



VA Redistricting &lt;varedist@dls.virginia.gov&gt;

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## Redistricting Comment

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**marlene Thacker** <MolliT7@msn.com>

Fri, Apr 9, 2021 at 9:51 AM

To: "varedist@dls.virginia.gov" <varedist@dls.virginia.gov>

Please undo the gerrymandering that resulted in some of Woodbridge being placed under District 1. We originally voted for Rep. Gerry Connally and, subsequently, found ourselves under Rep. Rob Wittman. Please undo this so that we are placed back under Rep. Gerry Connally so that our voting will count once again. We were told that this issue would be resolved in 2021 and we appreciate it as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Nellie E. Thacker  
Marlene E. Thacker



VA Redistricting <varedist@dls.virginia.gov>

## Public Comment: Letter to the Virginia Redistricting Commission about the Proposed Timeline and Public Input

1 message

**Candace Butler** <candy@edandcandy.com> Fri, Apr 9, 2021 at 8:42 PM  
 To: Greta Harris <gharris@dls.virginia.gov>, Mackenzie Babichenko <mbabichenko@dls.virginia.gov>, varedist@dls.virginia.gov  
 Cc: Sean Kumar <skumar@dls.virginia.gov>, Marvin Gilliam <mgilliam@dls.virginia.gov>, Rick Harrell <rharrell@dls.virginia.gov>, James Abrenio <jabrenio@dls.virginia.gov>, Jose Feliciano <jfeliciano@dls.virginia.gov>, Brandon Hutchins <bhutchins@dls.virginia.gov>, Senator Steve Newman <sdnewman7@gmail.com>, Senator Mamie Locke <district02@senate.virginia.gov>, Senator George Barker <senatorbarker@gmail.com>, Senator Ryan McDougle <redistricting@ryanmcdougle.com>, "Simon - Marcus B.=D" <DeIMSimon@house.virginia.gov>, Delegate Les Adams <deladamsredistricting@house.virginia.gov>, Delegate Delores McQuinn <deldmccuinn@house.virginia.gov>, Delegate Margaret Ransone <delransoneredistricting@house.virginia.gov>, "Claire Waters (staff)" <cwaters@dls.virginia.gov>

We are submitting this letter about the Commission about the Proposed Timeline and Public Input. We hope the ideas and suggestions will be helpful.

Sincerely,

Bill Millhouser, Falls Church VA	Janet Martin, Springfield VA
Candace Butler, Annandale VA	Michael Martin, Springfield VA
Kathy Utgoff, Falls Church VA	Deborah Mayer, Centreville VA
Pat Kablach Casano, Alexandria VA	JoAnn Kennedy Flanagan, Fairfax VA

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 **2021-04-09 ltr to Commission final signed.pdf**  
104K

*VIA EMAIL*

April 9, 2021

Ms. Greta J. Harris  
Co-Chair  
Virginia Redistricting Commission  
gharris@dls.virginia.gov

Ms. Mackenzie K. Babichenko  
Co-Chair  
Virginia Redistricting Commission  
mbabichenko@dls.virginia.gov

Dear Ms. Harris and Ms. Babichenko,

We are writing to you about the Commission's "Revised Draft Proposed Timeline" presented at the March 30, 2021, Commission meeting. We are particularly concerned with the public participation provisions in the Timeline.

The proposed Timeline is an important first step, but it needs to be fleshed out to provide more detail and more specific deadlines. A more detailed Timeline will ensure the Commission and the public have a clear understanding of the steps in the process—and the role that citizens will play at every step. Clear public participation guidelines are needed so that citizens can provide input that is both useful and timely. The comments and suggestions that follow are based on the expected receipt of 2020 Census data information in mid-August when the 45-day "clock" begins to tick.

First, the "Administrative Decision Points" listed in the March 30 Timeline, including the Public Participation Guidelines, need to be finalized and publicized no later than the end of April.

We also suggest that several tasks regarding the submission of Communities of Interest (COI) maps be moved earlier on the draft Timeline to ensure the public has time to provide useful input well before the map drawing process begins in mid-August. Specifically, we suggest that the public participation guidelines for map drawing should be completed by the end of May. Public hearings to receive input should be completed at least a month sooner than indicated in the timeline, e.g., on or about June 30.

These suggestions are important because citizen input is central to protecting communities of interest, one of the criteria to be used in the map drawing. Protecting communities with similar interests from being split up is essential to making sure that communities have fair representation. There will be many valuable inputs from individuals and good government groups regarding how they define their communities. Analyzing all inputs and presenting them to the Commission in a useful way will take a considerable amount of time and effort and is but one aspect of the effort necessary to prepare for the map drawing process.

We suggest the Commission consider increasing the number and duration of Commission meetings to broaden the opportunity for public engagement. We support the recommendation of Erin Corbett of the Virginia Civic Engagement Table that some Commission meetings occur during the evening when working citizens are available. Meetings should include time for the Commissioners to discuss and respond to public comments.

The Commission website is an essential means to communicate with the public and encourage public engagement; it should be updated as soon as possible. As required by Virginia law, the website must be able to “disseminate information about the Commission’s activities” and “be capable of receiving comments by the citizens.” We refer you to the suggested website improvements listed in our March 23 letter; these suggestions are based on our analyses of redistricting commission websites in 5 other states.

In conclusion, we urge the Commission to provide for substantial public input in accordance with the law, such that Commission members, particularly the citizen members, can fully represent the interests of citizens of the Commonwealth. This will counterbalance the purely political considerations which have often driven redistricting in the past and will result in maps that will be seen as fair in the eyes of the citizens.

Sincerely,

Bill Millhouser, Falls Church VA  
Candace Butler, Annandale VA  
Kathy Utgoff, Falls Church VA  
Pat Kablach Casano, Alexandria VA

Janet Martin, Springfield VA  
Michael Martin, Springfield VA  
Deborah Mayer, Centreville VA  
JoAnn Kennedy Flanagan, Fairfax VA

cc:

Commissioner Hutchins

Commissioner Feliciano

Commissioner Abrenio

Commissioner Kumar

Commissioner Gilliam

Commissioner Harrell

Commissioner Les Adams

Commissioner Barker

Commissioner Locke

Commissioner McDougle

Commissioner Newman

Commissioner McQuinn

Commissioner Simon

Commissioner Ransone

Claire Waters, DLS Staff