

APPENDIX

Assembly Judiciary Registration - July 20 - ACR188



Helen Kioukis <hkioukis@lwvnj.org>

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Today, 3:17 PM

OLSaideAJU

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Testimony - ACR188 - L...
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RedistrictingReformPro...
136 KB

Fair Districts Coalition :
119 KB

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Hi – Attached, please find my written testimony for Monday’s Assembly Judiciary Public Hearing on ACR188, along with 2 other documents I’d like to submit to the committee: a joint organizational sign-on letter and a summary of the Fair Districts NJ proposal for redistricting reforms.

Thank you,
Helen Kioukis
League of Women Voters of New Jersey
cell: 609-816-8671

From: OLSaideAJU [mailto:OLSaideAJU@njleg.org]
Sent: Friday, July 17, 2020 9:53 AM
To: Helen Kioukis <hkioukis@lwvnj.org>
Subject: Re: Assembly Judiciary Registration

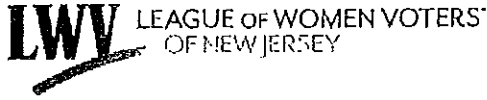
This message contains the information necessary to participate in the AJU Zoom meeting on 7/20 at 10:00 AM. The meeting will be open one hour prior to the meeting start time and we encourage you to connect early so that everyone can be processed in time for the meeting. It is highly recommended that you connect no later than fifteen minutes prior to the start of the meeting & your Zoom account is created prior to joining. If connecting via the web, the app is the preferred method to use, please ensure you are familiar with using the Zoom application. Instructions are attached to assist you in creating an account and using Zoom.

You must have a Zoom account created prior to the meeting in order to access a secure Zoom meeting.

The access information is listed below. Please do not disseminate this meeting information to staff, only members, committee aides and invited participants should be accessing the meeting.

Topic: Assembly Judiciary 7-20-20
Time: Jul 20, 2020 10:00 AM Eastern Time (US and Canada)
Join Zoom Meeting
<https://zoom.us/j/96260162873?pwd=bjIxMXlEYmF2ejlVZW5vdmQwWnk0QT09>
Meeting ID: 962 6016 2873
Password: 058759
One tap mobile
+13126266799,,96260162873#,,,0#,,058759# US (Chicago)
+19292056099,,96260162873#,,,0#,,058759# US (New York)

lx



Testimony in Opposition of ACR188
Assembly Judiciary Committee – Public Hearing
July 20, 2020

Good morning, and thank you for this opportunity to testify on Assembly Concurrent Resolution 188. My name is Helen Kioukis, and I am testifying on behalf of the League of Women Voters of New Jersey. The League is a nonpartisan political organization that works to protect our democratic processes and empower voters across the state.

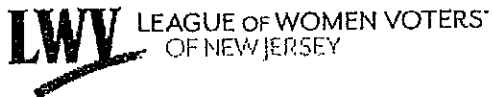
I am here on behalf of the organization to testify with concerns on ACR188, a Constitutional Amendment proposal that would extend the term of the 2011-2020 legislative district map - and any future map - for two additional years whenever New Jersey receives new decennial census data after February 15th of years ending in "1." This is being proposed to address the current, unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic, but it would result in a permanent constitutional change.

Unfortunately, concerns expressed by advocacy organizations last week and recommendations for additional amendments were not taken into consideration by the sponsors or legislative leaders. We understand their concerns with extremely condensing electoral timelines or significantly altering election dates. We also understand that this is a serious dilemma that does require swift action, because New Jersey will not have the new census data in time for a new map to be certified prior to the June 2021 Primary Election. But what we don't understand is the complete unwillingness to present this as a one-time solution, or to change the February 15th date by 4-6 weeks to ensure this is not a situation in which New Jersey finds itself decade after decade, or to offer additional solutions to address the disproportionate harm that delaying the implementation of a new voting map will have on New Jersey's growing communities of color.

As written, and as a stand-alone proposal, ACR188 should not move forward. A companion proposal that outlines structural redistricting reforms is needed. Redistricting process improvements would amplify the voices and prioritize the representation of those communities hardest hit by the pandemic, by a Census undercount, and by the delayed implementation of a new map. We must have a process in place in which diversity, racial equity, public participation, transparency, and fair line-drawing rules are the values and standards guiding the map-drawing process. And this can only be achieved with a second proposal.

Along with this written testimony, I have submitted a joint organizational statement calling on our legislative leaders to introduce and move a companion proposal, and a summary of the Fair Districts New Jersey proposal for reforms. Hopefully, a companion proposal with process improvements can move just as quickly as we have seen ACR188 be introduced and moved through the legislative process.

Over the last two years, the League of Women Voters of New Jersey and the Fair Districts New Jersey coalition has been working to reform New Jersey's redistricting process so it better serves the residents of our state. We have called for more meaningful public input, greater transparency, and a more independent commission: all proven solutions and best practices being implemented with success in other states. However, instead of advancing these good government reforms, New Jersey has attempted to legitimize gerrymandering through a previously introduced and defeated Constitutional Amendment, made headlines through party infighting regarding a Chairmanship position and the power to appoint redistricting commissioners, and has drawn widespread public criticism for the egregious lack of diversity represented within the partisan groups' commissioner appointments – those appointments already made and those appointments suggested.



At the same time, a recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling will not allow any future claims of partisan gerrymandering to be heard in federal courts, and we learned that manipulating the redistricting process to increase the political power of "non-Hispanic whites" was what motivated the proposal for a citizenship question on the Census.

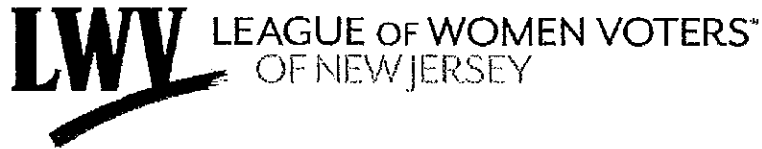
Over and over, these headlines have sent a clear message to the public: the redistricting process is one to be gamed by elected officials and party operatives, and no place exists in the process for the public's voice. The message being sent by this proposal is no different. In these uncertain times, with the Census' delayed operational timeline, a complete count in jeopardy, political polarization at a high and public trust in government at a low, the redistricting "status quo" in New Jersey is not only inadequate, but harmful to our democracy. We need a companion proposal to guarantee that when a new map is drawn, it's drawn in the public's interest to ensure "equal and fair representation for all."

We cannot compromise the integrity of the Census or redistricting for expediency. We must make sure we get this remedy right. Again, without a companion proposal that outlines meaningful, structural improvements to our legislative redistricting process, ACR188 should not move forward.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and share the League of Women Voters' concerns with Assembly Concurrent Resolution 188.

Testimony submitted by:

Helen Kioukis
League of Women Voters of New Jersey



Fair Districts New Jersey - Constitutional Amendment Proposal

Redistricting is a fundamental component of our democracy. Free and fair elections and fair and equal representation rely on fairly-drawn maps. As advocates for strengthening our democracy, the Fair Districts New Jersey coalition is proposing a more independent, representative legislative redistricting commission that minimizes partisanship, opens up each step of the process to the public, and establishes a set of clear line-drawing rules to guide redistricting commissioners. These rules would include checks against gerrymandering and protections for New Jersey's communities of color and communities of interest.

In addition to the proposed changes to the New Jersey Constitution, the coalition is also advocating for a complete and accurate 2020 Census and an end to the practice of prison-based gerrymandering – the discriminatory practice of counting incarcerated individuals at their prison address for redistricting purposes.

To achieve a transparent, inclusive and fairer redistricting process, the coalition is proposing the following:

- A 15-member commission that includes 5 members of the public chosen by a panel of former New Jersey Supreme Court Justices. Three of the 5 independent members must not be affiliated with either the Democratic or Republican party. The commission must reflect the racial, ethnic and gender diversity of the state.
- Expanded commissioner eligibility requirements to improve the independence of the commission. Elected officials, their staff, party leaders, political committee officers, and others whose participation in the legislative redistricting process may present a conflict of interest should not be permitted to serve on the commission.
- An open and transparent redistricting process that requires the commission to hold public hearings, broadcast meetings statewide, allow public submissions of maps, share drafts of maps publicly and issue reports justifying their work, among other requirements to make redistricting community-driven.
- A set of line-drawing criteria clearly outlined in order of priority, emphasizing people-centric, rather than partisan-centric standards. Commissioners must create a map that is in compliance with the U.S. Constitution and federal law, has contiguous boundary lines, reinforces the equity principles of the Voting Rights Act, preserves communities of interest within the same legislative district, and minimizes the division of municipalities and counties. To the extent practicable, after legal and community-driven standards are met, districts should be compact and politically-competitive.
- A restriction on the use of partisan and political data during the process to provide a check against gerrymandering and ensure that districts were not drawn to favor one political party over another.
- A process that fosters cooperation among commissioners, but also between commissioners and the general public. The final decision regarding a map that determines the political representation of New Jersey residents for the next ten years should not fall in the hands of a single person, as it currently does. At least nine of the fifteen commissioners should agree on a final map before it can be certified. Inability to reach agreement will trigger a failsafe mechanism that includes the involvement of a court-appointed special master.
- A system that permits voters to raise objections to the implementation of a new map on legal or constitutional grounds.

As the 2020 census approaches, the time is now to enact comprehensive and meaningful redistricting reforms in New Jersey.

Statement of Latinas United for Political Empowerment (LUPE)
in Opposition of ACR188/SCR122
New Jersey State Assembly Judiciary Committee

Submitted via email: OLSAideAJU@njleg.org

LUPE is a state-wide organization advancing the interest of Latinas and our families. We advocate for the economic, educational and political empowerment of Latinas by engaging in issue advocacy, voter education & mobilization, and in training and supporting Latinas to run for public office. Our mission is to advocate for the rights of Latinas to have a seat at the table in government and politics so that our community can have a voice in enacting policies that encourage economic opportunity, equity and inclusion across all areas of society for Latinos in New Jersey.

In light of the current health crisis in our state and country, we acknowledge that the proposed amendments to the Constitution of the State of New Jersey are an attempt to create a new timeline for redrawing legislative districts in light of the federal U.S. Census collection and processing delays, specifically their adjusted delivery dates for Public Law 94-171 redistricting data from May 1st-July 31st.

In light of these proposed amendments, Latinas United for Political Empowerment stands in opposition to the proposed changes for the following reasons:

- There have always been long standing concerns with New Jersey's tight redrawing schedule, and yet the Census Bureau has always provided NJ with data on the earliest possible side of their timeline and the off-year election has always taken place with some spontaneous adjustments. We did not need the pandemic to make adjustments to the timeline - this is always an issue -we are debating this now and proposing hasty amendments to our Constitution that we cannot take lightly.
- There are always concerns with the highly partisan nature of NJ's redistricting process and the limited input of the public, yet we aren't necessarily addressing those concerns in these amendments. Providing additional time for input does not mean you will actually create a process to manage that input and provide the transparency that advocates including LUPE seek. Promising for a debate is not the same as creating true reforms to an existing flawed system.
- We can not support any amendments that potentially give any presumption that LUPE does not value the equal voting power of Latinx people. We strongly stand on the side of the U.S. constitution and our rights under the one-person one vote principle. These amendments if passed will be presented to the voters as the most democratic of all options, and yet there is nothing democratic about districts being malapportioned and unfortunately disproportionately in areas of robust growth for communities of color.
- The redrawing of NJ's legislative districts has a huge impact for a decade - we have seen tremendous growth in our cities and towns throughout the state and unequivocally

Latinas United for Political Empowerment Inc.
Testimony of July 20, 2020 - In opposition of ACR188/SCR122

from traditional growth spots like Passaic, Hudson and Middlesex counties. No shocker. We currently have Census estimates and sampled population data that I am sure is currently being analyzed prior to the arrival of the official decennial data in order to simulate possible changes to the NJ district map. The legislature would not be starting from scratch upon receipt of the decennial data next spring/early Summer.

- The options for a delayed primary for September 2021 or a new election in June 2022 would all take this data delay into account, but still afford voters a chance to elect candidates of their choice in districts of equal proportion.

Lastly, I do wish we were in a discussion about how to ensure every single person in NJ is captured in the Census count -but we are not. Many of the testimonies provided today reflect a desire for a more accurate Census, something this body is not addressing in this Constitutional amendment nor do they have jurisdiction to do so. Instead, we are trying to create a new timeline on numbers we have yet received and are essentially being asked to sign a blank check as voters. LUPE can not support that. We will not gamble our voters' chance to elect candidates of their choice after a legally mandated population adjustment to the districts.

We thank you for this opportunity to present our testimony and thank you all for your ongoing work for the residents of New Jersey. We look forward to further discussions on how to best make adjustments to the delay in the arrival of Census data.

Written testimony for ACR 188 (Monday 10 am hearing)



Rebecca Scheer <rebeccascheer@gmail.com>

Today, 2:06 PM

OLSaideAJU

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Hello,

I'd like to submit the following testimony to voice my opposition to ACR 188.

Thank you,

Rebecca Scheer
Maplewood, NJ
on behalf of SOMA Action

Dear Assemblymembers Jasey and McKeon,

Thank you for your continued leadership in the 27th district. As your constituents we feel very fortunate to have you representing us and for your reasoned voice in our state legislature.

We are writing because of a resolution you recently introduced into the assembly, [ACR 188](#). This bill, if passed, would create a new amendment in New Jersey's constitution, stipulating that if the Census Bureau does not provide our state with new decennial Census data by February 15 of the year after the Census was carried out, that districts currently in place will be used for upcoming Assembly elections, and will not be updated until the following cycle. (If implemented, this means that the 2021 Assembly elections would use the current districts, and that the first election to use the new districts based on the 2020 Census would be in 2023.) While we know that action must be taken to address the inevitable delay in receiving Census data due to the extraordinary circumstances surrounding Covid, we question whether this bill is the right answer.

We are concerned that a constitutional amendment in this case is overreach. The February 15 date when the Census Bureau traditionally provides data to New Jersey is not an official deadline, but rather a courtesy that the Census Bureau extends to our state as one of only two to hold its state elections in odd years. (Virginia is the other). This new amendment consequently could result in outdated districts being used for the first state election held after the Census, anytime the Census Bureau, for whatever reason, may not give our state data by February 15.

We wonder if a delay of a full election cycle is overreach as well. While we welcome legislation to address this unprecedented crisis, the current legislative districts have been in place for 10 years, while the demographics of our state have changed considerably. A two-year delay in updating our districts would most detrimentally impact

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in response to Covid. We wonder why a similar response is not being considered instead for 2021.

We are also concerned that a proposed change to our state's constitution regarding redistricting does not also address the proposed improvements to New Jersey's redistricting process which The New Jersey League of Women Voters and the Fair Districts Coalition have been lobbying for years. These proposals aim to make the redistricting process more transparent, non-partisan, and representative of all residents with regard to socioeconomic, demographic, and political characteristics. The state legislature has had ample time to act around these proposed improvements and we are disheartened that this proposed legislation does not address them.

Last, we are concerned with the rushed manner in which this bill is moving through the legislature. The process used to determine new legislative districts, which will be in place for the next decade, is of premium importance. Thus, any changes to this process must be done with great deliberation and, most critically, with the participation of interested groups and residents of our state.

Again, we thank you for your thoughtful leadership as our representatives in the State Assembly. We also thank you for having the wherewithal and interest in tackling this unprecedented issue regarding the timing of the new Census data and our state elections. A little over a year ago, you voted in the interests of New Jerseyans when you opposed a constitutional amendment which would have made our redistricting process more partisan and beholden to the interests of our legislators. We ask that you consider the views espoused in this letter, and we hope that you will work with us as members of the Fair District Coalition, to support a redistricting plan that truly represents and considers the views and interests of all residents of our state.

Signed,
Rebecca Scheer
Maplewood, NJ
SOMA Action, Political Action Committee Chair

NJ Appleseed Testimony in Opposition to ACR 188



Mary Gallagher <mary@njappleseed.org>

Today, 1:27 PM

OLSaideAJU; renee@njappleseed.org

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You replied on 7/17/2020 1:50 PM.

Testimony--Redistrictin... 62 KB

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To the Assembly Judiciary Committee:

I hereby submit the testimony of NJ Appleseed Public Interest Law Center in opposition to ACR188.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Mary Pat Gallagher, Communications and Policy Director
NJ Appleseed PILC
50 Park Place—Room 1025
Newark, NJ 07102
973-735-0523
www.njappleseed.org



TESTIMONY OF NJ APPLESEED IN OPPOSITION TO ACR188
BEFORE THE ASSEMBLY JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

JULY 20, 2020 Public Hearing

Chairman Mukherji, Vice-Chairwoman Murphy and members of the Committee.

We are submitting this testimony on behalf of New Jersey Appleseed Public Interest Law Center ("NJ Appleseed"), a nonprofit, nonpartisan legal advocacy group based in Newark that has been active in voting rights issues since its inception in 1998.

NJ Appleseed is a member of the Fair Districts New Jersey Coalition, and we stand with the Coalition in opposing ACR188/SCR123 and calling on the Legislature to enact improvements to the redistricting process that will render it more fair, transparent and democratic with a small "d."

We recognize that the expected delay in receiving the 2020 Census data as a result of COVID-19 will make it difficult if not impossible to redraw the state legislative map in time for the 2021 election. We sympathize with the need you feel to address the situation. But this is the wrong fix. It does both too much and too little.

It does "too much" in several ways. First, it locks in the use of a 10-year old map that fails to reflect the demographic changes that have occurred over the past decade, especially with regard to the nearly 20% increase in the Asian and Hispanic population, and it locks in that outdated map for two extra years, when at most, one might be necessary.

Second, although this is being done in response to a unique, unlikely-to-recur situation--the confluence of an historic pandemic with the decennial census--it would change the basic governing document of our state, the framework on which

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Public Interest Law Center of New Jersey
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Newark, New Jersey 07102

Phone: 973.735.0523 Fax: 973-710-4653
Email: renee@njappleseed.org
Website: www.njappleseed.org

9x

the machinery of our government operates, in a permanent way that will trigger this same type of disenfranchisement whenever the data is a tad late. The proposed amendment is the equivalent of killing a fly with a sledgehammer.

Third, the extended use of the old map kicks in far too early--if the data is not received by Feb. 15--despite the fact that it would still be possible to get the new map ready in time even if the data were to arrive a month or two after that, perhaps even a bit later. That might necessitate some compressed timelines and delayed dates for the primary and general election. But these are things that can be done without amending the Constitution.

We are also troubled by the way this is being pushed through--introduced July 6, heard in committee and finalized as to its language by July 9--leaving little if any opportunity for the public to weigh in. We understand the need for haste at this point to meet the constitutional deadline for getting it before the voters this fall. But you could have acted sooner given that Governor Murphy declared a state of emergency back on March 9. And as far back as April 13, the Census Bureau announced it was delaying field operations by 90 days because of the pandemic and around the same time asked Congress for authority to delay the release of the Census count by 120 days. There could and should have been more time for the people of this state to evaluate your proposal and the alternatives, instead of being faced with this last-minute rush to get "something" on the ballot.

As for the "too little" part, ACR188/SCR123 is meant to address a one-time delay while nothing is done to fix the perennial problems with the redistricting process that cry out for constitutional amendment.

For instance, the commission drawing the map is comprised entirely of Democrats and Republicans, despite the fact that nearly 40% of registered voters are unaffiliated with either party. As of April 1 of this year, there were more than 2.4 million unaffiliated voters, slightly more than the 2.34 million registered Democrats, and they far outnumbered the 1.35 million Republicans. An additional 78,000 plus voters, including Greens, Conservatives and Libertarians, are categorized as "Other." Yet everyone but Democrats and Republicans is excluded from the line-drawing process.

Nor is there anything in the Constitution now that bars any of those Democratic and Republican commissioners from being a

current officeholder or candidate for office. As a result, the politicians get to pick the voters when it should be the other way around.

The Constitution's only specified requirements for commissioners are geographic, ethnic and racial diversity. Gender is not mentioned. It is thus not much of a surprise that of the 10 names we understand to have been put forth for the 2021 redistricting commission, only one, a Republican, is female.

Further, the need for Constitutional change is not just about the WHO but the HOW. There need to be criteria setting forth what factors should be taken into account in drawing the lines and provisions ensuring greater transparency and opportunity for public participation in the process.

We need so much more from a redistricting amendment than what the current proposal provides. It would go a long way to allaying our dissatisfaction with it if the Legislature were to take concrete action before November, introducing and voting on meaningful redistricting reform in a way that strengthens our democracy and directly benefits the very people the Legislature is supposed to serve rather than bolstering the interests of the two major political parties. Otherwise, New Jersey Appleseed will not put its imprimatur on nor its support behind a constitutional amendment that is so problematic and not well thought out.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Renée Steinhagen, Esq., Executive Dir.
Mary Pat Gallagher, Communications Dir.
New Jersey Appleseed PILC

vote no monday on acr 188



jean public <jeanpublic1@gmail.com>

Yesterday, 4:05 PM

OLSaideAJU; yourviews@app.com

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this bill does not include any part that includes a section that we go back to having the 21 countries of new jersey represent th voters of nj. i think the way the lines are drawn for gerrymandering is crooked as can be. there is no reason to change counties. essex has always been democratic so codey should be down there in essex. he lives in essex.

the people living in the county shudl be the county rep,not some person from essex county representing hunterdon county. that does not make sense that is just plain crooked imo

wl need to go back tohaving the counties voe as a county and to choose their reps from within that county. not having a dem from essex crpersenting a reouublic county hunterson. the gerrymandering is widelhy acknowledged to be as crooked as can be. it needs to be changed to be honest.

vote no on this bill this does nothing on this issue of crooked gerrymandering to get a rep into office when they should not be.

vote no

July 16, 2020



Dear Senate President Sweeney and Assembly Speaker Coughlin,

We recognize the various constraints you face due to COVID-19. At the same time, we are disappointed with the inadequate proposal currently before the Legislature - SCR123/ACR188 - to address the Census Bureau's operational delay. The Bureau's request for a 4-month extension to deliver new population data to each state will not allow New Jersey to have a new legislative district map in place before the June 2021 primary, but the far-reaching proposal to permanently amend our state Constitution and extend the term of the 2011 district map by 2 years is not in the best interest of the public. This proposed solution runs counter to the principle of "equal and fair representation," dilutes the voting strength of New Jersey's communities of color, and will not protect our democratic processes amidst a global health pandemic.

As the window to further amend SCR123/ACR188 has now closed, a companion amendment for the 2021 ballot is required to address the harm to our political representation that this Constitutional amendment proposal will cause. SCR123/ACR188 should not move forward without structural improvements to our redistricting process that would guarantee that diversity, racial equity, public participation, transparency, and fair redistricting standards guide the map-drawing process.

We understand the complexity of this situation and know that New Jersey already had a difficult road ahead to ensure a complete count of all its residents. The majority of organizations within the Fair Districts Coalition are also active members of the statewide Census 2020 NJ Coalition, and have been exploring solutions to address the Bureau's operational delay since mid-April. To be clear: no one has ever suggested that we rush forward with a redistricting process that relies on incomplete data or data other than the actual census data New Jersey should receive by June 17, 2021. But rushing forward with a 2-year extension of a district map drafted with decade-old data – without offering any process improvements that would amplify the voices and prioritize the representation of those communities hardest hit by the pandemic and by a Census undercount – should also not be the path forward.

We urge you to introduce the Fair Districts New Jersey proposal, attached, which we developed after gathering input from nearly two dozen New Jersey-based organizational partners, national redistricting experts, and hundreds of voters who participated in a series of redistricting educational forums. This would improve the independence of the Apportionment Commission and give New Jerseyans a redistricting process that is inclusive, transparent, and community-driven, with fair line-drawing standards similar to the ones states across the country have adopted as part of their redistricting reform efforts.

Since SCR123/ACR188 was introduced, we have repeatedly heard that you care about the interests of communities of color and that you want real redistricting reform. Passing this companion proposal in 2020 for the 2021 ballot would demonstrate that those statements are not simply words.

Please work with us to introduce this proposal before the end of this month and present it to the full Legislature by September 15, 2020 so it qualifies for the 2021 ballot. We are asking you to commit to protecting New Jersey's diverse communities against a plan that dilutes their voting power and delays fair representation. And we are asking you to strengthen our democracy and introduce a companion proposal that would directly benefit the very people whose interests the Legislature is mandated to advance. Thank you.

Signatories:

BlueWaveNJ
Clean Water Action
Good Government Coalition of New Jersey
Latino Action Network
League of Women Voters of New Jersey
Network for Responsible Public Policy
New Jersey Appleseed Public Interest Law Center
New Jersey Citizen Action

New Jersey Institute for Social Justice
People Demanding Action - NJ
Piscataway Progressive Democratic Organization
Planned Parenthood Action Fund of New Jersey
RepresentUs/Central New Jersey
SOMA Action
STAND Central Jersey
TriCounty NJ Chapter of American Promise

ACR188/SCR123, 10:00 Public Hearing, Judiciary Committee



Catherine Hunt <cchunt205@yahoo.com>

Today, 10:05 AM

OLSaideAJU

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cTo Whom It May Concern,

May I declare my position concerning ACR188/SCR123: OPPOSE.

SCR123/ACR188 should not move forward without a companion amendment and structural improvements to our legislative redistricting process. It is not wise to rush forward with a 2-year extension of a district map which was drafted with data which is a decade old. Please support process improvements that would amplify the voices and prioritize the representation of the communities hardest hit by the pandemic and a Census undercount. Please provide a process in which diversity, racial equity, public participation, transparency, and fair line-drawing rules are the values and standards guiding the map-drawing process.

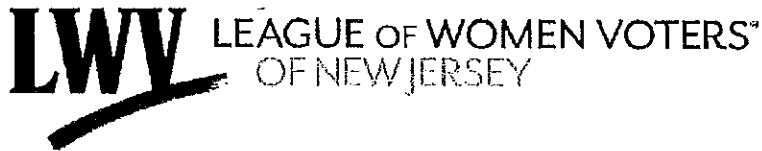
I support the Fair Districts New Jersey's companion amendment with meaningful redistricting reform. This companion amendment is required in order to address the harm to our political representation that this proposed constitutional amendment will cause. Please see the companion amendment proposed by Fair Districts New Jersey here:

[Fair Districts New Jersey's companion amendment is summarized here.](#)

SCR123/ACR188 requires a companion proposal to protect New Jersey's democratic systems.

Thank you,

Catherine Hunt
205 821 1209
cchunt205@yahoo.com
121 P Lowell Lane
Monroe Twp, NJ
08831



Fair Districts New Jersey - Constitutional Amendment Proposal

Redistricting is a fundamental component of our democracy. Free and fair elections and fair and equal representation rely on fairly-drawn maps. As advocates for strengthening our democracy, the Fair Districts New Jersey coalition is proposing a more independent, representative legislative redistricting commission that minimizes partisanship, opens up each step of the process to the public, and establishes a set of clear line-drawing rules to guide redistricting commissioners. These rules would include checks against gerrymandering and protections for New Jersey's communities of color and communities of interest.

In addition to the proposed changes to the New Jersey Constitution, the coalition is also advocating for a complete and accurate 2020 Census and an end to the practice of prison-based gerrymandering – the discriminatory practice of counting incarcerated individuals at their prison address for redistricting purposes.

To achieve a transparent, inclusive and fairer redistricting process, the coalition is proposing the following:

- A 15-member commission that includes 5 members of the public chosen by a panel of former New Jersey Supreme Court Justices. Three of the 5 independent members must not be affiliated with either the Democratic or Republican party. The commission must reflect the racial, ethnic and gender diversity of the state.
- Expanded commissioner eligibility requirements to improve the independence of the commission. Elected officials, their staff, party leaders, political committee officers, and others whose participation in the legislative redistricting process may present a conflict of interest should not be permitted to serve on the commission.
- An open and transparent redistricting process that requires the commission to hold public hearings, broadcast meetings statewide, allow public submissions of maps, share drafts of maps publicly and issue reports justifying their work, among other requirements to make redistricting community-driven.
- A set of line-drawing criteria clearly outlined in order of priority, emphasizing people-centric, rather than partisan-centric standards. Commissioners must create a map that is in compliance with the U.S. Constitution and federal law, has contiguous boundary lines, reinforces the equity principles of the Voting Rights Act, preserves communities of interest within the same legislative district, and minimizes the division of municipalities and counties. To the extent practicable, after legal and community-driven standards are met, districts should be compact and politically-competitive.
- A restriction on the use of partisan and political data during the process to provide a check against gerrymandering and ensure that districts were not drawn to favor one political party over another.
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- A system that permits voters to raise objections to the implementation of a new map on legal or constitutional grounds.

As the 2020 census approaches, the time is now to enact comprehensive and meaningful redistricting reforms in New Jersey.

ACR188 Testimony



Rozella Clyde <rozella.clyde@gmail.com>

🔄 Reply all | ▾

Today, 11:22 AM

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Inbox

My name is Rozella Clyde. I reside at 33 Carmine Street in Chatham, NJ. I am the Educational Director of Clydeoscope Educational Consultants, LLC. My company provides support to academics. I have been a Social Studies educator for the past 50 years, 44 of those years connected to classrooms.

I oppose the passage of a constitutional amendment that would expand current legislative districts for an additional 2 years when the decennial census results are not presented to the governor by February 15. This is a simplistic solution to a complex process.

While a delay in the reporting of census statistics causes difficulties in redistricting our legislative districts, we cannot allow the ripples created by the COVID pandemic to continue the inequities created by our current redistricting process.

The current projected timeline estimates that the statistics should be available by July 31, 2020. A more equitable response would be to delay the primary election to 2 months after the statistics are available. In the mean time the redistricting commission members could be selected in advance ready to begin realigning the district maps just as soon as the statistics are available.

I further support the proposal to expand the redistricting commission to 15 members, 5 of whom would be selected by a panel of Supreme Court justices as independent voters not associated with any political party. I also hope to avoid conflicts of interests in the commission members by requiring that any member of the redistricting committee not be a sitting or campaigning legislator.

It is imperative that the legislation be in place to enable the creation of a fair redistricting committee and ready to function just as soon as the statistics are available. This Constitutional Amendment would delay the more pressing and necessary actions necessary to create that commission.

Thank you for allowing me to share my position on this proposed constitutional amendment.

Dr. Rozella Clyde

Dr. Rozella G. Clyde, PhD.

Sent from my iPhone