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Sent: Tuesday, January 4, 2022 10:36 PM
To: House & Governmental Affairs; s&ga@legis.la.gov
Subject: Statewide Hearings on Redistricting

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Dear Legislative Redistricting Committee members:

I am writing to you recognizing how well educated and fully experienced each of you are in matters of public policy and their impacts on the daily lives of the citizenry of this state. Considering this, I would like to share with you that we pray that your knowledge and experience will lead to wise and righteous action on your part regarding the discussions of making changes to our Congressional Districts.

Although the population of Louisiana has, according to 2020 Census data, increased by only 2.74%, that we could all come together in a conversation among reasonable people and say that an overall increase of 2.74% is below what would warrant any major reapportionment.

Looking at the data on a district-by-district basis, it is not likely that reasonable people would say a major reapportionment should be considered. Following previous Census Data, Louisiana's six Congressional Districts were redrawn to adjust for Louisiana's decreased population growth in relation to the United States as a whole, and to comply with the Justice Department's requirement for minority representation in Congress. The current boundaries were approved by the U.S. Justice Department as complying with voter representation guidelines. Since the 2020 Census data reveals Louisiana's population increased only 2.74% in the past 10 years, only minimal changes are worth discussing.

The rules recommend the boundaries be redrawn **only when the Census reveals a particular District experienced a significant increase or decrease in population**. The rules define "significant" as a change of greater than 5%. The 2020 Census data reveals the change in population of Louisiana's Congressional Districts as follows:

- 1st District population increased by 4.68% (Within Ideal Range)**
- 2nd District population decreased by 0.13% (Within Ideal Range)**
- 3rd District population increased by 1.23% (Within Ideal Range)**
- 4th District population decreased by 6.18% (Smaller than Ideal)**
- 5th District population decreased by 4.77% (Within Ideal Range)**
- 6th District population increased by 5.18% (Larger than Ideal)**

As you can see, the majority of Louisiana's Congressional Districts are within the ideal range where no change in boundaries is warranted. The "Ideal Range" is the total population of the jurisdiction divided by the number

of districts. While three (3) Districts have experienced an increase in population, only one District, District 6, is larger than the ideal population range of a Louisiana Congressional District. There are three (3) Districts who have experienced a decrease in population, yet only 1 District (District 4) is smaller than the ideal population range of a Louisiana Congressional District wherein redistricting adjustments may be necessary.

The current Congressional District boundaries are based on a commonality of interests in economy and needs of the respective districts. The northern part of Louisiana is largely rural, agricultural, and focused on Christian values. The coastal area of the state is concerned about coastal restoration and largely employed in the oil and seafood industries. The urban districts are distinctly different in needs and goals from adjacent districts. In short, each district has unique needs, and deserves representation in Congress that make their unique needs a priority.

In both an Associated Press (AP) Poll and a poll conducted by RepresentUS, gerrymandering is alarming to the citizens of the state. 67% and 89% respectively affirmed that using reapportionment efforts to benefit one group over another is a “major problem.”

Despite the obvious will of the people, a national coalition of groups have partnered together in an attempt to force widespread racial gerrymandering. We as reasonable people cannot allow ourselves to look past the truth represented in the numbers and make unwise decisions based on the special interest of a few loud voices. We need to be found strong and courageous to choose what is right even if it is not beneficial to us. I urge you to not be swayed by anything other than truth and good reasoning.

In short, **I recommend the Louisiana Congressional Districts remain largely intact.** It is most representative of the people’s needs, it is fair to all voting groups, it is the will of the people, and it follows the law.

Sincerely,

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