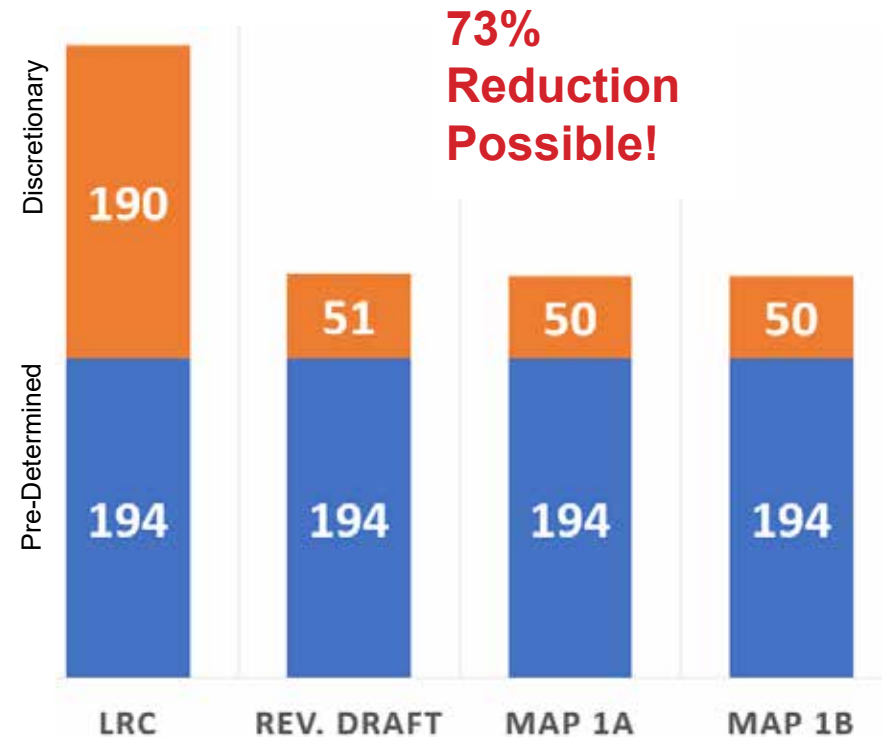
Divisions Not Minimized:

Total Splits in Senate Plan



	LRC	Map 1A	Map 1B
☑ Equal Population	9.59%	8.89%	8.86%
☑ Majority-Minority Districts	4	4	4
☑ Coalition Districts	1	1	1
☑ Compact Districts			
Roeck	0.3669	0.3869	0.3850
Polsby-Popper	0.3312	0.3341	0.3361
☑ Contiguous Districts*	Yes	Yes	Yes

Total Splits in House Plan



	LRC	Rev. Draft	Map 1A	Map 1B
☑ Equal Population	9.28%	8.74%	8.97%	9.71%
☑ Majority-Minority Districts	12	18	19	19
☑ Coalition Districts	13	9	8	8
☑ Compact Districts				
Roeck	0.3844	0.3843	0.3906	0.3787
Polsby-Popper	0.3471	0.3519	0.3529	0.3413
☑ Contiguous Districts*	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Other Goals

Path toward majority for both parties

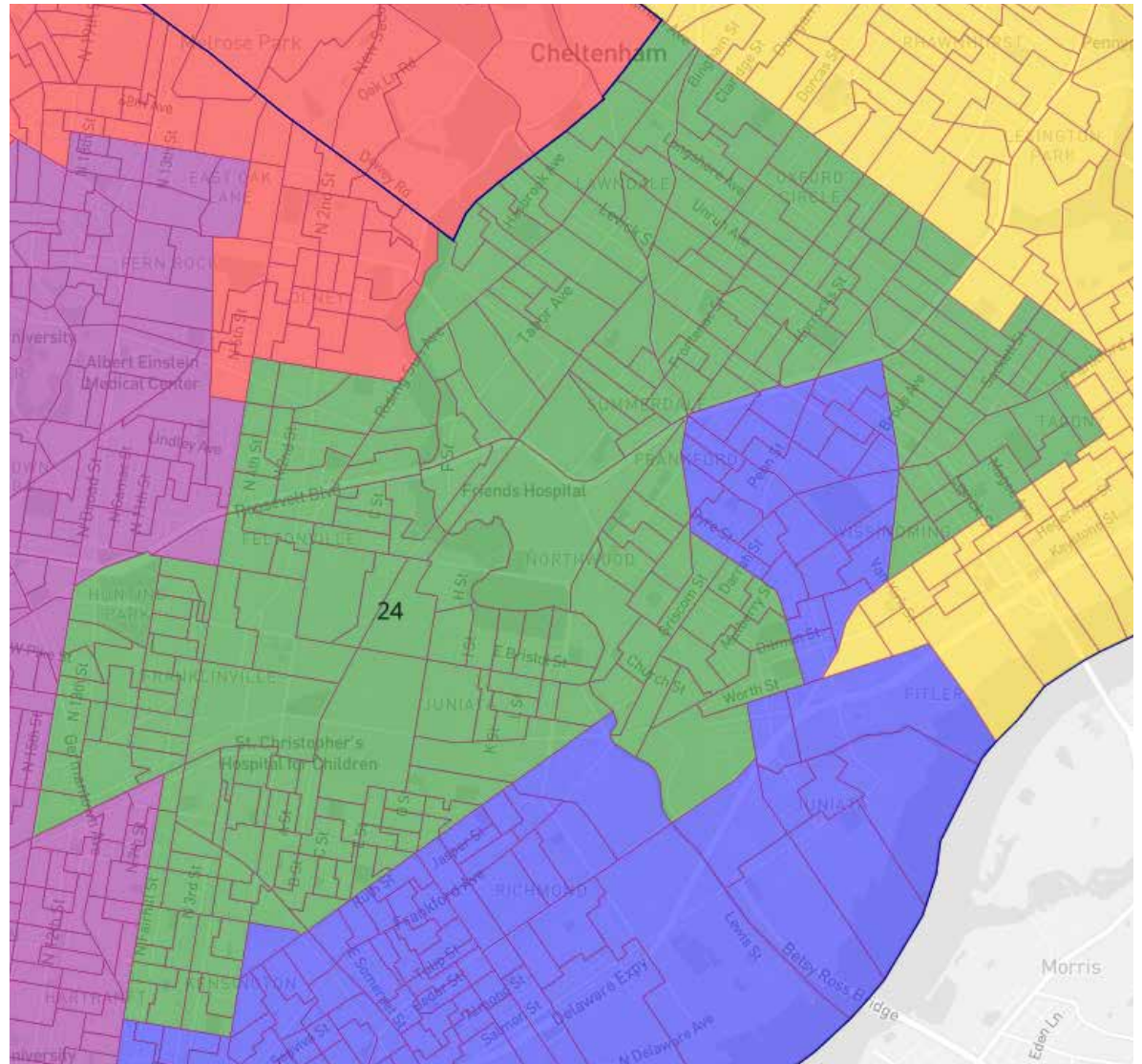
Minority Opportunity Districts (with no incumbents)

Avoid/limit contests between incumbents

**Is it possible to incorporate
other considerations
without
violating the constitution?**

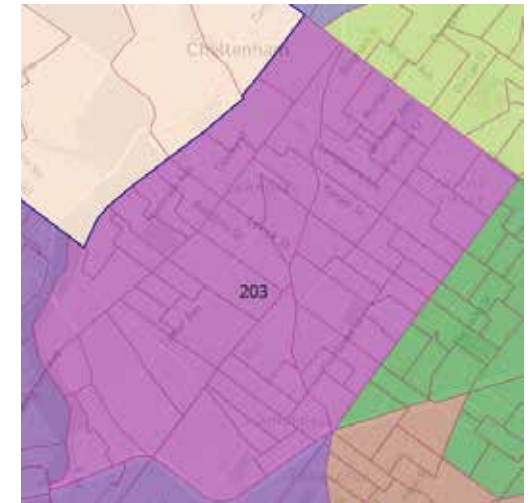
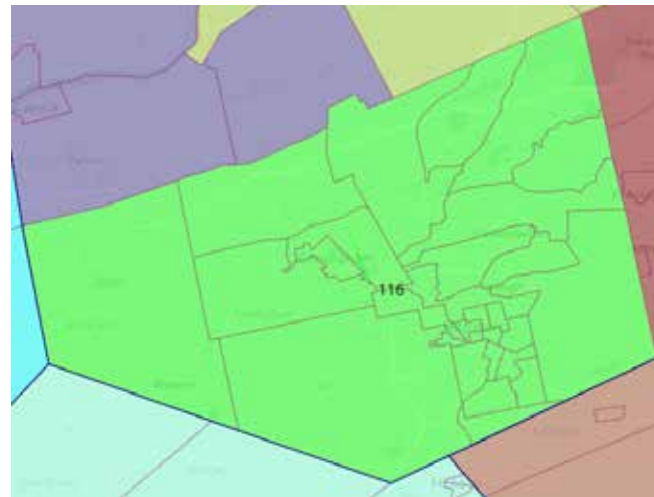
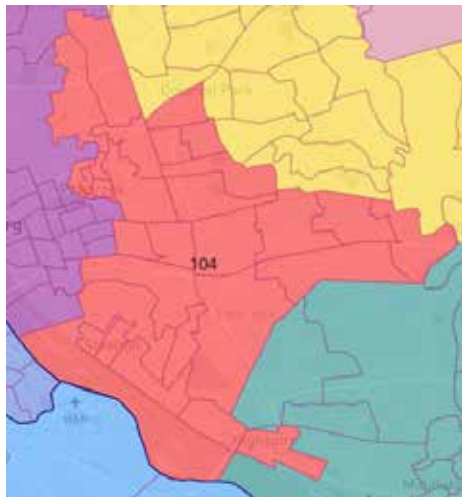
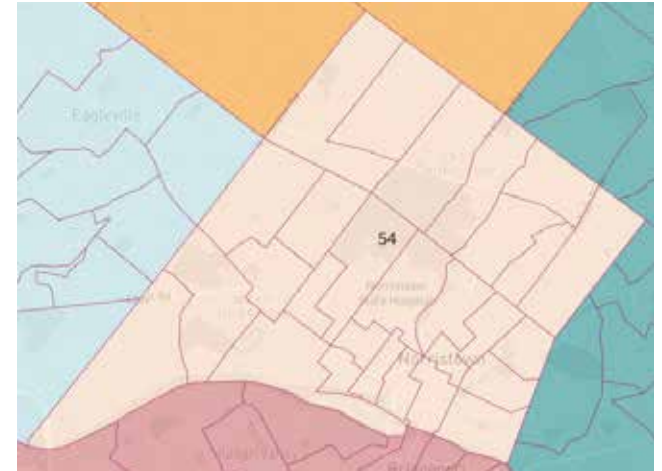
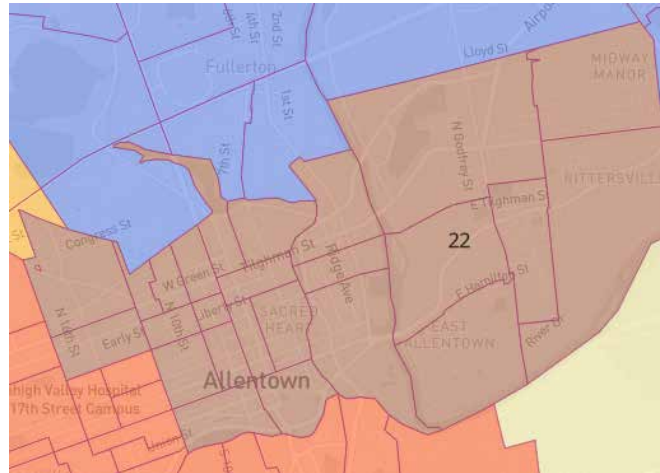
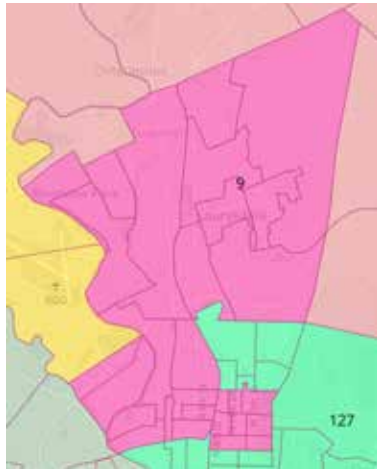
Hispanic Opportunity Senate District

Link to map on Dave's Redistricting App:
<https://davesredistricting.org/join/5f87df13-7121-46c0-95c2-2dd1917f817c>



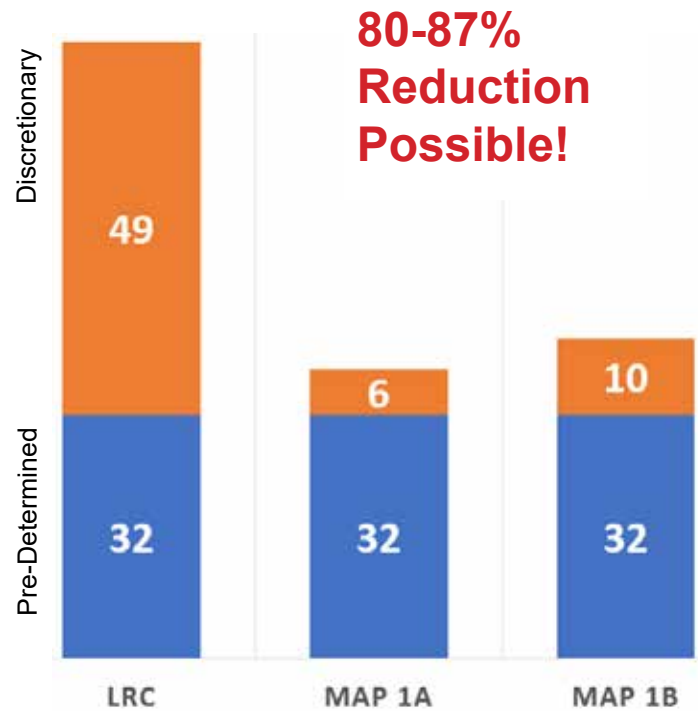
District ▾	WVAP ▾	HVAP ▾	BVAP ▾	AVAP ▾	Other ▾
24	16.8%	41.4%	29.0%	10.1%	2.6%

Opportunities for Minorities (in House Districts)



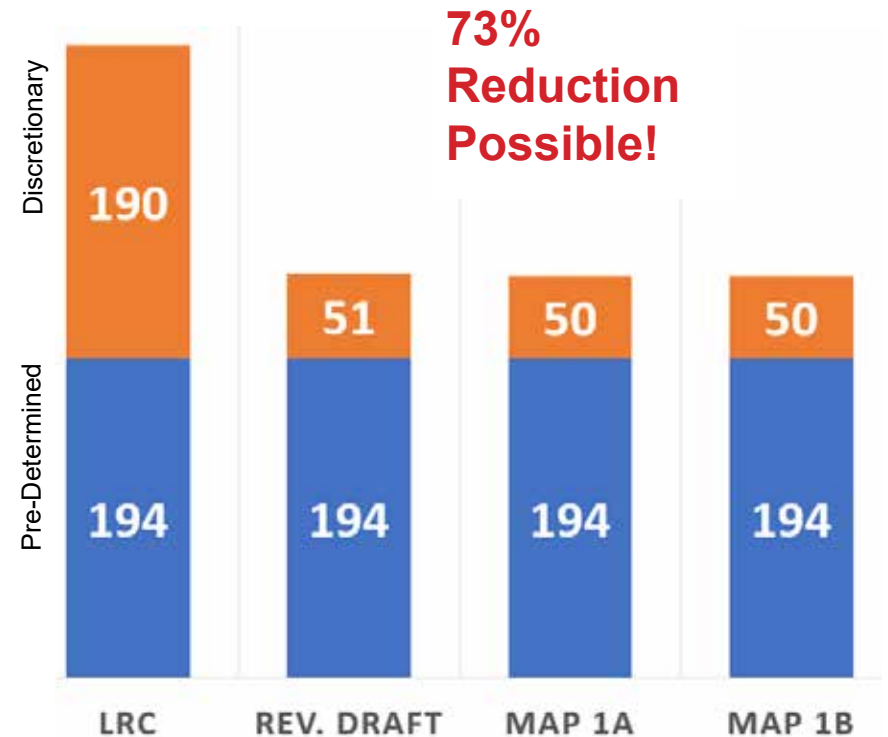
Divisions Not Minimized:

Total Splits in Senate Plan



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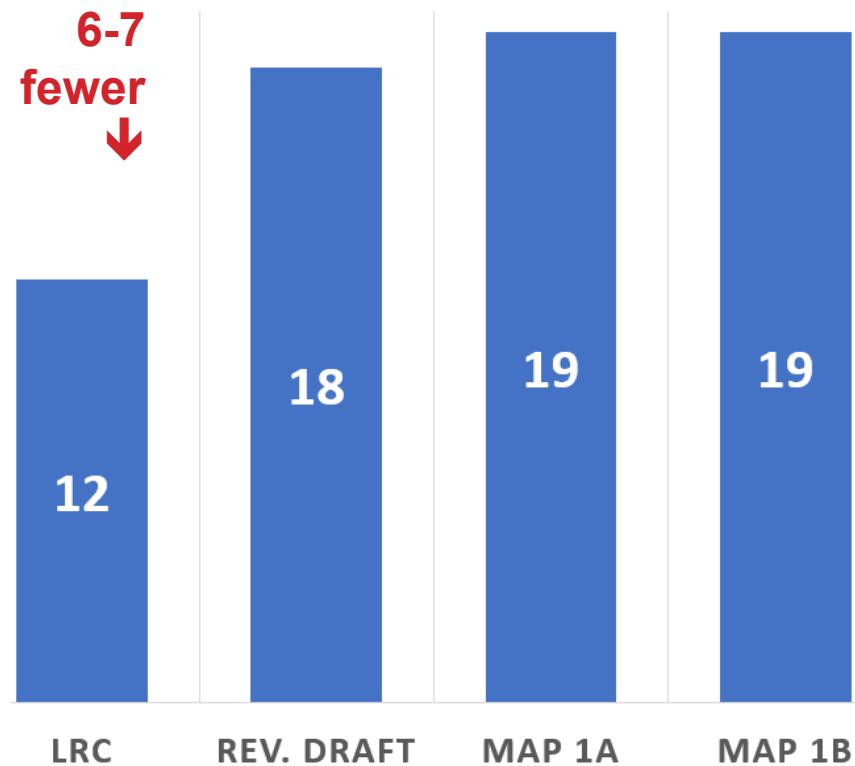
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☑ Contiguous Districts*	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Danger in doing violence to Constitutional restraints

Majority Minority Districts (House Plan)



Links to Submitted Exceptions

Exceptions to the Senate Plan:

https://amandae.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/LRC_HoltExceptions_Senate_20211231sm.pdf

Exceptions to the House Plan:

https://amandae.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/LRC_HoltExceptions_House_20220114.pdf

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TOWNSHIP MANAGER

DENNIS P. HAGGERTY JR
DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION

William T. Gildea-Walker, Township Manager

Horsham Township

Testimony to the Legislative Reapportionment Commission

January 14, 2022

Thank you for allowing me to speak today. It is my pleasure to serve as the Manager for Horsham Township. Horsham Township and its residents are facing great challenges. We are actively pursuing the redevelopment of a 862-acre parcel that was formerly the Willow Grove Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base (NASJRB). In order to accommodate the growth that redevelopment will bring, our township needs to make many difficult decisions, including decisions on traffic improvements to state highways necessary to accommodate the impact of the redevelopment of NASJRB. There are limited resources at both the local and state level to assist with those improvements. The preliminary redistricting map divides the township in half, with the state roads adjacent to the east side base in one legislative district, and the roads adjacent to the base on the west in a different legislative district. We need one representative to work with us to prioritize the allocation of scarce traffic improvement resources in a manner which benefits **the whole of Horsham Township**. My fear is that each legislator will advocate for his or her own district, diluting the imperatives of the improvements necessary for the successful redevelopment of the base.

Horsham is also facing wide-spread PFC contamination of our groundwater, resulting from years of the U.S Navy using fire-fighting foam on the base. The township, our water and sewer authority, and the Horsham Land Redevelopment Authority (responsible for the reuse of the base) have been working with the Navy for almost seven years to remediate the contamination which emanated from the base. Having a single legislator during this process has been invaluable. We are achieving great success in remediating the contamination, in large part because our legislator has fought to secure funds which are used to provide clean water in **the whole of Horsham Township**. Again, my fear is that if the preliminary districting plan is made final, Horsham Township will have two legislators, each advocating for funding for his or her own district, thus defeating our efforts to resolve these issues together, as one community. Note that while working together, with one legislator, we have been able to provide public drinking water to **the whole of Horsham Township** at undetectable levels of PFCs. We have also extended public water lines to provide safe drinking water to many families on private wells. There is much work to be done, though, and we urge you to allow Horsham to continue to benefit from working with a single legislator.

We are fortunate in Horsham Township and in the current 151st as a whole, to host two large communities of interest, that being the Korean-American and the Indian-American community. There are several Korean-American churches in Horsham Township, including one of the largest Korean-American churches in southeast Pennsylvania. These churches serve not only a religious purpose, but a cultural one as well. The preliminary map would dilute the voice of this community which is currently well served by a Democratic Senator and a Republican Legislator.

The constitution requires that municipalities not be divided, unless absolutely necessary. Horsham Township is facing challenges which are unique and require a single legislative advocate in the House. We understand that, at times, some municipalities will be divided. But for the reasons stated earlier, Horsham Township cannot be divided without dividing a strong Korean-American and Indian-American communities, and without sacrificing the effectiveness of the Township's efforts to redevelop the base and remediate the wide-spread groundwater contamination.

Horsham Township supports the House Map submitted by Fair Districts PA which keeps Horsham whole.

Over 200 comments have been received on the comment section of your website with the majority requesting your consideration to keep Horsham whole.

We have extremely unique and serious issues that most communities in the Country will never have to deal with, that will have extreme consequences if not addressed with one voice in the Legislature.

Thank you, Commissioners and your staff, for the hard work and time you have spent on this process to get the map right.

Exhibits:

- A) Horsham Township letter and Resolution 2021-46
- B) Horsham Water and Sewer Authority letter and Resolution 2021-9
- C) Fair Districts PA proposed map for the 151st
- D) Submitted comments by Horsham Land Redevelopment Authority
- E) Submitted comments by Korean American Lawyers Association
- F) Submitted comments by Korean American Vietnam Veterans Association of PA
- G) Submitted comments by 21st Century America-Korea- Chinese Leaders Society
- H) Submitted comments by The Peaceful Unification Advisory Council
- I) Written testimony from William Whiteside, Horsham Councilman and Chairman of the Horsham Land Redevelopment Authority

Exhibit A

HORSHAM TOWNSHIP

WWW.HORSHAM.ORG
COUNCIL
MARK MCCOUCH, PRESIDENT
W. WILLIAM WHITESIDE, III,
VICE PRESIDENT
WILLIAM GALLAGHER
VERONICA HILL-MILBOURNE
GREGORY S. NESBITT, Esq



1025 HORSHAM ROAD

HORSHAM, PA 19044

215-643-3131 PHONE
215-643-0448 FAX

WILLIAM T. GILDEA-WALKER
TOWNSHIP MANAGER

DENNIS P. HAGGERTY JR
DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION

December 2, 2021

PA 2021 Legislative Reapportionment Commission
Harrisburg, PA

Dear Chairman Nordenberg and Commission Members,

I am writing to you to urge you not to divide Horsham Township as part of the proposed 2021 Legislative Redistricting effort. Horsham Township is located in Montgomery County. Please find attached our Resolution 2021-46 approved by Township Council at their publicly stated meeting on November 22, 2021.

Aside from the confusion among residents when having multiple legislators, our community faces unique and pressing issues that affect our entire community. First, we have the redevelopment of the former Willow Grove Naval Air Base which is almost 1,000 acres. This will be the largest land development in Montgomery County and possibly in southeast PA. Secondly, we are the epicenter of PFAS contamination and this issue has implications for our entire Township. Further, we are one of only six other sites nationwide for the National PFAS Multi-Site Health Study being conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ASTDR). Finally, our residents are benefiting from Act 101 of 2019 and any divide may cause issue with same.

These unique challenges faced by the Horsham Community will require the coordinated effort of the entire community. The challenges will require the ability of the community to speak with one voice and be represented by legislators who speak on behalf of the entire community.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment about the proposed Redistricting effort and for your consideration of our request. Should you need any further explanation and/or have any questions please contact me at 215-643-3131 or wwalker@horsham.org.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "W.T. Gildea-Walker".

William T. Gildea-Walker
Township Manager

Attachment: Resolution 2021-46

RESOLUTION NO. 2021-46

**RESOLUTION OF THE HORSHAM TOWNSHIP
COUNCIL URGING THAT THE HORSHAM
COMMUNITY NOT BE DIVIDED AS PART OF THE
PROPOSED 2021 LEGISLATIVE REDISTRICTING
EFFORT**

RESOLUTION, made this 22 day of November, A.D., 2021 by the Horsham Township Council.

WHEREAS, the Council of Horsham Township, Montgomery County, supports a fair, fully transparent, impartial, and depoliticized process of the decennial drawing of legislative districts; and

WHEREAS, the Pennsylvania Constitution, at Article 2, §16, directs that legislative districts shall be composed of "compact and contiguous territory" and that no township shall be divided in forming legislative districts; and


WHEREAS, the Horsham community faces extraordinary challenges, including the economic development and traffic infrastructure improvements required by the redevelopment of the former Willow Grove Naval Air Station and the environmental cleanup necessitated by the presence of perfluorinated compounds in the groundwater and soil throughout the Township resulting from the Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Willow Grove; and

WHEREAS, the challenges faced by the Horsham community will continue through the next decennial and will require the coordinated effort of the entire community; and

WHEREAS, efforts to address these unique challenges will require the ability of the community to speak with one voice and be represented by legislators who speak on behalf of the entire community;

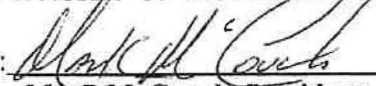
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of Horsham Township does hereby implore the 2021 Legislative Reapportionment Commission to avoid splitting the Township of Horsham among legislative districts in order to ensure a fair redistricting, devoid of political motivation or partisanship, to allow our community to continue to address the challenges we face with one voice.

ATTEST:



William T. Gildea-Walker, Manager

**TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
TOWNSHIP OF HORSHAM**

By: 

Mark McCouch, President

Horsham Water & Sewer Authority
www.horshamwater-sewer.com



617 Horsham Road • Horsham, PA 19044
PHONE: 215-672-8011 • FAX: 215-672-8065

January 11, 2022
Via electronic submission only
<https://www.redistricting.state.pa.us/comment/>

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
2021 Legislative Reapportionment Commission
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Chairman Nordenberg and Members of the 2021 Legislative Reapportionment Commission,

In 2005, the U.S. Congress approved the Base Relocation and Closure Act which provided for the closure of the Willow Grove Naval Air Station/Joint Reserve Base ("NASJRB"), located entirely within Horsham Township ("Township" or "Horsham"). The former NASJRB comprises approximately 8% of the Township and its closure not only left an economic void in the community, but also a legacy of historic activities that contaminated *every single* groundwater source in Horsham's public water supply with per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances ("PFAS"). This contamination also impacted hundreds of private drinking water wells throughout the Township. Horsham Township and the Horsham Water and Sewer Authority (HWSA) have been together confronting the water contamination crisis that first came to light in 2014. Given the persistent nature of PFAS, this contamination will continue to be a weight that Horsham Township will carry well beyond any of our lifetimes, if not permanently.

While HWSA recognizes that a review of legislative districting is required every ten years following the US Census, HWSA believes that the intent of Article 2, §16 of the Pennsylvania Constitution that no township shall be divided in forming legislative districts, is pertinent to the environmental challenges and public health concerns currently being faced by Horsham.

These challenges include the ever-changing "guidelines", "policies" and regulations governing PFAS, requiring a unified and cohesive approach so that the community can speak for itself and be represented by legislators whose focus is on the goals of the *entire* Horsham Township community.

Dividing Horsham Township into multiple legislative districts would dilute the unified voice needed to address these unique issues and would be a severe detriment to the Horsham Township community as a whole.

HWSA implores the Commission to avoid splitting Horsham Township's legislative districts. Undivided Township-wide legislative representation is absolutely crucial in order to continue to address the harm that has been done to the Horsham community from these "forever chemicals".

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,


Tina M. O'Rourke
Business Manager

TMO

cc: Board Members
William T. Gildea-Walker, Horsham Township Manager

RESOLUTION NO. 2021-9

RESOLUTION OF HORSHAM WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY OPPOSING THE POTENTIAL DIVISION OF THE HORSHAM TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY AS PART OF THE PROPOSED 2021 LEGISLATIVE REDISTRICTING EFFORT.

RECITALS:

A. The Horsham Township community faces a unique issue caused by the environmental cleanup necessitated by the presence of perfluorinated compounds in the groundwater of Horsham Township caused by certain activities performed on the former Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base (NAS JRB) Willow Grove.

B. In 2014, the groundwater in certain areas of Horsham Township, near the former Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base (NAS JRB) Willow Grove, was found to contain perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) or perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS), at concentrations at or above their respective Provisional Health Advisory (PHA) levels (0.4 micrograms per liter for PFOA, 0.2 micrograms per liter for PFOS).

C. In May 2016, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued a health advisory level of .07 micrograms per liter for both PFOS and PFOA (HA). Additionally, if both PFOS and PFOA are found in drinking water, the combined concentrations of PFOS and PFOA should not exceed .07 micrograms per liter.

D. In November 2021, the Pennsylvania Environmental Quality Board voted overwhelming to adopt a proposed Safe Drinking Water PFAS MCL Rule of .014 micrograms per liter for PFOA and .018 micrograms per liter for PFOS.

E. The challenges faced by the Horsham Township community, including the ever changing regulations governing perfluorinated compounds, require a unified and cohesive approach so that the entire Horsham Township community is protected.

F. The efforts to address the perfluorinated compounds will require the ability of the community to speak for itself and to be represented by legislators who are focused on the goals of the Horsham Township community.

G. Dividing Horsham Township into multiple legislative districts would dilute the cohesive voice needed to address these unique challenges and would be a detriment to the Horsham Township community as a whole.

H. The clear stated intent of Article 2, §16 of the Pennsylvania Constitution, that no township shall be divided in forming legislative districts, is precisely for the environmental challenges currently being faced by the Horsham Township community.

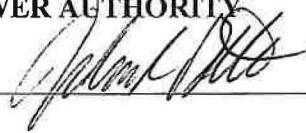
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of the Horsham Water and Sewer Authority do hereby request that the 2021 Legislative Reapportionment Commission avoids splitting Horsham Township among legislative districts so that the Horsham Township community can continue to address the challenges unique to itself with legislative representation focused on such unique challenges.

ATTEST:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anthony J. Feathes", written over a horizontal line.

**HORSHAM WATER AND
SEWER AUTHORITY**

By: _____

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Adam Dito", written over a horizontal line.

Pennsylvania ▾

1 65,970 1,917

District Selector ^

District Population Deviation

Un	0	0
1	65,970	1,917
2	65,857	1,804
3	65,021	968

District Details ▾

Colors ▾

Districts ☐ Only Current

☒ Map Colors ☐ Partisan Lean

☐ Demographics ▾

Precincts

☐ Partisan Lean

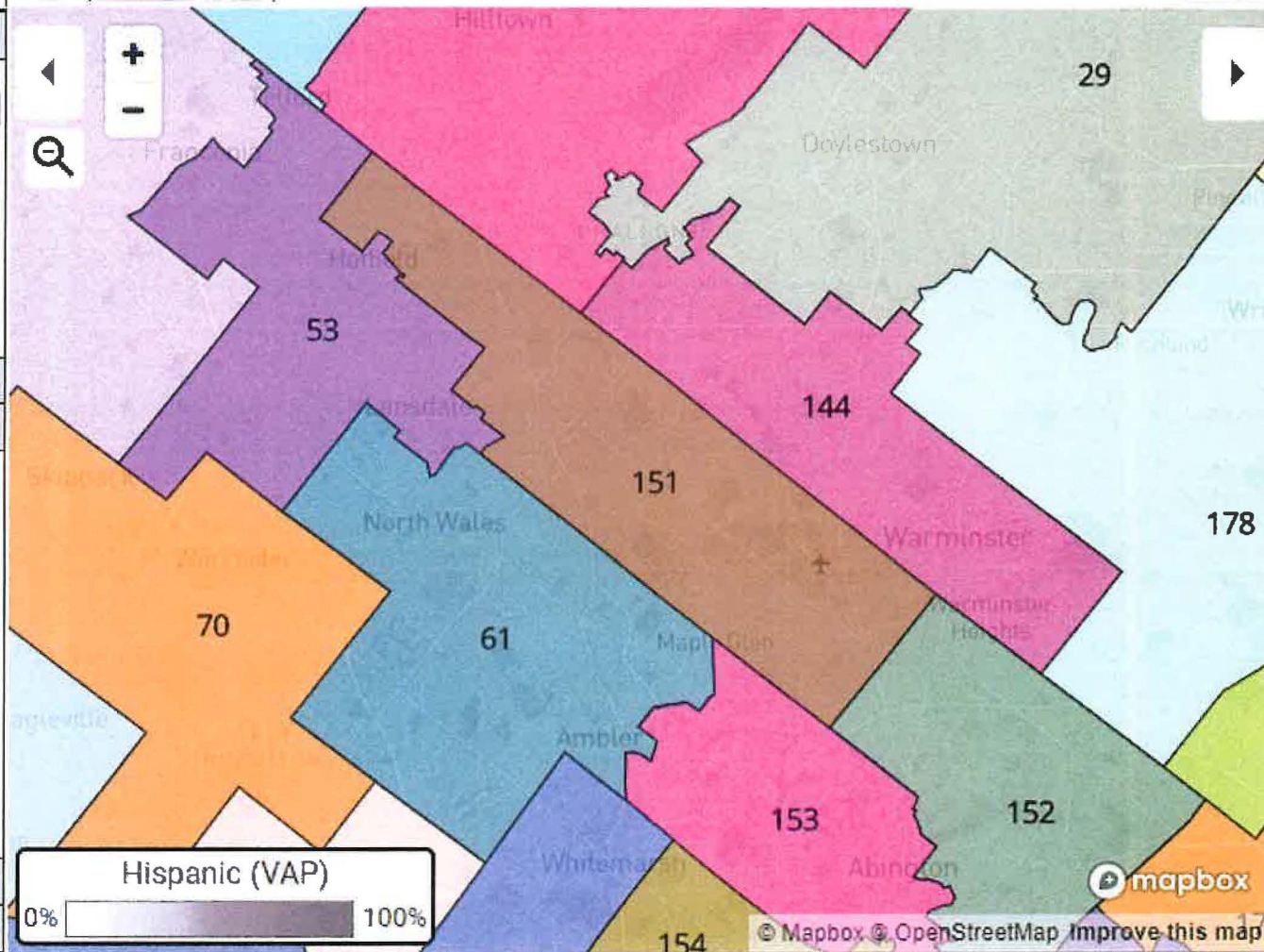
☒ Hispanic ▾

Opacity

Overlays ^

Custom Overlays ^

View Only County City
Precinct Block Tools ▾



Precinct Details

Voting Age Pop 2020

	Pop	%
Total	0	(-)
White	0	(-)
Hispanic	0	(-)
Black	0	(-)
Asian	0	(-)
Native	0	(-)
Pacific	0	(-)

Composite 2016-2020

	Votes	%
Democratic	0	(-)
Republican	0	(-)
Other	0	(-)

Total Population 2020

	Pop	%
Total	0	(-)
White	0	(-)
Hispanic	0	(-)
Black	0	(-)

Hispanic (VAP)

0% 100%

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Exhibit C



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Jan 12, 2022



[Pam delissio](#)

Jan 12, 2022

6 KEEP HORSHAM WHOLE

147 By MM

2022

KEEP HORSHAM WHOLE

My name is Michael J. McGee and I serve as the Executive Director of the Horsham Land Redevelopment Authority. The HLRA is the Federally-recognized entity charged with the duty to plan the redevelopment of the Willow Grove Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base and to implement that redevelopment plan. The base we must redevelop is comprised of 862 acres and is located entirely in Horsham Township. It has been a long journey since the base was first placed on the BRAC list in 2005, and our path to redevelopment has been fraught with obstacles. In working with Horsham Township to overcome these obstacles, we have been fortunate to have had one voice in the state senate and one voice in the state house. Now, the preliminary redistricting plan threatens to divide Horsham Township in half, leaving us with two state representatives. While the plan does not bisect the base, it, severs the road system to the east of the base from the road system to the west of the base.

The single biggest issue the HLRA faces is the PFC contamination which is not limited to the boundaries of the base, but which has seeped into the creeks and groundwater of Horsham Township on both sides of the base. PFCs are pollutants, regulated by the EPA, but have not yet been classified as CERCLA contaminants, which is a very important distinction. The military is not obligated to clean up all of the PFC contamination on the base because PFCs are not CERCLA contaminants. PFC contamination has delayed the redevelopment of the base and, as of today, we are not certain that we will be able to implement the reuse plan as drafted because of EPA regulations. The Navy has funded the remediation of wells in Horsham Township which exceed the 70 ppt HIAL established by the EPA, but it took the actions of our state representative to secure the funding necessary to provide drinking water uncontaminated by PFCs.

The benefit of a single representative in remediating PFCs is clear—the majority of the contaminated public drinking water wells are located on the west side of the township, but the Park Creek, on the east side of the township is being affected by stormwater discharges from the base. We were, and continue to be, well served because our single representative was able to prioritize the most important



project, and the prioritization is not always popular with all residents, but to continue our efforts, we must speak with one voice.

We need to improve our road system to accommodate the traffic generated by the redevelopment of the base. In a perfect world, there would be enough state funds to make major improvements to all the state highways in the vicinity of the base. The reality is that state funds are limited, and we must prioritize our traffic improvement projects. The base is bounded on one side by Easton Road and on the other side by Horsham Road. Both roads need to be improved, and roads need to be extended through the base. Prioritizing the use of the state funds for these traffic projects can only be done by a person or entity evaluating the needs on both sides of the base. As executive director I feel that the single-unified voice of both our senator and our representative is necessary to avoid conflict between what is proposed to be the two halves of Horsham Township.

The HLRA is also responsible for spurring the economic development necessary for the successful redevelopment of the base. We hope for state funds and possibly legislation to accomplish those goals. It is imperative that we have one single voice advocating for the priority that best serves the entire township. Competing objectives will hinder a process that has been difficult from the start.

Horsham Township provides an excellent example of why the framers included a constitutional requirement that municipalities not be divided unless absolutely necessary. The HLRA will need a united Horsham Township as it moves forward with traffic improvements, continues the remediation of the contamination, and works toward the economic development on the base. Please keep Horsham whole.

Useful links

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- PA General Assembly

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SUBMISSION

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151ST LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT - KOREAN AMERICANS

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Jan 12, 2022



[Pam delissio](#)

Jan 12, 2022

11 151st Legislative District Korean American Community

2021  By KK

My name is Kevin Kim and I am a 20 year Resident of the 151st Legislative District. I have lived with my elected Representatives being both a Democrat and a Republican. I respect equally all those who step up to serve the public good. The 151st Legislative District as it currently stands is comprised of the best of the Korean American community. We have the largest and the most vibrant Korean American Christian Church with numerous smaller Korean American churches, the largest and most well stocked Korean American International Supermarket and the newly built public memorial in honor of the Korean War Veterans. All of this has been made possible because Korean Americans have made the 151st Legislative District their home. Their children attend the same schools, play at the same parks and recreation centers, join the same little league and youth soccer teams. The 151st Legislative District welcomes individuals of all heritage and ethnicity irrespective of anyone's political persuasion. The 151st Legislative District encompasses thousands of Korean Americans living in Horsham Township, Montgomery Township, North Wales, Lower Gwynedd and Upper Dublin. Over the years, Korean Americans have been given an opportunity to feel at home and be identified with their elected leaders within the 151st Legislative geographic boundary and made to feel that they are a part of something bigger and that they are individuals with full rights and privileges and responsibilities and obligations as an undeniable Americans of Korean heritage.

If the 151st Legislative District is torn apart and redrawn for political reasons of one Party over another, such actions ignore the people who have come to call the 151st Legislative District their home and who have called both the Democratic elected leaders and the Republican elected leaders their friends, neighbors and mentors. The Korean American community respectfully requests that the 151st Legislative District be left as it currently stands without regards to the next State Representative who may be a Democrat or a Republican or otherwise. It is a difficult request no doubt, but that is precisely what good leaders would do when they are asked to do the right thing. May God bless our Country. May God bless the 2021 Legislative Reapportionment Commission.



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10 Redistricting 151ST Legislative District

JAN 12, 2022
By YC

From: Korean American Vietnam veterans association of Pennsylvania
Redistricting - 151st district legislative (Horsham and Montgomery township)
1, korean american community is a in Horsham and Montgomery Township
(Community of interest in)
2, A strong and Vibrant Korean American community lives, works, worship, shops and raises families within Horsham and Montgomery township
3, Many Korean American resident of Horsham and Montgomery townships worship at various Church, witch Frist Korean United Methodist, Young Sang Presbyterian,
4, many Korean American shop at Horsham and Montgomery township shop at the store at the Assi plaza shopping center in could grocery store providing Korean food as well as Korean restaurants
5, Korean Americans residents of Horsham and Montgomery township led the effort to locate the Korean war memorial and peace park in Montgomery township with assistance from republic of Korea
6, Korean American residents of Horsham and Montgomery township sure have one state representative in Harrisburg who will prioritize the issue's facing their community
7, Splitting the sizable Korean American community living in Horsham and Montgomery township will dilute and diminish the Korean American communities' voices in State Government



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Jan 12, 2022

11 151st Legislative District

51
2022 By BY

My Name is Grand Master Bong Pil Yang and I am the General Secretary of the 21st Century America-Korea-Chinese Leaders Society. I am writing on behalf of all members and constituents. The Korean community is a "Community of Interest" in Horsham and Montgomery Townships. A strong and vibrant Korean-American Community lives, works, worships, shops and raises families within the Horsham and Montgomery Townships. Many Korean American residents of Horsham and Montgomery Townships worship at various Korean churches in Horsham and Montgomery Townships, including Yuong Sang Presbyterian Church and First Korean United Methodist Church of Horsham. Many Korean American residents of Horsham and Montgomery Townships shop at the stores in Montgomery Township at the Assi Plaza Shopping Center, which includes a Korean grocery store providing Korean food and a local Korean restaurant. Korean American residents of Horsham and Montgomery Townships led the effort to locate the Korean War Memorial and Peace Park in Montgomery Township with assistance from the Republic of Korea. The Korean American residents of Horsham and Montgomery Townships should have one State Representative in Harrisburg who will prioritize the issues facing their community. Splitting the sizable Korean American community living in Horsham and Montgomery Townships will dilute and diminish the Korean American communities voice in state government.



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#DO NOT WANT SPLIT UP TO FAVOR EITHER PARTY

#KOREAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY

#REDISTRICTING

#HOUSE DISTRICT 151

RECENT



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Jan 12, 2022



[Pam delissio](#)

Jan 12, 2022

16 151st Legislative redistricting Korea-Am Community

402  By TS
2021

The 151st Legislative District comprised of Horsham, Montgomery with portions of North Wales as well as Lower Gwynedd and Upper Dublin Township. These townships are made of one of the largest groups of Korean-Americans living in Pennsylvania. Horsham Township has one of the largest Korean-American Churches and Montgomery Township has the newly built Korean War Veterans Monument as well as the largest Korean-International Supermarkets, Korean Restaurants, and etc. The 151st Legislative District should not be broken up for the political reasons as it contains a thriving and growing group of Korean-Americans who have made the 151st Legislative District their home. Korean-Americans want unity, we do not want to split up to favor either parties.

Tina Sung

The Peaceful Unification Advisory Council, Philadelphia Chapter

Useful links

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- [2017 and 2020 Census](#)

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- [Constitutional](#)

Exhibit I

Testimony
W. William Whiteside
Horsham Councilman/Chairman HLRA

January 14, 2022

My name is Bill Whiteside. I am a Horsham Councilman and Chairman of the HLRA (Horsham Land Reuse Authority). The HLRA is the federally designated and recognized authority to oversee and implement transfer and redevelopment of the closed military base. As such I am here to ask you not to divide Horsham Township in your redistricting effort. The effects of will be devastating. Every township believes that they are unique and in some sense I guess they are. But Horsham is truly unique by virtue of the fact that we are charged with the redevelopment of an 862 acre military base which is located entirely within Horsham Township. That site makes up about 10 percent of Horsham Township. So it means that we will need to do an enormous amount of infrastructure improvement if the redevelopment is to be successful. The property is contaminated and requires us to work with both Federal and State agencies to remediate. The most recent example of this remediation is our battle with PFAS water contamination. PFAS contamination from the base has seeped into our public and private drinking water wells and our creeks and streams. Because we currently have a strong and focused voice in Harrisburg, we Horsham Township have been able to implement an effective plan to address and treat these problems. Horsham has become a leader in addressing these problems. So much so that other towns and communities have come to us to find out how to address their own PFAS contamination problems. None of this would have been possible without help from the state of Pennsylvania. And we would not have been able to get the help we needed if we had to depend on two different state Reps from two different legislative districts with conflicting needs all competing for the same limited state funds and assistance. The needs on the west side of the base are different than the needs on the east side of the base. The majority of contaminated drinking water wells both public and private are on the west side of the township while surface water runoff primarily affects creeks and streams on the east side. We need a single coordinated effort to address these problems. We will never get the attention we need to coordinate and resolve these problems if we become a minor subdivision of two different legislative districts. We need a single strong focused

voice if we are going to continue to be a successful township. I mentioned infrastructure improvements. We need roadway and intersection improvements and upgrades all they way around and leading up to and from the base if the redevelopment of 10 percent of Horsham Township is to be successful. It is a daunting undertaking. It cannot be done well if we become the minor subdivision of two different legislative districts and we have to compete against ourselves for planning funding and assistance.

It's my understanding that under the law that regulates redistricting no town is to be divided unless **ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY**. There does not appear to be any reason to divide Horsham and it certainly is **NOT ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY**. In fact it will do irreparable damage to Horsham Township if it happens. It's disappointing to me that my township could be cast aside as collateral damage and used as a pawn in a purely political maneuver in a process that is supposed to be unbiased, fair and objective. I have lived my entire adult life in Horsham and devoted many years to help make it a **CNN BEST PLACE TO LIVE IN AMERICA**. Taking away our voice in Harrisburg will limit our ability to continue to be a successful township now and for the foreseeable future.

W. W. Whiteside
Horsham Councilman

Hello, my name is Deborah Rose Hinchey. I am the Executive Director of BetterPA. I want to start by thanking the Commissioners and the staff of this body for what has become tireless and tedious work to give Pennsylvania a set of fair and equitable maps. You are in the final leg of a long and arduous process and are still taking the time to listen to as much feedback, and sometimes critique, that you are able to fit in.

Thank you for making this process transparent and accessible in the ways that you could in the midst of a global pandemic. Between an easily navigable website, with a comment section that is clearly read and considered by the commissioners, and many hearings for public testimony with an option for virtual participation, it is obvious to all that have been paying attention that this commission took seriously its promise to provide citizens with the redistricting process they deserve.

Chairman Nordenburg, thank you for approaching this work with thoughtful consideration and a commitment to create fair and balanced maps for our state. It shines through. As you weather an onslaught of critique given in bad faith, know that the majority of Pennsylvanians see the way you have approached this work and are deeply grateful for it.

Leader McClinton, you have done everything in your power to give Pennsylvania a set of maps that reflect the state we actually live in, and most importantly, the people who reside within it. You have also withstood many bad faith attacks and malicious actions in this process and have responded with brilliance and grace every time. You showed up in this work and did absolutely everything you said you would in your opening statement at the first commission meeting. Thank you, Leader.

I would like to start by talking about the preliminary house map, which as many before me have said, is by far the better of the two proposed maps. It begins to correct decades of Republican gerrymandering. It was clearly designed to reflect the communities of Pennsylvania as they actually are. It does the hard work of keeping communities together through less splits in counties and municipalities. It gives candidates of color better opportunities to represent their own communities by creating more majority/minority districts. It does all of this while still keeping most incumbents in their home districts. In short, this map reflects the Pennsylvania we actually live in today – not the makeup of a state that once was.

Leader Benninghoff and other Republicans have attacked this map by calling it an attempt at Democratic gerrymandering. On its face, this critique is ridiculous because as Chairman Nordenburg and other non-partisan experts have stated clearly, this map still favors Republicans. There have been attempts to show specific districts as proof of that gerrymander,

even when the districts shown are heavily Republican. State Republicans are not interested in fair maps; they are interested in maintaining their power at all costs. It doesn't matter that this map still favors their party; that's not enough for them. They are now going so far as to attempt to dissolve this Commission in favor of one that they would control. That is a fact. Their desperation for power, regardless of the diverse needs of Pennsylvania's communities, is so transparent it borders on the absurd.

I urge this commission to continue to operate with the fearlessness and attention to detail that it has consistently shown throughout this process and to not underestimate what the Republicans in both chambers are willing to do to hold onto their power.

In regards to the Senate map, it clearly makes an attempt to address some of the issues that are harming community representation, but it does not make even close to the same attempt to rectify those issues as the House map does. There are key places where the effort to accurately reflect communities is seen, one of which is Harrisburg and its suburbs where the new districts are clearly drawn with the communities who live there in mind.

However there are some key places where that is not the case. There are areas that were clearly drawn to protect the incumbents who currently hold the seats. The people who will suffer because of that are the residents of those districts. There is no reason to cut Allentown down the middle, except to protect the incumbents. There is no reason to divide up the communities of interest in Lancaster and its suburbs, except to protect incumbents. This aspect of the map needs to be rectified.

And lastly, as a kid from Delaware County, the attempt in the Senate map to dilute the voting power of the collar counties and Philadelphia is obvious. This is the fastest growing and the most highly populated region of the state, and the preliminary Senate map makes a clear attempt to curb that influence. How is that done? Nearly all the districts in Allegheny County and southwestern PA are far below the ideal population for a Senate district, therefore requiring more districts to represent them. Nearly all the districts in Philadelphia and Delaware, Montgomery, Chester, and Bucks Counties are far above the ideal population for a Senate district, therefore requiring less districts to represent them. The outcome of this is to make up for losses in population in Southwestern PA at the expense of these five highly populated, incredibly diverse counties. Once again, this is done to protect incumbents. This needs to be corrected.

The changes needed to the Senate map are not small, but they are able to be done in time and are very much necessary so that it accurately reflects the communities of Pennsylvania in the

same way the proposed House map does. The residents of our state deserve the full undiluted power of their vote, and they deserve to be heard both in the voting booth and by those who represent them. I hope this commission hears my testimony and all the similar feedback with the good faith in which it is intended and makes these crucial adjustments.

I once again want to thank the Commission for the time it takes to hear from so many Pennsylvanians and the effort that has clearly gone into creating a set of maps that reflect the state in which we live. These new maps will change the Pennsylvania voting landscape for years to come and, should these proposed changes be made, the impact will be positive and immense. This is undoubtedly important and tedious work, necessary though it is, but it should not be thankless, nor should the effort and care put forth go unnoticed. Please stay diligent in your efforts and true to the values you have already shown us. Thank you. I am happy to take any questions.

LRC Commission Hearing on Redistricting

**Testimony presented by: Kadida Kenner, Executive Director, New Pennsylvania Project
January 14, 2022**

Good afternoon, Chairman Nordenberg and Commissioners, I would like to thank you for allowing me to speak and provide testimony this afternoon. I would also like to commend your work, thus far, in this process. Yours is a thankless job, but it is one of the most important processes that is done at the state level, that directly impacts every single resident in our Commonwealth.

My name is Kadida Kenner. I was born in Monroeville, Allegheny County. Both my parents are Pitt graduates - I'm the outcast and proud Temple Owl. I grew up in West Chester, Chester County, historical home to the Underground Railroad and civil rights icon Bayard Rustin. I recently moved after living in Susquehanna township, Dauphin County for five years. I currently reside less than a mile from Valley Forge National Park.

I am the founding executive director of the New Pennsylvania Project. The New Pennsylvania Project is a voting rights organization, operating statewide, with the primary purpose of voter registration. It is our mission to register as many of the 1.1 million Pennsylvanians who are eligible to vote yet not registered to vote in the Commonwealth and mobilize them to vote in every single election.

We canvass neighborhoods, knock on doors, listen to concerns about housing, economic justice, and fairly funded public schools, in often ignored and underrepresented communities, particularly communities of color. We register these folks to vote and encourage their participation to actually cast their ballot.

We believe that participation in our democracy is foundational to the American experience. But for far too long, that participation has not been reflected in those who represent us.

In Pennsylvania, our growth is driven by people of color - Black, brown, Latinx, and AAPI residents. That's not my opinion. That's an absolute fact. And these emerging populations are choosing to live in vibrant, smaller cities within our state such as Lancaster, Allentown, Scranton, and Erie.

Our commonwealth is at a point of crisis due to underrepresentation.

If our state legislature were truly representative of our state's population, then at least one in every four state legislators would be a person of color. Instead, we have a General Assembly that is 90% white. This is due, in part, to decades of elected officials picking their voters - and not the other way around.

I'd like to provide a little perspective for anyone wondering why this matters so much.

For someone who is a native-Spanish speaker, living in Reading, and in need of help, calls their state representative or senator looking for information about the LIHEAP program, but no one in that office speaks Spanish, or thinks to hire bilingual staff who could effectively help their constituents get the help they need to heat their home - that's a representation issue.

If a Black woman from Chambersburg faces unjust discrimination in the workplace for wearing her natural hair but finds herself unprotected because there are no laws on the books, or proposed legislation from her elected officials - whose job it is to represent all their constituents - that's a representation issue.

In many cases, the current maps carve people of color out of their own communities, to make way for safe incumbent seats, or pack people of color together to limit their influence and minimize opportunities for the maximum candidates of color. This is no way to govern, and it ensures that communities of color stay underrepresented in the building in which I appear today.

What makes me hopeful for the future is that the LRC has proposed a House map that corrects the injustices of past maps. The proposed map improves on the current map by every good government redistricting standard there is. It gives opportunity for new voices to rise and lead. It opens a door that was previously inaccessible and bolted shut.

I strongly urge the Commission to adopt the proposed House map and give communities of color a chance to elect leaders that look like them, value what they value, and experience life in Pennsylvania as people of color do.

Change is hard. It can feel uncomfortable, even oppressive. But our legislative maps must change as our population changes. There is a reason we go through the reapportionment and redistricting process every 10 years after a new Census. And unfortunately, when the maps are as skewed as the current maps are, any effort to correct them will feel like an affront on those feeling as though they're losing power. But we must pursue fairness, even when it is difficult.

I want to commend the work of Chairman Nordenberg and the Commissioners and staff for keeping this process moving in a fair and nonpartisan fashion.

I'm happy to answer questions.