

**Public Submission to the West Virginia Legislature
Senate Select Committee on Redistricting**

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From: Matthew Massie [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 8, 2021 10:32 AM
To: Joint Redistricting
Subject: Redistricting Proposals

Committee:

Thank you for your redistricting proposals. In reviewing the committee's congressional submissions, I prized those submissions that created districts of substantially equal population and compact geography. I also favored submissions that kept Charleston and Huntington—which together form a largely continuous metropolitan area—in one district.

In light of these rubrics, I only considered those submissions with a 0.05% deviation or smaller. Of the seven maps with deviations this small, the two proposals that caught my eye were Trump 10 and Tarr 2/Trump 14 (which are identical). Both proposals cut a roughly diagonal line NW–SE that keeps the coalfield counties in the same district as Charleston and Huntington, the two major cities most relevant to their interests. Of these, **Tarr 2/Trump 14** creates two geographically compact districts by keeping Summers and Monroe counties in the southern district. My preference would be for those proposals.

As for the Senate maps, **Trump 1** is the best by far. It minimizes the number of split counties, which makes interaction and negotiation with senators easier both for the voters and the elected leaders of our counties. By my count only Kanawha, Wayne, Marshall, and Berkeley will be split between two districts in this map. In our current map, 13 counties are split by districts—two of those being split among three districts. This map and some others also make the inspired choice to give Monongalia County its own district, which I believe is a move that will benefit the people of that county and the state.

Several of the other submissions are, however, particularly offensive with regard to county-splitting. Trump 3–7 split Cabell County between two districts, which to my knowledge has never happened before and appears unnecessary and unwise. Inexplicably, Trump 4–6 create a District 17 with probably 90% of its population in Kanawha County and the remainder in the Alum Creek area of Lincoln County. This is remarkable because it would create a situation in which that small, rural section of Lincoln County would be constitutionally entitled to a senator residing therein for at least the next decade. As fine as the people of Alum Creek are, I am not so sure that the Kanawha County voters who overwhelmingly populate the district would appreciate having their choices for that seat so limited.

Thank you for your hard work on this matter. I hope my comments may be of some help.

Sincerely,
Matthew R. Massie