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

Date Document Received: October 7, 2021
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Senators:

Out of 55 counties, only Monongalia County meets the equal population criterion, with its 105,822 people falling within 0.3% of the ideal population target of 105,513. Also, Mon County is a distinct community of interest. Therefore, any map that splits Mon County should be discarded. Period.

A decision to preserve Mon County whole leaves Trump #1, Trump #3, and Trump #4 for consideration.

Of those remaining maps, I focused on the "tails" of the northern and eastern panhandles because splits for counties there are the most geographically constrained.

In the north:

- Marshall County is split between Districts 1 and 2. That split in Trump #4 leads to a higher population variance than in Trump #1 or Trump #3.
- District #2 in Trump 4 contains too many counties to the south, straying from the communities of interest criterion.
- District #2 in Trump #3 and Trump #1 contains fewer counties, with Trump #1 having the most visibly compact District #2.
- Conclusion: It appears that Trump #1 is the preferred option for Districts 1 and 2.

In the east:

- By necessity, Jefferson County, which is far below the population target, must adopt a portion of Berkeley County, which exceeds the population target, to create District 16. District 16 constitutes the end of the eastern panhandle tail.
- The main consideration for constructing District 16 appears to be how much of Martinsburg, if any, to include. (Note: The extent to which District 16 encompasses Martinsburg is very difficult to analyze from the published maps because the three maps followed different scales and labeling conventions.)
- In practical terms, Shepherdstown is a distinct community of interest from Martinsburg. But more importantly, Martinsburg (which is its own community of interest) should not be split, while keeping the district population within the 5% variance. It appears (again, within the limits of the map labeling) that Martinsburg is split the least in Trump #1. However, Martinsburg may be split in all three renderings and, unfortunately, District 16 has a near-maximum population deviation of 4.24% in Trump #1.
- Conclusion: A clear preference could not emerge because of the limitations of the map renderings. However, I lean toward Trump #1 for the eastern panhandle District 16, for the reasons cited above.

Thank you for your work and the extent to which it has been done in public. The rule adopted in your first meeting that maps are available at least 24 hours in advance of discussion and your willingness to conduct open discussion during public meetings have contributed to a sense of transparency that is lacking on the House side. If I could make one suggestion: please publish PowerPoint slides, handouts, and minutes on your website along with agendas.

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