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STATE CONFERENCE

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**KENTUCKY'S 2022 REDISTRICTING LEGISLATION:
A JOINT STATEMENT FROM
THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF KENTUCKY AND
THE NAACP KENTUCKY STATE CONFERENCE**

January 13, 2022

Kentucky's recent redistricting process has produced unfair maps without meaningful public participation. The protection of incumbents drove the process, and the interests of voters were significantly harmed. We do not argue that the new maps reflect more or less partisanship than previous versions. Instead, no matter who holds power, our view is that redistricting should focus on empowerment of citizens and respect for communities, not on the interests of parties or current officeholders.

The Congressional map creates an absurd First district, wrapped three-quarters of the way around the Second. The new First includes both the state's western-most counties and the state capitol, connected by a strip of single counties along the southern border and a narrow column of counties pointing north. In order to reach Franklin County, the mapmakers also had to slice through Anderson County like some new-age Daniel Boone. A drive through the district from one end of the First to the other will take eight hours or more, nearly double the time needed for any other district. Voters are badly served by this design.

The Senate map divides the states' largest counties in ways that seem to put the comfort of incumbents first and the concerns of communities last. Based on initial review and without time to gather wider stakeholder comments, here are some concerns:

- Warren County, large enough to have its own Senate district, has instead been used to complete three districts that include 12 other counties. The dividing lines break apart Bowling Green, the state's third largest city.
- Kenton County has had three downtown Covington precincts moved out of the 23rd district and added to the 24th, which serves Campbell, Pendleton, and Bracken counties.
- Fayette County no longer has two full Senate seats: the 12th has been redrawn to serve a small part of Fayette along with three other counties. Other parts of Fayette are in five other districts serving 17 other counties.
- Jefferson County now has six full Senate seats, including the 26th, which previously represented Oldham and a small part of Jefferson. However, the new 26th strings together precincts stretching from the Ohio River nearly to the Bullitt County line, the opposite of a compact and coherent district.

The House of Representatives map poorly serves many medium and large cities and counties. For example, many county seats have been divided in disruptive ways:

- In Kenton County, Covington is cut in half and placed in two districts that each contain other municipalities.

- Madison have been denied a coherent district centered on Richmond.
- Bullitt, Christian, Franklin, and Hardin have had precincts pulled away from Shepherdsville, Hopkinsville, Frankfort, and Elizabethtown and into more rural districts when the population numbers required no such move.
- Warren County's 20th district has been redrawn in ways that have an important impact on historic Bowling Green neighborhoods and communities, but without inviting meaningful input from the affected citizens.

The House map also harms larger jurisdictions in other ways, including these:

- Jessamine, Laurel, Pike, and Pulaski are large enough to have districts inside their county limits, but all four have been broken into small pieces assigned to districts representing many other counties.
- Jessamine County now shares both the 39th and the 45th with Fayette. It was clearly possible to have a district fully focused on Jessamine County and Nicholasville.
- Fayette County's 88th district has been transformed from serving the southeastern edge of the county to include a wide array of precincts to the north and west, along with a portion of Scott County.
- Jefferson County could have three districts with Black voting age majorities, but instead has none.

The process that produces these maps also created major obstacles to public participation:

- The House map was released on December 30, allowing only a holiday weekend for review, and the Congressional and Senate maps were available for an even shorter period. All three maps were introduced to the legislature on January 4th and approved and sent to the Governor on January 8th.
- Detailed boundaries and key population analysis were not shared in time to allow meaningful discussions.
- The map designers chose not to share their reasoning for the districts described above, leaving Kentucky's citizens to guess at their rationales.
- The timetable ruled out any type of forum or systematic input, leaving citizens to scramble for even the most basic information.

The people of the Commonwealth deserve better. The NAACP Kentucky State Conference and the League of Women Voters of Kentucky urge Governor Beshear to veto the Congressional, Senate and House maps, and the General Assembly to start over, using a better, more transparent, more inclusive process of public input and discussion to draw maps based on fairness to voters rather than protection of incumbents and partisan advantage,

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