



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MISSISSIPPI

February 12, 2011

Senator Burton, Representative Reynolds and Committee Members;

The League of Women Voters of Mississippi urges the committee to adhere to all Constitutional and Voting Rights Act requirements; promoting competitiveness and partisan fairness; respecting political subdivisions and communities interest; an encouraging geographical compactness.

In order to achieve representative democracy, redistricting plans must be drawn in a manner that allows elected bodies to reflect the diversity of the populace, especially racial ethnic diversity.

In respecting political subdivision and communities interest line drawers should make sure that even small deviations can be justified. Justifications need to be more compelling than the interest of Democrats and Republicans.

Redistricting should foster the democratic principal of allowing voters to choose their elected official rather than a process in which we allow elected officials to choose their constituents.

We realize that time between knowing the census count and producing the finished product is short; however we feel it is essential to allow direct public comment on the plan. It is disappointing that this last meeting was not for that purpose.

The redistricting process should be transparent and open for public participation through the whole process.

We encourage you to present the final plan on your website as soon as it is completed. This will give citizens time to review the plan and confer with their legislators.

Representative democracy depends on the voters freely choosing their representatives rather than politicians choosing their voters.

Sincerely,
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Making Democracy Work!

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