

May 5, 1966

Dear Fellow Delegate:

Last week you received a copy of a proposal introduced by myself and co-sponsored by two other Middlesex County delegates.

This proposal calls for a 112 member Assembly and provides that this Convention determine single member districts so that each assemblyman has a constituency of substantially the same population.

We feel very strongly that it is the duty of this Convention to determine a New Jersey Legislature that is truly a government of the people. It is extremely important that in arriving at our decision we fully implement the one man - one vote concept of the Supreme Court and the equal representation meaning of the U.S. Constitution.

It is these points that influenced our decision to submit the 112 single member district proposal. One man - one vote and equal representation to us means much more than allotting each county varying number of representatives in an assembly and electing them at large.

We believe true equal representation calls for and demands that each citizen vote for and be represented by the same number of representatives. By creating districts of substantially the same population and by allowing each of our citizens the right to vote for one representative and be represented by one representative, we feel we are meeting the full meaning of equal representation.

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Equally important is the size of the Assembly. Any legislature we determine must truly be a government of the people and the size will play an important part insofar as citizen interest and participation is concerned. A citizen is entitled to express his views on any legislation to his representative. A representative likewise is entitled to and most certainly should be able to determine the views of his constituency. In order to allow both the citizen and the representative the time to efficiently exercise their given rights of communication, we must be realistic in the number of people an assemblyman will represent. Considering the amount an assemblyman is paid, the fact that it is not a full-time position, that the New Jersey Legislature is one of the smallest in the nation and that our population has increased quite rapidly and further substantial increases are expected, we believe that an enlargement of the Assembly to 112 is desired in order to insure that the desires of our citizens can be known and considered by their elected representatives.

John P. Gallagher
Mildred G. Willis
Donald L. Borst

Delegates, Middlesex County