

Joint Select Committee on Congressional Redistricting Public Comments - 02/15/2016 - Complete Report

Category	Name	Address	Comments
Joint Select Committee on Congressional Redistricting	Robin Withrow	Apex, NC	The legislature, knowing that the districts they drew up were unconstitutional at the time of their creation, needs to redraw these and surrounding districts in a fair, constitutional and more non-partisan manner. When the Democrats were in power I am sure the GOP members did not like gerrymandered districts. The GOP came into power saying they would be different. Well, in a sense they have been. They've been a hundred times worse. It is time to end once and for all partisan redistricting and put the responsibility for redrawing districts in the hands of a non-partisan group that will be charged with drawing up logical, fair and constitutional districts that allow the people of North Carolina to elect whomever they choose in a way that is not stacked against minorities or one party or the other.
	Lisa Ross	Greensboro , NC	Districts should be drawn by an independent nonpartisan body in a regular geometric shape.
	Lisa Jordy	Hillsborough, NC	Dear Lawmaker, When three federal judges ruled two of North Carolina's 13 congressional districts are racial gerrymanders -- unlawfully packing African-Americans within their boundaries and whitening the surrounding areas, all for political gain -- U.S. District Judge Max Cogburn, wrote an important message to you: "Elections should be decided through a contest of issues, not skillful mapmaking." I agree. These cynical, partisan maps continue to aggressively segregate voters even as North Carolinians like me prepare to head to the polls in March 2016. That's why the courts ordered you to redraw them immediately. And that's why this isn't a time for more legal appeals. I'm calling on you to to stop making excuses, follow the order, and redraw the maps. After all, fair elections require fair maps. Can I count on you to draw fair maps now? Thank you, Lisa Jordy
	Noah Grolnick	Durham, NC	It is vital that the redrawing of North Carolina's congressional maps assures that every citizen has an equal voice in our democracy; that politicians do not chose their voters in a way that makes it easier to get reelected but that voters are able to chose the the politicians to represent them. The new redistricting process must not return to the status quo and simply do the

		bear minimum to satisfy judicial review. The issue of our democracy should be bipartisan. The people of North Carolina deserve a true representative democracy.
Marilyn Harris	Roanoke rapids, NC	<p>It is my belief that the 1st Congressional District was redistricted to discriminate against African American voters and to lessen their voting power. The 1st Congressional District and all districts affected by the Redistricting done by the Republican Congress of the State of North Carolina should be reversed to their former state prior to being gutted and creating a state of gerrymandering among the voters in the 1st Congressional District (in which I reside)and other voting districts.</p> <p>The citizens of the 1st Congressional District and all citizens in the State of North Carolina deserve a fair and equal opportunity to cast votes without being lumped in voting clusters that dilute their voting power and produce an inequity in representation.</p>
Wilton Strickland	Goldsboro, NC	<p>In an article re. drawing Congressional districts published in The News & Observer 13 Feb 2016, Dallas Woodhouse, NC Republican Party executive director, said, "We will advocate a complete colorblind drawing of the map where no racial considerations are made whatsoever."</p> <p>If that really be the case, why can't the districts be simply composed of contiguous municipal units (cities, towns, counties), based on population numbers alone, as necessary to make up the population apportionment and let race and politics fall where they may.</p>
James Johnson	Wade, NC	The maps should NOT have to be redrawn. "Gerrymandering" of districts has been the privilege of the majority party in NC for years and now you have some political activist judge saying they're "unconstitutional". Well, I say...screw him.
Timothy O'Brien	Chapel Hill, NC	Please end gerrymandering. Please extend an olive branch by allowing a non-partisan group determine these congressional districts. Please turn over redistricting to an independent commission for all current and future redistricting decisions.
Mary Ann McCarthy	Southport, NC	I implore you to return NC7 to its pre-2011 District area. Brunswick & New Hanover Counties are coastal communities whose needs are very distinct from interior counties. This District was redrawn to include Johnston County for one reason, to give David Rouzer a seat in the House. The needs of the Coast are not being served by a Congressman whose primary interests and campaign funding is solely focused on the farming industry. We have no Representation or a voice in the U.S. House of Representatives. Setting House a Districts to suit the needs of your cronies is bad politics and we are fed up with the status quo.
Betsy Lowman	Boone, NC	With the death of Supreme Court Judge Scalia the ruling of the lower court regarding redistricting holds. You now HAVE to redistrict within 2 weeks. Take political allegiance out of the equation by using a computer algorithm to do the job. California Silicon Valley companies surely have such programs available. Letting any member of the NC legislature participate in redrawing the maps would be fishy and smelly. So would calling on local company SAS since Goodnight is such an outspoken member of the ruling oligarchy.
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Dwight Grissom	Greensboro , NC	<p>Our state is rigged By the wealthy and Republicans. I want the lines drawn fairly!</p>
Joe Lowman	Boone, NC	<p>Gerrymanded congressional districts are very undemocratic and should be changed and avoided when new ones are drawn. The temptation of legislators, Democratic as well as Republican, to cheat when redistricting NC's districts is so great a truly independent group using computer methods to redrawing them is needed. Several states which also have to redraw their districts are looking at neutral methods drawn without political input from either party. NC should also lead in this important reform in our congressional elections. Maybe the public with respect the House of Representatives again if districts are formed fairly.</p>
Nancy Wilkinson	Elon, NC	<p>Please make sure that all districts are drawn up fairly in a non-partisan manner. By doing this, you'll make sure that all citizens have an equal voice. Thank you!</p>
Kenneth Dalsheimer	Durham, NC	<p>Dear Joint Committee on Congressional Redistricting,</p> <p>I am writing to strongly urge you to strengthen our democracy here in NC and ensure that citizens of the state have fair districts for fair elections. Our Federal judges have ruled that two of North Carolina's 13 congressional districts are racial gerrymanders, unlawfully packing African-Americans within their boundaries and whitening the surrounding areas -- all for political gain. The judges have ruled that these unconstitutional districts must be redrawn immediately. This is especially urgent as our March elections approach.</p> <p>Please abide by this judicial request and redraw the maps.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Kenneth Dalsheimer Durham, NC</p>
Jonathan Markle	Raleigh, NC	<p>I agree with the Federal Court's decision. The voting districts, as now set up in North Carolina, seem to me to be stilted against any logical, reasonable division of the State into districts which allow for everyone to have their vote count in elections. It would seem to me that the Republican legislature has devised the current districts to make it nearly impossible for the votes of minorities, Blacks and disenfranchised people to have a say in the Government of this State and representation at the Federal level.</p>

		Further, it does not seem possible, given the uneven distribution of the current State legislature which weights heavily in the favor of Republicans, that honest redistricting can ever be had in this State.
Helen Compton	Durham, NC	Please return Durham to one congressional district. The voice of our community has been broken up among 5 districts. When people go to vote, across the street neighbors can be voting for different congresspeople. The issues these neighbors address are often the same. Because our community is broken into parts, we can offer no unified voice in the needs of our county. Keep communities whole!
Gregory Kennington	Durham, NC	Please bring democracy back to North Carolina--End political gerrymandering by implementing a non-partisan redistricting process.
Lynda Bennett	MAggie Valley, NC	I am completely satisfied with the district boundaries for US House of Representatives and believe it UnConstitutional to try to change our elections that are already underway. We accept 'NO DELAY' in our state elections! That would constitute DISENFRANCHISEMENT - if allowed to interrupt our 2016 election. The worst case of gerrymandering was created under the DEMOCRATS and continued under the recent redistricting.
Gail Bromley	Leland, NC	We cannot be present for the public hearings being held on how to deal with designating Congressional districts in NC. We do know, however, that both major political parties have done what they can to influence the process to the advantage of the party in power. That is not good, does not help our democracy work well, and means strange and unwieldy districts without a logical reason other than trying to gain a political advantage. We strongly request that district boundaries be drawn by an independent group that does NOT represent political parties. Partisan politics should not be how these lines are drawn. In states where an independent group has drawn the boundaries, the process is much more acceptable to all the citizens. This process takes a lot of pressure off the political party in power and the resulting districts look more reasonable, understandable, and the process seems much more open to the public at large. Thank you. Gail F. Bromley Voter Services Chair League of Women Voters of the Lower Cape Fear
John Wells	Edenton, NC	Please redraw the boundry lines for District 1 and 12 Tha reflects the states racial composition so that all citizens can participate in our government. Thank you.
William Miller	Edenton, NC	The present makeup of congressional districts favors incumbents and has contributed to the polarization of North Carolina politics. I am a resident of the 1st District, one of the two districts which have been the basis of the Federal Panel ruling; it is apparent that gerrymandering has been done on a racial basis here...to preserve a Democratic representation in this district and to preserve a Republican seat in the 3rd district. Neither situation is fair to voters in either party; I believe that this practice is referred to as

		<p>"Packing" a district. In any event, it has served to concentrate political power within a district, but not allow a natural expansion of party representation and influence beyond the district. I urge you to deliberate carefully, consider wisely and propose fairly in these deliberations. We, the citizens of North Carolina, expect no less than your best efforts to remedy the disservice being done to our voters.</p>
Roy Smith Jr	New Bern, NC	<p>I am a lifelong citizen of North Carolina.</p> <p>It's time to end the Gerrymandering of North Carolina's Voting Districts. The Taxpayers deserve a fair process in elections and a non-partisan way to draw districts. Please stop wasting our tax dollars and do the right thing!</p>
Melanie Goff Bradley	Rocky Mount, NC	<p>Thank you for holding public hearings, although I wish you had planned and announced them earlier for more advance notice, and later in the day at a more convenient time for the working public. Thank you for your tardy addition of a location in District 1.</p> <p>I believe the maps should be drawn by an independent, non-partisan panel charged with basic standard instructions. Included are that the continuity and contiguousness of the district shapes should be compact, should follow geopolitical boundaries as much as possible, and not divide counties and/or cities if at all possible. The locations of the boundaries should approximate traditional districts except in these recent egregious maps. Very importantly, more attention needs to be paid to the rights of every citizen to be counted and represented, in a 'one person, one vote' manner, and less to the race or economic condition of the citizen.</p> <p>My hope is that the primary will be held as planned on March 15, unaffected except for the Congressional races, which should be postponed to May or June. My expectation is that the people who commissioned and supported the current unconstitutional maps should realize the unnecessary expense they are subjecting our citizens to. And my signal to both parties in the Legislature is that the citizens will not allow this type of unconstitutional voter suppression to stand. Thank you.</p>
James Bennett	MAggie Valley, NC	<p>It is a disregard of our RIGHT to VOTE to have the courts Delay the Congressional Election.</p> <p>I am satisfied with the Congressional Districts.</p>
Larry King	Raleigh, NC	<p>Gerrymandering (along with money in politics) is one of the greatest threats to democracy because it makes a mockery of the principle of "one person, one vote". Redraw Congressional districts 1 and 12 such that they support this basic principle.</p>
Laurin Kier	Elon, NC	<p>I am a NC native and have lived most of my 60 years in this state. I believe all registered citizens deserve for their vote to count as much as anyone else's vote. I do NOT believe that either the Republicans or the Democrats can be trusted to draw fair, non-partisan Congressional voting districts. I urge you to use my hard earned tax dollars to hire a non-partisan agency to redraw the district lines as ordered by the Federal court system.</p>
Terr Schmidt	Pitsboro, NC	<p>If we have to redistrict, ANY redistricting must be color-blind! Stop the gerrymandering. Keep precincts and counties together.</p>

Edith Knight	Stoneville, NC	Please stop gerrymandered districts in North Carolina, allowing each vote to count. Now, in general elections in my district the outcome is decided before I enter the voting booth. I am for nonpartisan redistricting in all districts in North Carolina.
Robert Heltman	Hendersonville, NC	This intervention attempting to redistrict what has already been legally done, AT THE LAST Minute which disrupts plans, ballot printing, etc. for the March 15 election, is outrageous, and mindless as to the expenses (time, effort, confusion, money) such nonsense entails. Those "judicial" entities ought to be charged individually with those expenses and have their pictures and names prominently shown in public so voters can boot them out of office for such silly behavior.
John Adams	Star , NC	As a life long Republican voter I believe that the existing districts are lawful and should stay the way that the were drawn up. The Democracts are trying what the learn from our President and go around the law as it is written. We live in a country that is governed by the people for the people. If your side losses the election pull yourself up by your boot straps and try harder the next time to get in office and pass the laws to change ones they don't agree with.
Greg Hausler	Greensboro, NC	The current districts are drawn unfairly and are confusing. They are not in the best interest of the state and do not represent the citizens accurately. They should be redrawn. Delaying the redistricting only serves the interests of those who intentionally gerrymandered them in the first place.
Donna Newman	Raleigh, NC	Redraw the two districts FAIRLY. If we the People cannot trust that our Legislators are being selected based on the demographics of NC as a whole, and that we are being represented fairly even when in the minority across the State, the whole house of cards will tumble down. Trust, lost in the process, cannot easily be regained. You must start now to regain it.
Elaine Hewitt	Cleveland, NC	I am strongly opposed to disruption of the NC Primary. To disrupt the primary after absentee voting has begun would result in extreme confusion to voters, thus suppressing voting, huge unnecessary costs at the state and county levels, and put an undue burden on candidates. If the lines must be redrawn, I recommend that the gerrymandered 12th and 1st districts be eliminated and replace with districts with logical boundaries. I recommend that counties not be split between different districts unless absolutely necessary. I hope to attend a hearing in person, but with the predicted weather do not expect to be able to attend.
Cornelia Cree	Waynesville, NC	Gentlemen and Ladies, I've lived in Haywood County 25 years and we have never had adequate representation. We see ourselves as the most gerrymandered county in the state. Our representatives are not malicious, but they have concerns of their own. Haywood meanwhile has a very large, very prosperous cattle industry. It is no small feat moving around 1,200 pound beasts. The cattlemen privately have put a great deal of time and energy into their business as a joint effort. Our representatives should be able to promote this in the General Assembly. I am aware that your present job is to straighten out possible inequities in our Congressional group, although we are quite happy with our Congressman but for the future please consider Haywood needing its own

		single legislator so we can improve on our progress as a cattle-raising area. Thank you.
Robert Doss	Marshall, NC	<p>Clearly my input doesn't matter, given the short time frame between soliciting constituent input and actually redrawing the districts.</p> <p>Bernie Sanders has come to prominence in large part because voters feel that politicians behave unfairly. No where is this more obvious than in the gerrymandering of districts. The republican-controlled assembly can do if they like now, but that will drive voters to replace Republicans with Democrats who will redraw the districts yet again.</p> <p>If fairness and statesmanship were actually to prevail, I would recommend that a Geographic Information System (GIS) such that each district contains roughly the same number of people and had roughly the same average distance to a population center suitable for congressmen to establish their offices.</p> <p>But fairness is a naive notion in today's government (especially the NC General Assembly) and true statesman are no longer willing to run for office.</p> <p>I'm sure you will redraw the districts according to the maps you already have drawn, with no regard to input from me or any other constituent.</p> <p>Thanks for putting on the show though.</p>
Grant Millin	Asheville, NC	<p>My trust in the NC GOP is nonexistent.</p> <p>Splitting Asheville into NC 10 and 11 was a political move to maintain GOP control. I want legislation enacting the North Carolina independent redistricting commission.</p> <p>The inability for the NC GOP to produce draft redistricting maps reflecting their response to judicial mandates as of today (2/14/16) shows a dangerous, anti-democratic lack of transparency. Citizens have no legitimate basis to form a response.</p> <p>It was only today that written comments sent directly to the 2016 Joint Select Committee on Congressional Redistricting was possible.</p>
Dan and Eva Steward	Skyland, NC	The timing on this is absurd! It's hard enough to get people to vote and now you want to throw a monkey wrench in this NOW? I'm all for fairness, but this seems contrived. Wait until 2017 to deal with this matter please!
A.W. Myers	Cleveland, NC	To start with I believe any district should not be determined by color of skin, ever effort should be made to keep a county in tack not split up. As for redistricting presently being considered it should not be implemented until after the coming election. If a redistricting is needed based on population it should be done after the coming election due to the controversy/representation that may arise in changing district lines at such a late date prior to a major general election. The best time may be after the election in early 2017 or mid 2017
Todd Patton	Durham, NC	Please redraw NC's Congressional Districts in as compact a manner as possible, splitting the fewest number of counties and precincts as possible.

		You should completely ignore the location of homes of incumbents, political parties of voters and races of voters. NC deserves sensible, compact districts - not districts designed to protect a political party or certain powerful legislators.
Jennie Betton	Greensboro, NC	Districts should be created by an independent commission without regard to party affiliation or politics. No one likes to play in a game whose outcome is rigged in favor of the rule makers. So much more so for the process of electing our representatives, which is vastly more important than any game. No matter how this process has been handled in the past, it is time for it to be fair. All citizens deserve this.
Carolyn Sexton	Raleigh, NC	Now that NC has received the ruling of the Federal judges that two of North Carolina's 13 congressional districts are gerrymandered racially, unlawfully packing African-Americans within their boundaries and whitening the surrounding areas, I hope that you will seriously work to preserve the integrity of our voting system by redrawing district lines to assure that everyone's vote truly counts and that the districts reflect their true multi-racial character. Even if the primary must be postponed, this is too important not to address.
Jody Och	Weaverville, NC	The NC GOP has eroded all trust. The gerrymandering of Asheville into NC 10 and 11 was obviously an unabashed political move to maintain GOP control. We want legislation enacting an independent redistricting commission for NC. With only 5 days left before the deadline, the fact that the NC GOP have yet to produce a draft of new redistricting maps responding to court ruling is an anti-democratic lack of transparency.
Cinnamon Frame	USA, NC	I want my representative to be a person who represents the interest of my area, not some corridor. Boundaries should be drawn along county lines and should represent areas who have common interests. For example, I live in Johnston County. I do not want my representative to be standing for us and the cities of Raleigh and Garner. I also don't think Johnston County should be split along the middle. We should have legislators from communities, just like we have community schools. In addition, to be fair, I feel a non-partisan committee should draw the lines - neither party can be trusted to do this fairly and not butcher our representation to suit their own ends.
Orlando Miller	Cary, NC	Simple fairness and common sense, not to mention the Court, and principles of democracy, require the redistricting of districts 1 and 12 without delay.
Julia Bryan	Raleigh, NC	If the United States wishes to maintain the democratic principles the country was founded on, voting districts must be drawn to give each voter one full vote. A good place to start to reclaim this founding principle is with redrawing North Carolina districts 1 and 12.
Carroll Heins	Raleigh, NC	Gerrymandering, whether by Democrats or Republicans- which by definition is for partisan purposes - is counter to, and undermines and weakens, a democratic society. I hope our legislators will give serious thought to that,

		and to their responsibilities as leaders. I'm aware that this will sound naive and idealistic in this age of cynicism, but I note that there are some statesmen remaining in both parties who advocate for a non partisan solution to this obvious absurdity. (If you don't think it is absurd, check out the map.). I hope they prevail.
Martha Benton	Asheville, NC	As usual the Democrats are trying to screw up an election they are afraid of losing. They are guilty of voter fraud already in New Hampshire, and they now want to bring it to North Carolina. I would think our courts/Judges would have better sense than to fall for their underhanded tactics.
Bennett Cotten	Raleigh, NC	The legislative districts as they now stand are a perversion of the concept of 'district.' Please allow the legislative staff to revise the current redistricting plan so that it is not race-based, protects rural/urban differences, assures minority voice/balance/representation, protects incumbents from residing in the same districts as other incumbents, and is blind to past voting patterns and party registrations. Let the chips fall where they may. I urge you to follow the best interests of all North Carolina and make this the first step towards eliminating gerrymandering. If more time is needed in order to accomplish this, I would prefer that the primary date be delayed. Thank you for soliciting my input.
Roger Lytle	Zebulon, NC	First I am against taking any action as the primary process has already begun (absentee voting) and at this point it would be unfair to the voters, the elected officials as well as any candidates from all NC parties, not to mention the tax payers dollars it would cost as this late time. I actually think all the districts are Unconstitutional as well as the Voting Rights Act and should be challenged. We talk about stopping racism and this is the worst form, trying to arrange Representation for a particular group, at this point in history they are many different races in North Carolina/America. We don't make special districts for American Indians or Hispanics or Asians or anyone else. We are all Americans and we should be divided into equal populated districts, located in the same geographic area. The NC Constitution states that Counties should not be divided for the General Assembly but almost every County is. We have 13 Congressional Districts, 100 Counties and approximately 10 million people. So it should be approximately 770,000 people in each district and then distribute the 100 Counties to achieve this distribution. An alternative would be a mathematical grid pattern (based upon square miles) for the entire state based upon 13 Districts as the state population grows the grids are equally divided based upon the number of Districts. In the future as our population grows then only a reduction in the grid size would be required. Thank You for the opportunity to comment.
Steven Odom	Robbinsville, NC	I believe the current Congressional maps in North Carolina are both legal and fair. They have been upheld by our states highest court and have already weathered two election cycles. Changing the Congressional Districts at this point, the the middle of the election process, would be unfair and just plain wrong. The tax payers of North Carolina would be forced to bare the expense of separate elections and votes already cast via the absentee voting process would be declared void, the voters time and efforts wasted, not to mention their Constitutional rights violated.
Deborah Odom	Robbinsville, NC	I believe the current Congressional maps in North Carolina are both legal and fair. They have been upheld by our states highest court and have already weathered two election cycles. Changing the Congressional Districts

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Mary Engle	Robbinsville, NC	<p>I believe the current Congressional maps in North Carolina are both legal and fair. They have been upheld by our states highest court and have already weathered two election cycles. Changing the Congressional Districts at this point, the the middle of the election process, would be unfair and just plain wrong. The tax payers of North Carolina would be forced to bare the expense of separate elections and votes already cast via the absentee voting process would be declared void, the voters time and efforts wasted, not to mention their Constitutional rights violated. I disagree with the Federal courts ruling.</p>
Judith Lotas	Duck, NC	<p>We need fair maps of voting districts for fair elections. Please make this your #1 priority.</p>
Rollin Kibbe	Raleigh, NC	<p>I'm so happy that the party of the self-righteous has once again been caught behaving badly. So much for believing in an omnipotent God--a God that needs their devious tactics to ensure a victory. Shame, shame on the NCGOP. Do the right thing and get a non-partisan group to simply divide the state into geographically contiguous districts, and the the quality of the candidates determine the outcome. Isn't that what America is supposed to be about? Or do the NCGA and the NCGOP think they're better than America?</p>
Jim Roberts	Pilot Mountain, NC	<p>February 14, 2016</p> <p>3 Federal Judges recently ordered the North Carolina Legislature to redraw the 1st and 12th Congressional Districts of North Carolina currently held by Representatives G.K. Butterfield and Alma Adams because the districts were racially gerrymandered. The 100 page decision places blame on both the Democratic and Republican parties. The ruling states that the 12 Congressional District "is so contorted and contrived that the United States Courthouse in Charlotte, where this concurrence was written, is five blocks within its boundary, and the United States Courthouse in Greensboro, where the trial was held, is five blocks outside the same district, despite being more than 90 miles apart and located in separate federal judicial districts. How a voter can know who their Representative is or how a Representative can meet with their pocketed voters is beyond comprehension." The decision goes on to say that "While redistricting to protect the political party that controls the legislature is constitutionally permitted and lawful, it is in disharmony with the fundamental values upon which this country was founded".</p> <p>Political gerrymandering became so abusive in the state of Arizona that the people formed an independent redistricting commission and took the responsibility away from the legislature. The Arizona Legislature promptly sued the Arizona Independent Redistricting Commission and that case went all the way to the Supreme Court. Arizona State Legislature v. Arizona Independent Redistricting Commission. The Supreme Court found for the Arizona Independent Redistricting Commission 5-4.</p>

			<p>This recent decision is an excellent opportunity for the people of North Carolina to exert their influence over an unrelenting Legislative agenda that has overwhelmingly reflected the interests of the Corporations over those of the people. One of the most egregious examples occurred after the 6th Congressional District's Stokes County Board of Commissioners unanimously passed a law banning Fracking in Stokes County over concern about the pollution of Stokes resident's drinking water through the contamination of their wells. The Republican controlled North Carolina Legislature overrode the people of Stokes County before the week was out. Not only did they outlaw any City or County action in North Carolina against Fracking but they made it retroactive to declare illegal the Stokes County Board action. In an additional "slap in the face" to the people of North Carolina the Legislature made it a FELONY for anyone to expose any of the ingredients of the chemical mixture that is pumped into the ground during the Fracking procedure.</p> <p>As a Representative candidate for the 6th Congressional District of North Carolina I hereby call on the people of North Carolina, the Democratic and Republican Parties and the North Carolina Legislature to step forward and establish an Independent Redistricting Commission composed of 1 Democrat and 1 Independent selected by the Democratic Party, 1 Republican, and 1 Independent selected by the Republican party. And a 5th person that is a career employee of the state government and that is selected by the other 4. All those selected should have a well rounded familiarity with North Carolina's geography, agriculture, aquaculture, population and business. Their job should be to as evenly as possible divide North Carolina into the established number of Congressional Districts by adjoining counties that have a like number of people, a regional commonality without any partial counties in any district and no district composed of less than 3 counties.</p> <p>Jim Roberts</p>
Charlene Shaver	Statesville, NC		<p>It is time for a fair election. Districts must be redrawn to be more geographical not to suit partisan agenda and discrimination, the primary needs to be postponed.</p> <p>Thank You Charlene Shaver</p>
Margaret Leinbach	Winston Salem, NC		<p>I urge you to make the districts more geographically compact without dividing cities. Drawing "safe" Republican or Democratic districts is not a valid concern. Voters should pick their representatives, rather than politicians picking their voters.</p>
Tara Romano	Raleigh, NC		<p>With a federal court ruling that 2 of North Carolina's latest redistricts are racial gerrymanders, I urge the NCGA to immediately take up the work of redrawing the districts. Since this redistricting was done in 2011 - once again, without the benefit of an independent redistricting committee - there has been a lack of voter confidence in our election process. Taking the</p>

		<p>federal court ruling seriously and making an immediate effort to redraw these districts will go a long way towards boosting voter confidence that our elections in 2016 will be free and fair.</p>
Steve Coleman	Murphy, NC	<p>We do not need re districting every time the Democratic Party loses an election!! The districts are fine the democrats need to look at their national platform if they want change!!!!?????????????</p>
Thomas Hohman	Waxhaw, NC	<p>I advocate the passage of HB 92 to establish a nonpartisan redistricting commission.</p>
Jane Wallace	Arden, NC	<p>Please share that online written comments to the Joint Select Committee on Congressional Redistricting are finally possible. Unfortunately you'll have to Internet search "North Carolina Joint Select Committee on Congressional Redistricting" to learn why you should comment.</p> <p>I suggest asking your legislators to hold a joint GOP-Dem press conference to help us all</p> <p>"My trust in the NC GOP is nonexistent.</p> <p>Splitting Asheville into NC 10 and 11 was a political move to maintain GOP control. I want legislation enacting the North Carolina independent redistricting commission.</p> <p>The inability for the NC GOP to produce draft redistricting maps reflecting their response to judicial mandates as of today (2/14/16) shows a dangerous, anti-democratic lack of transparency. Citizens have no legitimate basis to form a response.</p> <p>It was only today that written comments sent directly to the 2016 Joint Select Committee on Congressional Redistricting was possible."</p> <p>http://www.ncleg.net/gascripts/DocumentSites/browseDocSite.asp?nID=292</p>
Carol Rist	Durham, NC	<p>When I first learned that I was now in the 1st Congressional District, I downloaded the map to see how my Congressman lived in Wilson. The first thought that came to my mind was "Gerrymander." I believe that I and my fellow North Carolinians have a right to congressional districts which are as compact as possible and follow municipal and county boundaries as much as possible while creating districts which have as equal representation as possible. While I believe that minority populations have a right to have districts where they have the possibility of having one of their own elected to public office, I believe that crowding as many minorities as possible in one district so as to minimize their influence overall, is unconstitutional.</p>
Ashlyn Bauer	Dudley , NC	<p>My district is beyond gerrymandered to just, come out and say it, cater to the black community, I have emailed my district leader BUNCHES of times about great concerns I had. That a lot of people had that just was scared or didn't know how to say. So I'm speaking on behalf of a lot of people in my town. My first time emailing my leader I got the basic automated response so I sent another and almost got an instant reply!! Whether it was him or his staff.... I was literally emailing back and forth. I stressed my concerns about the automated reply. What I got as my second reply was nasty!! It was beyond rude and I've shown it to EVERYONE in leadership positions in my county. They kept getting more rude as the messages went on.sadly</p>

		<p>he's a major incumbent who's gotten too comfortable in his seat and keeps his district drawn to where it's mostly illegals who cannot vote, or the black community. I am not racist I am telling the truth. No one will run AgAinst this man because he's such a horrible person to talk to!</p> <p>I'm in George Butterfields district, but I'd rather keep him "out of trouble"</p>
Cheryl Stallings	Apex, NC	<p>I support redistricting reform for districts 1 and 12 and ALL of NC districts for federal, state, and local elections. Have the courage to map all districts so they are fair to both parties. I support having a third, neutral party map election districts throughout our state. Let's have the courage to live into being a true democracy with fair elections that make it easy and accessible for all North Carolinians to vote. Campaign finance reform is also sorely needed b/c elections continue to be sold to the highest bidders/ donors/contributors. This is NOT democracy.</p>
Gail Stroud	Greensboro , NC	<p>Finally, a chance to end this madness of gerrymandering of the Democrats and the Republicans and appoint a non-partisan committee to make sensible districts. The "ballot-box mayhem " is evident on the ballot! The major disruption is that my vote has been diluted and that the gerrymandering has been self serving to an elite few.</p>
margaret mrstik	greensboro, NC	<p>I believe that the congressional districts should be drawn by an independent commission. All districts should be as compact and uniform as possible without political party considerations. Such districts would more adequately represent those populations. Please leave politics out of district consideration and go by population alone.</p>
Linda Jarrett	Pinehurst, NC	<p>TWIMC:</p> <p>In view of the findings of FIVE prior reviews all being positive, this single finding is at least suspect.</p> <p>It should be noted that one of the five reviews was by the US DOJ!</p> <p>In any case, to put such an unrealistic deadline - and, so close to the Primary date - is totally unfair to the voters of North Carolina.</p> <p>While the efforts of the GA to comply are laudable, i fervently believe their position is untenable.</p> <p>Sincerely, L. B. Jarrett</p>
gay dillard	greensboro, NC	<p>After 100 years of Democrats controlling NC, I find it ironic that "new" redistricting is a problem. People need to be honest about what their motivations are. I've yet to read a newspaper here in Greensboro (news and record)</p>
gay dillard	greensboro, NC	<p>Con't...that got all the facts straight. Let the legislature do their job.</p>
Stephanie Beaumont	Rutherfordton, NC	<p>North Carolina should implement an independent redistricting process that is fair and representative of the will of the electorate. No matter how strongly</p>

		GOP members of the legislature wish to rig the system to maintain control, we live in a democracy and all votes should count. An independent, unbiased process should be applied to federal, state, and local elections in all North Carolina races. Every minute wasted rigging the system is a burden to taxpayers and should be considered shameful to the controlling party of self-proclaimed "fiscal conservatives."
Suzannah Thomas	Durham, NC	I am not in favor of changing our voting districts period. Stop trying to manipulate the process please.
Henrietta Howell	Charlotte, NC	Redistricting in order to steal, or suppress votes should be considered illegal, and unconstitutional. Please take this opinion as representative of many who prefer to remain quiet, but are angry about the matter!
Sharon Came	Black Mountain, NC	This state should not be forced to redraw its congressional districts in the middle of an election cycle causing tremendous chaos. This action will cost our counties and state untold thousands. Let order reign in our state and the elections go forward as planned.
Pamela Ransohoff	Chapel Hill, NC	I believe this is very inappropriate so close to the actual voting date. It would leave no time to redistrict without chaos. Since this has been known for three years why this particular time to choose to ask for a redistricting? It appears to me that this could be "reverse gerrymandering."
Laura Macklem	Cary, NC	Please leave the districts as they are for this election. This issue can be revisited before the next election. This is going to cause so much confusion, feelings of being disenfranchised, and anger if the districts are redrawn while people already sent in their early ballots.
Robert Ward	Raleigh, NC	I oppose re districting!
William Rierson	Winston-Salem, NC	Redrawing congressional district lines would confuse the electorate and lower voter turnout in 2016. The people cannot trust representatives to adequately serve them if neither party trusts they are bound to each other.
Larry Schug	zebulon, NC	We do not need to change lines. Leave alone
cheryl hardman	Chapel Hill , NC	<p>Opposed to any change of the Federal Districts at this time. I believe that the work that has already been done, the ballots that have already been printed and the people signed up to run, need to stay as approved by the US Justice Department and the NC Supreme Court.</p> <p>This act to delay these elections would be a travesty of justice. Please know that the people have spoken by voting in the NC Legislature and NC Supreme Court.</p> <p>If this wants to be evaluated let it be done before the next election cycle, not now, and it is a huge waste of money for NC taxpayers as well.</p>
Patsy Bartlett	Swannanoa, NC	While I don't truly understand the reasoning for how and where the district lines are drawn. I know from experience it is not only unfair but very confusing for voters to be upended this close to a primary/election. If you feel the need to redraw the lines to do so now would disrupt the entire process.
Gail Hughes	Hurdle Mills, NC	Please leave our districts as they are, so our primary election is not

		compromised and our vote is counted! This is ridiculous! Voting has already begun!
Stephen Hughes	Hurdle Mills, NC	Please leave our districts as they are so our voting isn't compromised! Voting has already begun with absentee ballots! Enough of the politics! Let our votes count!
Alice Wilson	Raleigh, NC	I support efforts to pass legislation establishing a non-partisan redistricting process so Congressional Districts like 1 & 12 doesn't happen in the future. Thank you for doing the right thing...we all have the right to vote. Alice Wilson
Richard Scarce	Hillsborough, NC	Please keep our districts as they are! Now is not the time to play politics! The voting has begun and our votes should be counted!
Rosemary Stein	Burlington, NC	As a concerned citizen and advocate for families and children, I am outraged at the lack of regard for the Rule of Law. I demand to have the three Judges that were tasked with this ruling made accountable for making this decision at this inopportune time.
David Stein	Burlington, NC	As a former Army Officer and Physician, I am troubled by the decision made by three judges at an inappropriate time. I request that these judges give an answer directly to the Constituents of the areas they serve. None of us is above the law.
Rod Chaney	Hillsborough, NC	Attorney General Eric Holder's Department of Justice precleared the plans, more than once, when counties were still subjected to the Voting Rights Act. Why are they now being questioned?
David Stein	Burlington, NC	None of us is above the Rule of Law. I request that the Judges that have ruled on this matter address the Constituents of the District that they serve directly to ascertain the reasons for such decisions and the timing of such.
Patricia Croisetiere	Littleton, NC	As a chief poll judge, I firmly believe that changing the district at this time will cause mass confusion in the precincts. Postponing the Primary would possibly result in electorate frustration and voters NOT exercising their right to vote. It would be extremely costly to the taxpayers of our county and throughout NC.
Jonathan Spoon	Sanford, NC	This is an easy task to do fairly. Use computer mapping algorithms to draw the maps purely based on population numbers and geographic efficiency. Stop trying to guess how many people will vote or how they will vote. Don't use anything but raw population numbers and an unbiased computer program. There should be another declaration period for candidates once the new district maps are in place.
Rebecca Veazey	Cary, NC	I support an independent commission performing the re-redistricting for the state. The current system eliminates any true competition and protects incumbents. It is not a reflection of democracy but rather a power grab. The people of NC deserve better. Failure to make this change is a failure in serving constituents.
Beth Evans	Jamestown, NC	To Whom it May Concern: It is my understanding that the current NC federal districts have been approved by the US Justice Dept. and we have held 2 election cycles using the current disputed districts. Our current election has already started with absentee voting. To redraw the districts now would throw the NC elections

		<p>on March 15, 2015 into confusion. It would be very expensive to reprint ballots and reorganize everything at this point. I feel strongly that the current districts should be allowed to stand as they are and the elections continue on March 15th without disruption. Sincerely, Beth Evans</p>
Rachel Kubie	Charlotte, NC	<p>North Carolina has 3 of the 10 most seriously rigged congressional maps in the United States. This does not only affect us in NC, of course, since it also affects our presidential elections and it determines who we send to congress, which affects the whole country, and honestly, our actions around the world. Our most basic right as citizens has been made a cynical game, with the consequence that the people of North Carolina are left without a political voice. We need fair maps now, maps that anyone can look at and identify as reasonable, compact, and representing equal numbers of citizens. We have a right to vote. These maps have Gerrymandered made headlines across the country. These maps have been an embarrassment to us. These maps show the backwards South, once again, rigging the system against real democracy with obvious and underhanded tricks. Now the courts have stated in no uncertain terms that North Carolina's maps must be drawn so that the people of North Carolina can choose their representatives, and not the other way around. The world is watching. Please show that the legislature of North Carolina believes in and respects our constitution enough to protect the most basic right that any of us have. Please draw fair and compact districts for us for the current election. We can't wait for our most fundamental rights.</p>
Patricia Kleinmaier	Pfafftown, NC	<p>I think this is very bad timing. The primary is less than 30 days away. Staff has been hired and money spent on training and absentee ballots. The candidates have spent money to promote the election date. If this plan was so bad why was it ok when the democrats were in charge. If it must be changed then do away with any special district. No county should be split into 2 or 3 representatives</p>
Mary Carter	Hillsborough , NC	<p>The cost alone should be reason alone to wait until the next election.</p>
David Wils	Greensboro, NC	<p>Gerrymandering, while legal, represents the worst of politics. To quote many people on this topic, voters should choose their representatives, not the other way around. But when considering the 1st District and the 12th District, where I live, the Federal panel was correct in striking down these racially influenced maps. Any notion that they are drawn this way in order to help African-Americans have representation is disingenuous, because African-American Democrats have consistently been winning there for some time. Instead, these maps were drawn specifically to consolidate the majority of the African-American and Democratic vote into two Congressional Districts, making surrounding districts far less competitive to the point that the Republicans in those districts merely have to survive a challenge from their right during a primary in order to stay in office. The Federal panel has correctly struck down these districts, finding that race was the determining factor in deciding the boundaries, and it is right that we do not delay in re-drawing them.</p> <p>Yes, it is supremely inconvenient timing that we are required to re-draw these now, with exactly one month before the primary, a candidate filing process already closed, and absentee ballots already coming in. But let's not forget that, following the irresponsible drawing of these districts, Republican leadership in Raleigh took the extra step of moving our primary</p>

			<p>to an historic early date, which is why we find ourselves in this situation now. Had our primary remained in May, candidate filing wouldn't even be closed yet. No, the inconvenience of the timing of this ruling pales in comparison to the injustice of electing representatives for a third straight election under these unconstitutional districts which decrease the power of the African-American vote and establish a lopsided representation in DC, with Democrats receiving only 23% of the representation, even though we make up nearly half of all voters in the state. This is not democracy. This is political opportunism run amok. Re-draw these districts now, and ensure a more fair representation, especially for our African-American brothers and sisters.</p> <p>An outside political operative drew these maps at Republican Headquarters in Raleigh. This is not openness and this is not transparency. These very hearings (ours was cancelled due to weather) don't promote openness as they were announced after 5pm on the 12th, a Friday, to be held at 10am on the 15th, a Monday. It is time to restore faith in our government, and we can do so by having an independent, or bi-partisan, commission redraw these maps using state computers at the General Assembly in order to make the process a matter of public record. Any consultant involved in the drawing of maps should be made available in Committee meetings so that the public can have a full understanding of his or her role and intent in creating the maps. Furthermore, Republican leadership should disclose today every cent of taxpayer money that has been spent on consultants to draw maps and outside attorneys to advice on updated plans.</p> <p>North Carolina deserves better, and under Republican leadership, and frankly Democratic leadership before that, the voice of the people has taken a back seat to the desires of those in power. Return the power back to the people and re-draw these maps in a timely, open and fair-handed way, allowing for equal representation, and allowing our citizens to be the ones who choose their representatives, not the other way around.</p>
Sue Googe	Cary, NC		<p>Redraw congressional district less than 30 days from primary will cause extreme confusions among voters, especially some of the absentee ballots already came in. This disruption from federal government will undermine our democracy, many voters will be confused and not able to vote on time or the right candidate they have been followed or rooted since announcement of the candidacy. redistrict in such short time span, the message likely not able to communicate to all voters being affected, it will defeat the purpose of redrawing for more fair representation.</p>
West Bryant	Charlotte, NC		<p>Stop wasting taxpayer money on this litigation and make at least a moderately fair-looking map. NC is a national disgrace thanks to shenanigans like this one. Understand that you are currently causing problems, not solving them by resisting reasonable redistricting. Pretend to be adults for a little bit and do your job. I am talking to the GOP members here, obviously.</p>
Brad Hessel	Raleigh, NC		<p>The US Circuit Court decision invalidating two NC Congressional Districts is a modest step in the right direction, but much, much more remains to be done. The design of the NC House and Senate district boundaries is so partisan-focused that in 54 of them—nearly one-third of the districts in</p>

North Carolina—only one of the three state-recognized parties could find candidates to run in 2016. It's hard to persuade folks to devote time and effort to studying public policy issues, fund-raising, and campaigning when everyone knows from the start that no matter how smart and talented and committed they may be, the chance they will be elected is effectively 0%. And so in November, the voters in those 54 districts will have no alternative to the one name on their ballots...other than to stay home, which many of them will undoubtedly do.

Districts drawn to maximize partisan advantage and benefit incumbents have a corrosive effect on democracy, because many voters are effectively disenfranchised and have little incentive to participate. And because in a district drawn so that only one candidate has a chance to win, there is little accountability and diminished opportunity for public policy debate.

People are right to be frustrated. In 2014, Democratic US House candidates won 44% of all the votes cast for US House races...and came away with only three out of thirteen seats (23%). The lines are drawn so that only one or two districts are reasonably competitive. In 11 or 12 of our 13 districts, if you don't belong to the dominant party, your vote effectively means nothing. In fact, even if you belong to the party whose candidate can't lose, there is little point in voting!

And that's not all. Unreasonably partisan boundaries engender lawsuits from those whose interests are hurt. Taxpayer dollars are burned up defending against these suits, and more money is potentially at risk if ballots have to be reprinted or elections delayed or even re-run. And our leaders waste time and energy they should be devoting to the people's interests scheming and bickering about what ought to be merely a straightforward math problem.

And it's not just the 2010 census. Elections in North Carolina were delayed in 1998 and then again in 2002 due to court rulings against the 1990 and 2000 cycle redistricting. Over the last 30 years, legislators of both parties have persistently demonstrated that they are not capable of performing redistricting in a way that serves the best interests of the citizens of North Carolina. This is why we need to do far more than tinker with two of the worst districts. We need to completely overhaul the dysfunctional redistricting process currently in use and replace it with something like the Iowa system.

There is a bill which has been introduced in the General Assembly—House Bill 92—modeled on the Iowa system. It would empower expert non-partisan legislative staff to develop maps for the North Carolina House and Senate, as well as U.S. House districts. They would aim for compact districts that respect existing governmental boundaries without taking into account any political or election data (including the addresses of incumbents). The NCGA would then have the option of approving the plan—with no changes allowed—or rejecting it, in which case the staff would create and submit another plan.

I urge the swift enactment of House Bill 92. Eliminating partisanship from the redistricting process would go a long way towards strengthening democracy in North Carolina, and ensuring that government is more

		accountable and responsive to the will of the people.
Marshall Bennett	Greensboro, NC	<p>Thank you for this opportunity to submit public comment. I believe it is beyond time we create an independent committee to oversee how maps are drawn in our State. People should choose their representatives, not the other way around. There is no question our districts are gerrymandered, congressionally, State Senate, State House, and even locally, all one has to do is look at a map and see the interesting serpents and dragons carved out of our beautiful State. You have even tried and succeeded in forcing local government redistricting in cities and counties where the resistance to such changes is astounding (ask Sen. Wade, she'll know what I'm talking about). In fact, I have very little faith that this committee will take these public comments into consideration after seeing how you treated the citizens of the City of Greensboro last year by attempt to force redistricting on us for our City Council. I hope you prove me wrong this time. Yes, the Democrats did it when they held control before the Republicans, but that doesn't make it the right thing to do. I am encouraged by the efforts of Senators and Representatives to create such an independent board, such as Democrat Senator Jeff Jackson and Republican Representative Jon Hardister.</p> <p>As the issue at hand stands, the maps will likely have to be redrawn by you, a body that is controlled by one party, and which drew our current maps. I hope you find within yourselves the courage to be fair, to allow elections to run their course instead of building defenses against the threat of losing power. In the 2014 US House elections in North Carolina, Democrats received about 44% of the total votes, yet they only won 3 out of our 13 Congressional districts. In this system of rigged elections, it is no longer a democratic Republic we live in, it is an oligarchy. We are the example when it comes to gerrymandered districts today. Let's be a beacon of hope in our country by being the example of a State with fairly drawn districts. I suggest you use the already existing county lines as much as possible. I like compact districts, not sprawling ones with arms reaching in to steal a community's voters. I don't like that currently, my city is split in two, between the 6th and 12th Congressional districts. My friend that lives down the street from me is in another district. I was born and raised in North Carolina in the 3rd Congressional district. I currently reside in the 6th Congressional district. This state will always be my home, and I am optimistic we can find a solution to this problem. I hope you choose the right path and lead us into a new era of fairness and cooperation, because North Carolina deserves better.</p>
kim hardman	Chapel Hill, NC	<p>I believe that the voting process is too far along to try to change anything at this point. I have already requested an absentee ballot and am concerned that my vote could be stolen.</p> <p>The judges had 5 years to try to do this and waited till the last minute when the election process had already started. If they want to take this up, they can revisit this at the Supreme Court after the 2016 elections.</p> <p>We need fair elections and we don't need to waste money that all tax payers pay the burden.</p> <p>This is foolish and hopefully the Supreme Court will see it the same way.</p>

	Sean McNeal	Asheville, NC	<p>It is time that the people choose their politicians instead of the other way around. Redistricting encourages manipulation of our elections by allowing incumbent politicians to help partisan allies, hurt political enemies and choose their voters before the voters choose them. The current process is used as a means to further political goals by drawing boundaries to protect incumbents and reduce competition, rather than to ensure equal voting power and fair representation. Enough with the finger pointing. BOTH parties have taken advantage of the system to the detriment of the citizens of North Carolina. It is time for our representatives to GROW UP and do the right thing instead of the politically expedient thing. You can say whatever you want to the media, to your constituents, to yourselves. But the choice to continue down the current path shows the world who, and what, you really are.</p> <p>If you truly believe in this country and the constitution then you will choose non-partisan redistricting. Plain & simple.</p>
	Walter Salinger	Greensboro, NC	<p>Had weather permitted, I would have delivered my comments to the committee in person at GTCC in Jamestown and here is what I intended to say:</p> <p>Thanks so much for holding this hearing and for allowing me to participate!</p> <p>I speak as a member of the League of Women Voters of the Piedmont Triad which is a nonpartisan political organization composed of women and men who are dedicated to making democracy work. After extensive study, we adopt policy positions and support them vigorously, regardless of the political climate and which political party may be in the majority at the time. But we are nonpartisan: We never support or oppose any political party or candidate.</p> <p>The League of Women Voters adopted its current policy on redistricting in 1966. We believe that redistricting should produce fair and equitable representation for everyone in all voting districts at every level of government. By this we mean that each person should have a vote and that each person's vote should be as powerful as any other person's vote in determining the outcome of elections for each public office. The League is certain that when we deviate from this ideal, we endanger the exceptionalism of America and its democracy.</p> <p>The League believes that gerrymandering, the drawing of voting district boundaries to insure the reelection of incumbents by making elections less competitive, systematically violates the ideal that the value of every person's vote should be equal to that of others. And so we consistently oppose gerrymandering.</p> <p>Here's how gerrymandering works to lower the power of some people's votes. When a pair of candidates goes into an election in a virtual tie because their race is competitive, the power of single voters in that election is very high. However, when the race is not competitive so that the winner</p>

			<p>will achieve a huge majority, the power and importance of an individual vote proves to be small. Gerrymandering intentionally makes elections less competitive, thereby stealing the power of some people's vote.</p> <p>Thus, in North Carolina's last congressional elections in 2014, due to gerrymandering, no North Carolinian's vote was very powerful but some votes were much less powerful than others, by design. As a result of gerrymandering, no congressional candidate won by less than 14.5% of the vote, seven won by ~30% or more and one even won with more than 92% of the vote. With majorities so large in every race, no election for North Carolina Representative in the US Congress was competitive in 2014 and hence individual votes were not very powerful. But gerrymandering weakened the power of some votes much more than others: votes cast in District 9 had by far the least power because the winner, running unopposed, received 92.5% of the votes and so no single vote for either candidate had much power.</p> <p>And it will be even worse in 2016's elections for seats in the North Carolina General Assembly. In those elections, 40 % of the representatives will have no opponents because gerrymandering made it impossible for opposing candidates to be competitive. In those districts, the votes of North Carolina citizens will have zero power unless an amazing write-in candidate bursts on the scene. The same is true for 13 of the election contests for seats in the North Carolina Senate.</p> <p>What happened to our foundational American ideal that any person's vote should be as powerful as any other person's vote?</p> <p>If you believe as we do that it is our fundamental obligation to make America's democracy work by assuring that all voters have equally powerful votes, then you share with us the conviction that we must put an end to gerrymandering. Take this occasion to adopt an ungerrymandered voting district map and while you're at it, to adopt a bill like HB 92 which our Representative Jon Hardister has co-sponsored, a bill that would create a truly nonpartisan redistricting process.</p> <p>We thank Representative Hardister for his strong, consistent advocacy for nonpartisan redistricting reform over the opposition of the powerful leadership in the General Assembly. The reforms he supports are virtually identical to the ideal reforms envisioned by the League. To his legislative colleagues I say: Please do your duty to America's democracy and to North Carolina's citizens: vote to end gerrymandering in North Carolina.</p>
Linda Dahl	Green Mountain, NC		<p>As a voter who has always voted in the State I've lived in. Because of that fact it's incomprehensible to think that any Judge or judges should be able to over rule the will of the voters.</p> <p>North Carolina should not be forced to redraw its congressional districts in the middle of an election cycle, where people have already begun voting. - Delaying the congressional primaries for a court ordered redraw of the maps will cause massive voter confusion and disenfranchise thousands of voters who may not vote in a likely mid summer, stand alone congressional</p>

		<p>primary. (1998 Primary Elections: May 5th Primary for US Senate: 799,371 ballots cast and September 15th Primaries for US House: 161,596 ballots cast)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Republicans are largely satisfied with their current representation and the constituent services we have. <p>I am a member of the North Carolina Republican Party and opposes the redrawing of the congressional maps. However, should the Courts require the maps be redrawn, the North Carolina Republican Party believes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The current 10-3 partisan split is a fair result of Republican election victories, which allows legislators to take partisan voting behavior into account when drawing districts. - A new congressional map should keep precincts and counties whole as much as possible. - Due to the declining influence of North Carolina's rural communities, it is imperative that our state's smallest counties not be split. - Finally, as Chief Justice Roberts said in the opinion for Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District No. 1, "the way to stop discrimination on the basis of race is to stop discriminating on the basis of race." Any new districts should be drawn in a completely "color blind" fashion, with no regard to race or demographic regions.
Gail Stroud	Greensboro , NC	<p>Finally, a chance to end this madness of gerrymandering of the Democrats and the Republicans and appoint a non-partisan committee to make sensible districts. The "ballot-box mayhem " is evident on the ballot!</p> <p>The major disruption is that my vote has been diluted and that the gerrymandering has been self serving to an elite few.</p>
Julia Wright	High Point, NC	<p>These districts have already had all there materials prepared and have been signed off on by those in authority. There is not time to do diligence to redraw the lines. My concern is that the short amount of time would make it extremely difficult to do it justice.</p>
Julia Wright	High Point, NC	<p>These districts have already had all there materials prepared and have been signed off on by those in authority. There is not time to do diligence to redraw the lines. My concern is that the short amount of time would make it extremely difficult to do it justice. It could cause some legitimate votes to be discounted. sincerely, Julia A. Wright</p>
Sharon Pearce	Raleigh, NC	<p>In this ruling the federal judicial system is striking at the very root of our identity as a nation - our election process. I am in NO AGREEMENT with this attempt to use federal courts to disrupt North Carolina's Voice in the election process.</p> <p>The credibility of the whole federal judicial system is undermined. This is a terrible legacy for the 4th circuit.</p> <p>To the General Assembly and the people of North Carolina, I am so sorry for the confusion, waste of resources, and disruption this has produced.</p>

		<p>Not long ago I was in the Campbell University Law School. This is written on the wall: "He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?" Micah 6:8.</p> <p>May we all revisit this Eternal Wisdom - especially in the courts of America.</p>
Carol Ellis	Wendell, NC	<p>This issue is, once again, another attempt to push something through at a last minute timeframe which makes for poor management and oversight for things that really need more scrutiny or consideration. The expense alone for our state at this late date should be reason for a stay so that we can implement a clean plan for redistricting NC. Confusion cannot be the atmosphere of our elections at this crucial time for NC and our nation. We cannot be pushed into quick movements to satisfy unnamed agendas. Keep our process in place and then come to the table for intentional and deliberate considerations of things that concern the voting process of our state.</p>
Donica Hudson	Matthews, NC	<p>Dear Legislators: I urge you strongly NOT to go forward with redistricting at this moment as this will cost our state millions of dollars to redo ballots & rescind absentee ballots that have already been mailed, not to mention untold hours of unnecessary work for governmental leaders & local officials. This could also cause major headaches & lawsuits against the state if citizens who are redistricted decide to run in their new districts. Moreover, as a lifetime citizen of this state, I question why this court case which has been filed with the court since 2013 would suddenly be pushed through at election time in 2016! This breeds distrust towards our government & judiciary system. Are you trying to derail an election? This defies common sense. Do the right thing for the citizens of North Carolina and redistrict after the elections.</p>
Greg Mills	Apex, NC	<p>I am a lifelong resident of North Carolina. I am urging the senate and house to put aside the differences between the leadership and vote on to allow an independent commission of citizens to draw legislative districts. I support the Iowa model proposed by the group, End Gerrymandering Now.</p> <p>Section 2 of the North Carolina Constitution states that, "All political power is vested in and derived from the people; all government of right originates from the people, is founded upon their will only, and is instituted solely for the good of the whole."</p> <p>Neither current nor past districting plans have lived up to this provision of the State Constitution. Districts must be fairly drawn, so that people elect their representatives, rather than allowing the politicians to elect their voters.</p>
Marilyn Biddix	Candler, NC	<p>We are strictly opposed to the federal government's tampering with the elections and changing our districts!!! Thank you and please listen to the will of the people in this matter to let our states handle our own government. respectfully, Marilyn</p>
Randy Biddix	Candler, NC	<p>I am NOT in favor of redistricting our state!!! This appears to be a ploy prior to the election process and should be a conversation for the individual states after the election. Thank you considering my comments....Randy</p>

Deana Gasperson	Arden, NC	I feel the call for redistricting before the March elections should be stayed until after the elections. Ballots have been printed, absentee ballots have been sent out. The expense to do this now is not responsible use of our states resources. Thank you for your service for our state!
Vickie Partlow	Greensboro, NC	Members of the Joint Select Committee, I am deeply concerned over the current situation regarding the last minute redistricting mandate handed down by the court. I have already received my 2016 Primary Election Voter Guide from the N.C.State Board of Elections outlining Key Election Dates as well as important information regarding the NC Voter ID. Now it appears the districts may need to be re-drawn just weeks before the Primary Elections are to be held. As a taxpayer and voter, I can imagine the huge expense involved with calling the NC Legislature back for emergency session to address this issue, the expenses and confusion involved with changing districts, as well as the impact on every detail of the election process that IS ALREADY in place all across North Carolina. North Carolina has already held elections with the current districts in place, so why the urgency of NOW? I would suggest that the 2016 elections could go forward as scheduled to avoid the confusion and expense involved with redistricting at this late date. Issues of concern could then be addressed without adverse impact of voting this year. Thank you for the opportunity to express my views. Vickie Partlow
Chris Kaman	Pittsboro, NC	Any redrawing of congressional districts should be done with the following criteria: - districts should be compact, not spread across large sections of the state, - communities of interest should be kept in one district; the cities and counties should not be split among different districts, - districts should not be formed to benefit one political party or another, - districts should not be formed based on previous election results. Please draw the new districts with these criteria in mind. Thank you!
Karen Brooks	Candler, NC	I pray for wisdom and divine guidance through this process. North Carolina is important regionally and nationally. I do believe it will be in the best interest of all North Carolina citizens to only have one primary voting period as opposed to possibly having to split congressional vs presidential. Thank you for your willingness to serve this great state and it's people.
Rosemarie Wenzel	Chapel Hill, NC	This is an inappropriate ruling by the Justice Department. They have had at least 3 years to rule on this redistricting law. The Court did not take into consideration the cost and pain to the citizens of the state of NC that their ruling would create. This is reverse gerrymandering!
Brian Eldredge	Raleigh, NC	It is well past the time for "game playing" with our votes. Put political party agendas aside and do what's right. Your responsibility is to the public.
Jackie Wieland	Greensboro , NC	Not withstanding the illegitimacy of attempting to change the districts in an election year - let's put politics aside. The potential cost to taxpayers is

		unnecessary and borders on unethical. More importantly, this kind of radical change will create confusion to voters. On a sidebar - this is a very important election for both democrats and republicans. These changes will negatively affect voter turnout.
David Wickersham	Arapahoe, NC	FIRST, LET ME SAY THAT THE PLAINTIFFS CONTINUING EFFORTS TO OVERTURN THE ACTIONS OF THE LEGISLATURE AND THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA IS AN ABJECT DEMONSTRATION OF A SMALL MINORITY'S REFUSAL TO ACCEPT THE RULE OF LAW. THIS IS A CLEAR STATEMENT FROM THEM OF THEIR CONTEMPT FOR THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE AND THEIR DESPERATE, AND LARGELY UNSUCCESSFUL, ATTEMPTS TO USE THE COURTS TO SUBVERT OR SUBORDINATE THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE. THIS LATEST EXAMPLE OF THEIR ARROGANCE EXPOSES THE PLAINTIFFS TRUE AGENDA WHICH CANNOT IN GOOD CONSCIENCE, BE CONSTRUED AS ANYTHING BUT AN BLATANT EXAMPLE OF VOTER DISENFRANCHISEMENT. UNDER THE CURRENT LAW, ALL VOTERS WHO ARE QUALIFIED WILL BE ABLE TO EXERCISE THEIR CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT UNDER OUR EXISTING LAW AND CONGRESSIONAL BOUNDARIES AND VOTE. THE FEDERAL COURT'S DECISION WILL THROW THE VOTERS INTO TURMOIL AND CHAOS AND COST THE TAXPAYERS MILLIONS OF DOLLARS. THIS DISENFRANCHISEMENT WILL AFFECT THOUSANDS OF VOTERS ACROSS THE STATE AND MUST BE OVERTURNED OR THE LEGISLATURE MUST TAKE IMMEDIATE EMERGENCE ACTIONS TO PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF ALL NORTH CAROLINA VOTERS.
Glen Engram	Hendersonville, NC	<p>With a statewide election right around the corner, and primary races from the top to the bottom of the ballot, there already is plenty of anxiety baked into the current election season.</p> <p>To take an apportionment question that was settled back in 2011, that served us through the last 2 general election cycles, but now needs attention in our courts has the smell of mischief.</p> <p>Of course, NO ONE should be disenfranchised. So who's vote hasn't been counted? Whose ability to vote has been met with greater hardship & difficulty? What is the right outcome from a partisan point of view? Even if you can't produce a photo ID (and who can't?) you're able to express your sentiments in the voting booth. So why THIS issue, and why this issue NOW?</p> <p>Our election system continues to be under siege by those who seek to overlay outcome-based results on We The People. Voters are increasingly wary of both politicians and political processes, and this is just one more example of why that's the case.</p> <p>Hopefully Justice Roberts will stay this matter, and allow voters in North Carolina to cast their votes by March 15th. And that afterwards we'll get to the bottom of who is attempting to bring further disruption to election processes in North Carolina.</p>
JUDITH WICKERSHAM	Arapahoe, NC	THE DEMOCRATS ARE ACTING LIKE PETULANT, SPOILED CHILDREN BECAUSE THEY ARE NOT GETTING THEIR OWN WAY AND WE, THE TAX PAYERS, ARE FOOTING THE BILL. THOSE JUDGES SHOULD BE IMPEACHED!

	G.K. Butterfield	Wilson, NC	<p>Statement by Congressman G. K. Butterfield United States House of Representatives – First District of North Carolina Joint Select Committee on Congressional Redistricting February 15, 2016</p> <p>I am Congressman G. K. Butterfield. For the past 11 years, I have been a Democratic representative for the First Congressional District which is the district that the federal district court unanimously determined is unconstitutional because it was drawn using race as the predominate factor.</p> <p>It is disappointing that you have elected to proceed with this hearing this morning despite warnings from law enforcement that motorists refrain from travelling the streets and highways because of snow and ice. There are numerous reported accidents in Raleigh and I simply cannot attend.</p> <p>It is also disappointing that you have convened this public hearing today before releasing draft maps for the public to see. This is not a good way to start this process. The Court announced its decision on February 5th, ten days ago, and you could have prepared some proposed maps for the public to see. You have 'state of the art' technology; maps can be prepared on demand. Without having draft maps, there is really nothing for the public to respond to or have input. I ask that you engage in this process in good faith.</p> <p>In drawing Rucho-Lewis Congress 3 in 2011, not only did you decide to use race as the predominant factor in drawing Districts 1 & 12, but you knowingly and incorrectly interpreted the law by insisting that each of these district contain African American populations exceeding 50%.</p> <p>It is my opinion that you were fully aware that you were incorrectly applying the law. In a disingenuous way, you used a flawed interpretation of the Voting Rights Act for your own partisan political advantage. As a result of your overreach in drawing these maps, you have devised a system that guarantees the election of 10 Republican Congressmen out of 13.</p> <p>North Carolina's voter registration (between Democrats and Republicans) is 4.6 million voters. Democrats are two million of the 4.6 million voters or 43%, yet Democrats only get the opportunity to elect a Democratic Congressman in three districts (23%) out of thirteen districts. A fair plan should result in Democrats having the ability to elect at least five or six of the thirteen Congressmen.</p> <p>Your strategy worked. It worked in Virginia and Alabama and elsewhere. The United States Supreme Court has made it clear in identical cases that race CANNOT be the predominate factor in drawing districts. Legislatures are required to protect minority communities from racially polarized voting practices by not submerging them into districts where they have no opportunity to elect a representative of their choice.</p> <p>In some districts it may require 47% to protect the African American community from voter discrimination. In other districts, it may require less than 47% because of "coalition politics" where white voters are likely to form coalitions with the African American community.</p>
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Robin Buchanan	Spruce Pine, NC		<p>Just divide based on total population, trying to stick to full county lines as much as possible. There are numerous examples of this that I have seen.</p>
Jeffrey Phillips	Huntersville, NC		<p>I live in the little sliver of the 12th district which cuts through Cabarrus County. I tell everyone I live in the most gerrymandered congressional district in America, and so far I have not found anyone who has challenged me that their district deserves that title more than mine does.</p> <p>I hope you will add our section of Cabarrus County to either to district 9 or district 8. Most of my neighbors work in Charlotte and feel a strong connection to that city and the region. We don't have much connection to Winston-Salem/Greensboro region. That is why putting us in the 9th would make sense. Alternatively, the rest of Cabarrus County is part of the 8th, so it would also make sense to add us to the 8th. With either option I feel we would have a better opportunity for true representation in Congress. Right now we are basically ignored because we only serve as the geographic connection between the two major population centers of the current 12th district.</p>
Ted Frazer	Durham, NC		<p>I am a Durham independent voter.</p> <p>I am asking for redistricting reform legislation ASAP.</p> <p>As an independent voter I am completely locked out of the political process in NC.</p> <p>Both parties have lost my trust by the abuse of power. We need Republicans and Democrats sitting down and respectively wrestling with the</p>

		<p>many issues that face North Carolinians. This is possible if districts are drawn by an independent body, without direct influence of political parties or being drawn along party lines. We need an independent commission like 20 other states have already created. Please pass redistricting reform this session. Respectively,</p> <p>Ted Frazer</p>
Tina Forsberg	Greensboro, NC	<p>As a grandmother who was very concerned about the debt and civil-ethic we were leaving to the next generations, I became active in politics less than 10 years ago to create change. I was never active in politics before that, but I have become a committed volunteer worker in this arena ever since. And I was not alone, which is why we have been able to win the last elections of 2014, 2012, 2010. We have sent to Raleigh, a legislature more dedicated to the national and state constitutions to address the totality of its duties, including congressional districting.</p> <p>In addition to rolling back profligate spending, the legislature has used legal rules and means to do their duty of drawing new districts. Not surprisingly, and in keeping with the trend of all other elections since 2010, the districts show a partisan shift away from the Democrats and toward the Republican party. These districts were PRE-CLEARED through the Obama Justice Department and were found to be in compliance with the Voting Rights Act to which our state is bound — due to elections shenanigans under 100 years of Democrat rule!</p> <p>This re-districting has all been done legally, but since the Democrats - out of power for three election cycles now - crave power more than they respect the will of the people exercised at the ballot box. They are seeking to undo the results of these repeated elections through the style liberal-dominated courts system. Think of that - three elections undone with the stroke of a judge's pen. It's offensive to the republic and to the sense of fair play inherent in the democratic process. And it must not be allowed to happen.</p> <p>The good residents of the Districts may, indeed, be unhappy with their representation - I know I would be! But their remedy is to exercise their ideas and to convince their fellow citizens they are right - just like we had to do for 100 years. The courts are unreliable as to political ideology and are the wrong arbiter of the free and fair elections of the state of North Carolina in 2016.</p>
Tina Forsberg	Greensboro, NC	<p>As a grandmother who was very concerned about the debt and civil-ethic we were leaving to the next generations, I became active in politics less than 10 years ago to create change. I was never active in politics before that, but I have become a committed volunteer worker in this arena ever since. And I was not alone, which is why we have been able to win the last elections of 2014, 2012, 2010. We have sent to Raleigh, a legislature more dedicated to the national and state constitutions to address the totality of its duties, including congressional districting.</p> <p>In addition to rolling back profligate spending, the legislature has used legal</p>

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Joyce Ventimiglia	Durham , NC	Please, see to it that redistricting is done in a fair and equitable manner; preferably by an independent entity.
Richard Shaw	Hot springs, NC	No to redistricting! If necessary to redistricting it must be after the primary! You
Sarah Leone	Kernersville, NC	<p>I am not in favor of redrawing the congressional districts. We are currently in the middle of an election cycle where people have already begun voting. To do this now is not fair to the voters. This will only cause massive voter confusion and disenfranchise thousands of voters who may not vote at a later stand a lone congressional primary. I believe all districts are fair and legal. The NC Supreme Court has upheld the current map many times and did so again recently. Please do not make voting harder than it has to be. Many people do not vote as it is and launching a massive redrawing of districts is only a strike against the voter.</p> <p>Thank you for your time.</p> <p>Mrs. Sarah M Leone Kernersville, North Carolina</p>
Daniel Forsberg	Greensboro, NC	As a small business person who creates jobs in this state and in others, I am appalled to learn of the Democrat dirty tricks to undo the elections of the last three cycles. The changes made by the duly-elected legislature enable us to continue growing (and paying taxes). It should be obvious that the people of NC - having repeated themselves three times now - agree with the direction this state is going, but the Democrats cannot stand being out of power, so they are seeking the overthrow of THREE elections in the courts. It's shameful. As I understand it, these redistricting changes, before they were rolled out, were even pre-cleared by Obama's own Department of Justice!

		<p>But, given the courts are stacked with liberals, they may see victory, upsetting the will of the people and throwing our entire 2016 elections into chaos. If the Supreme Court fails to stay the lower court decision or, in its current state, rules in their favor, it is imperative that new districts be re-drawn to reflect the obvious will of the people of NC. All counties and precincts - especially the rural ones - needs to kept together instead of split to give the Democrats greater, artificial power. Let them earn that power back in the marketplace of ideas just like the Republicans had to do! They had 100 years to exercise their power, the Republicans, having won all these elections, deserve more than six!</p> <p>Additionally, any new districts need to be drawn without reference or preference to racial identity. It's 2016, for heaven's sake, and it's time for NC to stop living in the past.</p>
Michael Thurlow	Asheboro, NC	<p>A federal court panel ruled two of our congressional districts to be unconstitutional. I disagree, and, furthermore, believe these districts are fair and legal. The panel's ruling has put our states current congressional primary elections in a state of great uncertainty.</p> <p>Despite the fact that voting has already begun and thousands of people have already requested and received absentee ballots, the lower court has upended the current congressional election and ordered the legislature to redraw the districts by the end of next week. I believe this is an outrageous demand, not consistent with Federal and State constitutions. I hope for a stay to be granted by the United States Supreme Court. Meanwhile, our Republican legislators are making efforts to comply with the law pending the Supreme Court's review. Sadly, those whose candidates and ideas cannot prevail at the ballot box are destroying our liberties through the courts.</p>
Catherine Thurlow	Asheboro, NC	<p>A federal court panel ruled two of our congressional districts to be unconstitutional. I disagree, and, furthermore, believe these districts are fair and legal. The panel's ruling has put our states current congressional primary elections in a state of great uncertainty.</p> <p>Despite the fact that voting has already begun and thousands of people have already requested and received absentee ballots, the lower court has upended the current congressional election and ordered the legislature to redraw the districts by the end of next week. I believe this is an outrageous demand, not consistent with Federal and State constitutions. I hope for a stay to be granted by the United States Supreme Court. Meanwhile, our Republican legislators are making efforts to comply with the law pending the Supreme Court's review. Sadly, those whose candidates and ideas cannot prevail at the ballot box are destroying our liberties through the courts.</p>
Donald Taylor	Durham, NC	<p>The heart of redistricting is the same today as when the Dems ran the state. The winners pick districts to help them remain winners. The BIG difference is the Dem party had ideological diversity when they ran the state. The Dem hold seemed impossible to break but it broke. Your hold will also someday break. Use this ruling to not only come up with a short term solution to hold and election this year (which you must do of course), but to find a route to a 2020 plan that is a bit more bipartisan and reasonable. You guys wont' hold the reins as long as the Dems did, BECAUSE they had far more ideological diversity than you do, and so better represented the state.You need to come up with a way that charts a new approach, and in doing so</p>

		<p>you will deserve credit for doing something high minded and for the best interests of the state. You will also make it better for your party when do you go back to the minority, which of course will inevitably happen some day.</p> <p>I am unsure of the best way to draw lines. There are models. I do know that my mother in Goldsboro being in the 1st, and someone who lives less than a mile from me also being in the 1st (I am barely in the 4th) makes no sense.</p> <p>Respectfully, but clearly submitted because I know you are all busy. Don Taylor Durham, NC</p>
Harold Garrison	Winston-Salem, NC	<p>I hope that the Committee will take this as an opportunity to eliminate partisan redistricting in favor of one of the proposed methods that rely on census data and automated map generation tools. Regardless of which party is in power, any perception that redistricting is accomplished only for the benefit of that part feeds the increasingly common view that government is corrupt.</p>
Dana Thalheimer	Cary, NC	<p>Folks, I think in redistricting we should strive for geographic compactness as the primary criteria. Please see this article and associated links for a good explanation. You will also find a map of NC showing geographically compact NC districts.</p> <p>https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2014/06/03/this-computer-programmer-solved-gerrymandering-in-his-spare-time/</p> <p>You should strive for: Across all districts and all people, the best district map is the one where people have the lowest average distance to the center of their district.</p> <p>thanks and regards,</p> <p>Dana Thalheimer</p>
Alma Thomas	Garner, NC	<p>Clearly district lines as drawn are gerrymandered. North Carolina has become a national joke except that is not funny. Passing laws that are racist, damaging to the environment, disenfranchising, stating the ocean will not rise... How do y'all sleep at night? You should be ashamed. I am Caucasian and a registered Republican. And I can't wait to vote everyone of you out of office.</p>
Sam Shumate	Fayetteville , NC	<p>I have been following this issue for the past few months and do not find it to be a major issue. The liberal democrats in North Carolina gerrymandered several districts in the 90's and early 2000's. There was little outcry about it and the only reason it's gaining traction now is because Republicans are in power. I fully support the moves made on behalf of the NCGA. God Bless, Sam.</p>
Rodney Wiggins	Mt. Olive, NC	<p>Do not make cha2</p>

	Louise Romanow	Cary, NC	<p>North Carolina is in the timely position right now to establish an independent redistricting commission. I have watched both Democrat and Republican controlled legislatures protect themselves by gerrymandering districts. It's time to look out for the interests of all North Carolinians, regardless of who is in power, by instituting an independent, nonpartisan redistricting commission. Six states -- Alaska, Arizona, California, Idaho, Montana, and Washington -- have all draw both state and federal districts using an independent commission. Let us join them in improving representational government in North Carolina.</p>
	Barbara Murray	Sophia, NC	<p>Dear Sirs,</p> <p>I was scheduled to speak today but I am assuming this meeting was cancelled due to the ice storm we are currently having. Notice of this meeting was given on Saturday, Feb. 13 for a meeting to be held on Feb. 15 at 10 am – a weekday morning, hardly a convenient time for most people. No provision was made for rescheduling this meeting in case of cancellation due to weather. A reasonable conclusion is that you don't want to have to defend your districting decisions. Either you're ashamed of your actions (you should be) or you are arrogant enough to regard political power as a personal possession to be shared only with friends and other useful legal entities. This kind of thuggish behavior is repulsive and dysfunctional. North Carolina's state government is currently investing a lot of effort to attract business to our state. Stunts like this sabotage the effort. Many southern states (North Carolina included) suffer from the perception that they are backward, pandering to racial and religious hatred. Many companies, both foreign and domestic would prefer to not invest in such a place. So – do the right thing. Let the voters chose their politicians, not politicians their voters. If your policies are good, you will be re-elected. If not, you deserve to lose. This concept is a very conservative one – in fact it is the bedrock of our political system. Both intelligent self-interest and common decency should motivate you to correct your districting errors.</p> <p>Sincerely Barbara Murray</p>
	Dennis Burns	Raleigh, NC	<p>Common Cause has been fighting to fix the broken redistricting system in NC for over 20 years</p> <p>This will be the 3rd or 4th election that has been disrupted by legal wrangling over the antiquated and unfair method that designs our districts. And in the recent years of pushing for a professional non-partisan system like Iowa and AR already have, the General Assembly has almost adopted a better method several times...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2011, led by Speaker Tillis, an impartial reform bill passed the House but was never was taken up by the Senate • Last year, we had 61 bipartisan sponsors in the House for HB 92 but it was never heard in Committee. • And HB 92 is supported by a dozen organizations besides us from the AARP to the Sierra Club to the John Locke Foundation • Now is the time to fix the redistricting problem before another election is interrupted <p>We live in a growing state with a great future but we cling to a 1880's method of redistricting by our own politicians. Because of this old system</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • we have 13 Congressional seats with virtually no competition and

		<p>therefore, no need for our elected officials to listen whether they are Democrats or Republicans.</p> <p>So please make fairer, more compact districts to address the court directives for now</p> <p>But let's adopt a fair 21st century non-partisan system this coming session before we are back in this same position in another few years.</p> <p>Fix Gerrymandering now!</p> <p>Thank you for your attention</p>
Mary Weber	Asheville, NC	<p>I am writing to express my concern about the redistricting process. While I know we are in a tight timeline for redrawing the maps, I hope that you will pass a bill soon which establishes a non-partisan redistricting agency, similar to what has been successfully done in Iowa. I am an Asheville resident who got shifted to District 10 which now extends to Gastonia, which has little in common with the mountain region. I object to Asheville being split in half and having a representative who has little interest in Asheville. I know both parties have practiced gerrymandering which is why it is time to end the practice of the party in power drawing the boundaries.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>
James McKenzie	Bahama, NC	<p>I agree that Districts 1 and 12 are a mess in terms of their current drawn lines. However, with the primaries only 29 days from now it is ridiculous to try to redraw them at this time. The cost and total confusion that would ensure are beyond the pale. The court should allow them to stay as they currently are drawn and then after the primaries redraw them before July 31st. The court will remember that it was the democrats that created District 12 in its current configuration in order to ensure a black representative would be the outcome.</p>
Stephen Trubilla	Youngsville, NC	<p>I oppose redrawing the Districts because I feel well funds opportunist seek advantage for their political and racist agenda. I have spent many years trying to meet my civic duty. Over 30 of those years were in the Marine Corps. Elections are held, there is a contest, the people speak. Then their votes are subverted by people advancing their agenda with the manipulation of the process via courts. To me this is yet another face of voter fraud. A lesson learned it no bully will ever be satisfied by submitting to them. They will just suppress and bully more. Respectfully, Steve Trubilla</p>
Nancy Bradley	Raleigh, NC	<p>I believe it is time to stop gerrymandering voting districts for desired outcomes. I believe it is time to draw up districts based solely on equal population distribution (say an equal number of persons in each district regardless of race, political leanings for Democrats or Republicans, etc.) or based on county boundaries. Then let the true campaigning begin and let voters decide who they truly want to represent them. It is time for true representation of the people.</p>
Sandee Smith	Norwood, NC	<p>To be fair to both parties, all district lines should be drawn by population not political parties. Balancing the lines so that each district is evenly balanced, giving each district a fair chance.</p>
Ann McKenzie	Bahama, NC	<p>I agree that Districts 1 and 12 are a mess in terms of their current drawn lines. However, with the primaries only 29 days from now it is ridiculous to try to redraw them at this time. The cost and total confusion that would ensure are beyond the pale. The court should allow them to stay as they</p>

		currently are drawn and then after the primaries redraw them before July 31st. I find it ironic that the democrats would file a motion to redraw the lines when it was the democrats that drew up the District in its current configuration in order to ensure a black representative would be elected.
Walt Dietrich	Fayetteville, NC	This state needs a non-partisan committee to draw election districts. This continuation of the far left and the far right pushing to be elected is bad for this state and this country. Any problem is not solved without a compromise of ideas which will be supported by both sides. Otherwise, it festers like a sore into a irreversible infection. Please consider a bill to establish an independent non-partisan committee to establish redistricting for all future elections. This is the right thing to do!
Kent Ridge	Thomasville, NC	<p>Committee Members,</p> <p>Thank you for allowing the public to have input on the redistricting process. With the public forum being canceled due to weather in Guilford County, I shall keep this email short, as I can appreciate brevity in text as much as the next person.</p> <p>As a resident of the 12th congressional district for the majority of my voting life, I have seen first hand how gerrymandering can affect equal representation amongst the voting public. I have lived as far north as Davidson County and as far south as Mecklenburg County, all remaining in the 12th district. The needs of each place are different and require a representative whom can maintain objectivity without having to compete against other geographic territory which falls into the same district.</p> <p>Under the current procedures for drawing congressional district lines, the party in the majority has an advantage when new districts are to be added, or when existing districts are to be reformed. While this in no way means that any nefarious action has ever taken place, it does open the door to the possibility of impropriety and improper influence to the redistricting officials. Looking at the 1st and 12th districts, an argument can be made that in 2000, such influence more likely than not was present, and as a result we have two districts that in no way represent the community as a whole upon which they purport to represent.</p> <p>Without going into the equal protection arguments, I'll skip to my recommendation. I feel as though our State would be better served by an independent commission more akin to that of Arizona when it comes to mapping out congressional districts. This independent group of people would have the opportunity to remain neutral and detached and draw much more fair districts given simple census data. The details of such a process I'll leave to the legislature, but I would recommend that any independent commission for congressional redistricting be given only the most basic of census data; data such as eligible voting population, and not data such as individual party registrations within a geographic area.</p> <p>I understand that it is very unlikely, if not impossible, for a political entity to abdicate a power such as this; but I simply ask that a honest, good faith consideration be put forth on the feasibility of such a change in the redistricting procedures.</p> <p>I am open to any comments or questions that may further such a dialogue</p>

		<p>and I look forward to more equitable districts in the future.</p> <p>With Respect, Kent C. Ridge</p>
Gerry Cohen	Raleigh, NC	<p>If the stay is not granted, there are some difficult choices in making a new election schedule work. There are a number of different problems and solutions, which I discuss based on having been through planning for six or seven different delayed primaries.</p> <p>1) Make the rescheduled congressional primary based on plurality, no runoff (this was done in 2002 and may have been done in 1998 or other times).</p> <p>2) Put the rescheduled congressional primary at the same time as the second primary. This was done in 1984 for state house and state Senate primaries in 7 or 8 counties. The election administration system is far different now, and there may be practical difficulties in putting them together, though delaying the second primary until early June could allow enough time. See #3 below.</p> <p>3) Currently voter registration is not processed between February 19 and a second primary, which would cause difficulties whether the rescheduled congressional primaries are on that second primary date or later. This registration moratorium dates back to the first primary act in 1915 when registration books were only open for two 30 day period a year, and when registration became year-round sometime between 1940 and 1960, the actual reason for this moratorium vanished. (though there might be a reason to not allow party affiliation changes to be processed during this period)</p> <p>4) The statutory mandate for the amount of early voting in a congressional separate primary might need to be re-examined. While having early voting at the county board office or an alternate site nearby during the 10-day period might have minimal cost, pegging additional sites based on the number of registered voters eligible might be workable (eg just a D primary or just an R primary, or when a district primary is only conducted in a part of the county.)</p>
Henry Jarrett	Raleigh, NC	<p>It is time to move to a nonpartisan redistricting commission for Congressional Districts and state legislature. And if you want to avoid litigation stop interfering with school board districts and county commission and municipal districts.</p>
Matthew Arnold	Chapel Hill, NC	<p>As a resident of the 4th district, I am shocked that a Federal court is interfering with a state responsibility when all laws, rules, and regulatory obligations have been met. This included pre-clearance through President Obama's Justice Department. If this stands, how is a state legislature ever to draw reliable district lines?</p> <p>If our legislature is mandated to redraw lines to comply with the Federal court's ruling, we must move as quickly as possible and assure that as precinct disruptions are kept to an absolute minimum.</p> <p>The districts that we have are generally more competitive than those developed by Democrat controlled legislatures of the past 100+ years.</p>

		<p>Republicans have worked hard to be fair and follow all of the applicable laws and regulations. We should hold to these principles going forward.</p>
Crayton Bedford	Asheville, NC	<p>The redistricting done by the Republican Party in 2010 was successful in overcoming decades of Democratic Party gerrymandering. The trouble is that the 2010 gerrymandering went way beyond the bounds of decency or reason. It was successful because the Legislature is currently so heavily balanced in favor of Republicans, nowhere near the actual party distribution in the state. On the face of it, that ought to annul the latest district lines. Unfortunately for those of us who live in Asheville, the division of the city into three separate legislative districts, pooling pockets of Democrats with heavier Republican areas, has eliminate fair representation of our voices and needs. However, the only criteria that the courts can use is racial gerrymandering. That appears to have been accomplished only in the two districts recently thrown out by the courts. Since minorities tend to vote for Democrats, racial and political gerrymandering go hand in hand. There is a very simple and fair solution to this problem. District lines should be drawn by an independent commission, not a political party. The only criteria should be equal representation and conformity with natural and economic boundaries. In the meantime, the legislature should admit to political gerrymandering and redo the districts we are currently saddled with.</p>
Blake Tedder	Hillsborough, NC	<p>The right to vote and the notion of one-person-one-vote is absolutely critical for our Democracy to work as intended. We also must have fair representation, and actual representation of our populations. The state and federal districts in North Carolina are out of control, both parties are at fault. Particularly egregious are Congressional Districts 1, 12, and 4. These squirmy districts look like nothing we have seen before. The grouping of African Americans, a particularly Democratic voting contingent, is clear. Not to mention, how can a Congressional member adequately pursue constituent services when his or her district is barely contiguous and spread across minute sections of multiple counties. Please redraw the lines fairly, and do not wait for the Supreme Court to stay. This is a waste of taxpayer money and energy. The next step is an independent and nonpartisan redistricting committee.</p>
William Rogers	Edenton, NC	<p>To allow people to easily identify who represents them, it would be best to have district boundaries conform to large jurisdictions such as counties. The state should adapt a districting rule such as "The number of counties with multiple districts shall not exceed the number of representatives to Congress". This would allow the state to subdivide large counties as needed and divide a few others to balance population but stop the practice of creating odd-shaped districts that cross half the state.</p>
Carol Thompson	Greensboro, NC	<p>The existing maps continue to aggressively segregate voters even as North Carolinians like me prepare to head to the polls in March 2016.</p> <p>That's why the courts ordered you to redraw them immediately.</p> <p>And that's why this isn't a time for more legal appeals.</p> <p>I'm calling on you to to stop making excuses, follow the order, and redraw the maps. After all, fair elections require fair maps. For years we have been</p>

		<p>misrepresented because of the blatant gerrymandering in NC. Please redraw the districts immediately so that our next election will be fair.</p> <p>As a voter living in District 12 I would know that my vote counts. Please draw fair maps now.</p>
Melanie Lane	Apex, NC	<p>"All things are subject to interpretation. Whichever interpretation prevails at a given time is a function of power and not truth." ? Friedrich Nietzsche</p> <p>today you start the process of seeking a way to make people perceive that we are all working together to protect the very center of our democracy, the ability to choose our own representatives. there is a lot of emotion and difficulty that has happened on this subject over the last decade that has left everyone with the perception that the other side is trying to cheat and harm the process. Today you can work to find a way to heal that harm, to find the compromise that shows the people that the goal is to make everyone believe in our Democracy. I hope you take this moment to change the perception that the purpose was to suppress votes.</p>
Tyler Johnson	Goldsboro, NC	<p>As a Goldsboro native and a long-time resident of District 1, I am glad these maps are finally being studied. Nothing except gerrymandering for the sake of stacking districts can explain the finger-like extensions of District 1, which reach into each urban populace in the area, thereby limiting the number of minority voters in certain districts. It's a violation of the spirit of the Voting Rights Act and should be remedied by the DOJ.</p>
William Wilkes	Hendersonville, NC	<p>More than once, I have seen legislatures controlled by both Democrats and Republicans gerrymander legislative districts to attempt to ensure their own dominance in the polls. This ill serves the citizens of North Carolina and disrupts the electoral process, as is the case today. Now is the time for our legislators to rise above partisan interests and institute an independent, non-partisan redistricting commission. This has been done in six states in which both federal and state districts are drawn by an independent commission. Please lend your effort to improving representational government in North Carolina.</p>
Donna Beckmann	Durham, NC	<p>Durham County has been divided up into four Congressional districts. I reside in eastern Durham County and along with about 1% of the rest of Durham County residents, I am assigned to the 13th Congressional District. Although I would like to believe that our elected officials represent the best interests of all his or her constituents, I find it hard to believe that any Representative of the 13th Congressional District is going to make the interests of Durham County a priority. Although not designated as unconstitutional, the 13th Congressional District's formation is just as convoluted and the 1st and 12th.</p> <p>As quoted from WRAL.com: "Because there was no direct curative language in the opinion, we're hoping input from the public will shed light on what they want us to do," Rep. David Lewis, R-Harnett, the House co-chair of the committee, said Friday.</p> <p>However, despite bipartisan legislation (H.B. 49 2015-2016) to indeed provide input from the public, the State of North Carolina is faced with this crisis, putting the 2015 primary in jeopardy, in addition to the cost to taxpayers, due to attitudes such as this: "God bless 'em, I can't wait to get</p>

		<p>it over here," Republican Sen. Tom Apodaca of Henderson County told WRAL. "It's dead. It's not going anywhere."</p> <p>Redraw Congressional Districts based on population, regardless of political affiliation, and leave counties intact as best as possible. Twenty-two other states have given representation back to its citizens, North Carolina should do the same.</p> <p>Donna Beckmann Durham County</p>
Richard Weisman	Wilmington, NC	<p>Greetings,</p> <p>Thanks for the opportunity to express my views in this very, very critical process. Currently, NC is a district mess (and joke). Many citizens are aware that this is the most 'gerrymandered' state in the union. The City of Wilmington is split into part of two congressional districts: This is nonsense. Urban neighborhoods should not be split for partisan reasons. Congressional districts should include entire preexisting municipal districts, if possible to do so and make the numbers work. Ideally, counties would not be split. Neither would most NC cities. If a city is so large that it must be split, then existing municipal districts such as wards or precincts need to be used. The bottom line is that the legislators in power need to have this removed since they abuse it (both parties are guilty) and districts should include entire cities and/or counties when possible.</p> <p>Thanks Richard Weisman</p> <p>I believe that the legislature in office at any time of redistricting should NOT be allowed to change districts alone. There should be a bipartisan commission (equally split by party) of folks who can work together and compromise when needed, not stake out polar opposite positions from which they will not budge.</p>
Kimberly Jones	Summerfield, NC	<p>plans on congressional redistricting as the NCGA awaits the Supreme Court Decision.</p> <p>I believe that the congressional maps for Districts 1 & 12 were drawn using accepted precedent for representing the will of the people and are constitutional. The districts are just, fair, legal and in compliance with the laws.</p> <p>I am confident that the United States Supreme Court will issue a stay or "delay" so that the NC primary can proceed.</p> <p>I am convinced that the "rogue" judge who selected our districts 1 and 12 for review is disregarding the fair and legal manner the lines were drawn. While I am sure that the citizens of Districts 1 and 12 are unhappy with their representation that is a separate issue from the validity of the districts as drawn to comply with the Voting rights laws. I believe that I speak "write" for 1000 of North Carolina citizens (those at work, caring for children or just unaware of the issue) that our state, our elections, our legislature and our representative government processes are fair and legal and did nothing wrong!</p>

		<p>So “stick to your guns” and be firm in your convictions that the lines are lawful, right, justified and were also reviewed previously. I support our legislature and our representative government processes in which all citizens are equal before the law. Republicans are the party of respecting elections.</p> <p>Respectfully submitted, Kimberly A. Jones</p>
Christopher Mansfield	Greenville, NC	<p>Comments for Public Hearing Joint Select Committee on Congressional Redistricting February 15, 2016 10:10 AM</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to submit my comments in writing. My name is Chris Mansfield. I was coming from Greenville but only got as far as Wilson this morning because of icy roads. I had hoped to share these thoughts about the way we should make democracy work.</p> <p>I think my thoughts represent the sentiments of many other citizens. Polls tell us that citizens are angry, frustrated, disgusted, untrusting of government – all three branches but the legislative branch especially. A root cause is the electoral process. There is a sickness in the process but you can cure it. You can un-rig the electoral districts and make our democracy more truly representative. Yes, it is rigged. The current and past reapportionment plans have been a perversion of the Voting Rights Act and a carefully contrived, partisan corruption of democracy.</p> <p>The voters no longer choose who their legislators are, the legislators choose the voters who will elect them. The problem is more than just with Congressional Districts 1 and 12. It is with the NC House and Senate districts as well. There is no choice of a Republican in 29 of the current NC House races and no choice in 6 Senate districts. No choice of a Democrat in 28 House districts and no choice in 12 Senate Districts. Where there was a choice in the 2014 elections, only 8% of the races were competitive. The process is totally rigged.</p> <p>Most of the NC legislative districts are safe seats. The Congressional Districts all are safe, by 23 – 39 percentage points based on presidential election results.</p> <p>With no competition in the contest of ideas, there is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No constructive dialog; • No reason for bipartisan, creative compromise; • No accountability, no representative democracy; • Polarization and legislative gridlock; • More opportunity for cronyism and corruption; and • No faith in government. <p>Thank you for the opportunity to be heard. I hope the Commission is listening. I want what all North Carolinians want; representatives who will</p>

		<p>listen to citizens and talk and listen to each other. We want legislators who are more willing to save the state than save their seats. You can fix the problem. Please take up H92 in the short session.</p> <p>Chris Mansfield 408 S. Harding, Greenville, NC 27858</p>
Jimmy Gentry	Statesville, NC	<p>For many years the NC State Grange has been concerned about the redistricting process in our state. We have seen the results of partisanship in connection with the way that district boundaries are drawn by both Republicans and Democrats. As a non-partisan organization, we believe that party affiliation should not be considered when drawing district maps. Elections are important and all candidates should have a chance of being elected rather than having to overcome the obstacle of a skewed district that favors certain individuals. Our hope is that these hearings combined with recent court actions will lead to a more equitable method of creating voting districts in our state.</p>
Brian Irving	Cary, NC	<p>The people of North Carolina deserve a process where they choose their representatives, not the other way around. When it reconvenes in April, the state House should immediately consider and bring to a vote House Bill 92 to establish a nonpartisan redistricting process.</p> <p>Under this bill, the redistricting plan would be drawn up by a legislative office and submitted to the legislature for an up or down vote. It is based on the system used in Iowa successfully for years.</p> <p>For decades, North Carolina has had the most litigated redistricting process in the nation. Both Democrats and Republicans put partisan politics ahead of the interests of the people. As a result, elections were delayed and representation denied.</p> <p>When the Democrats controlled the process, the Republicans cried foul and challenged the plans in court. Now that Republicans are in power, they act no better. Whichever party is on top invariably acts in the same, self-serving way.</p> <p>Even though only two Congressional districts were ruled unconstitutional, redrawing the lines will have a ripple effect in adjoining districts. The problem goes far beyond using race to draw lines. The process is fundamentally flawed. The people of North Carolina need and deserve better.</p> <p>The state Libertarian Party supports an independent, nonpartisan, open, and transparent redistricting process. Party registration, voting history data, and the incumbent's place of residence shouldn't be considered when drawing district lines.</p>
Mary Platek	Jamestown, NC	<p>The Congressional district boundaries need to be drawn so that either political party does not have an advantage. Both parties have changed the boundaries to their own advantage, but the republicans have been shameless with their current changes and has made our state an object of ridicule</p>

Michael Garrett	Greensboro, NC	<p>Nobody interested in fair maps assigns a committee of people who have wrongfully redistricted local county commissions, boards of education, and city councils. Today's convening of the NCGA is only for the purpose of doing as little as possible to meet a court-mandated requirement and then resume politics as usual in gerrymandered districts.</p> <p>The time for nonpartisan redistricting reform was back in 2010. The least we can do now is get over politics and get back to work by agreeing to move forward with just maps. When I'm your State Senator, I will only vote for redistricting efforts proposed by nonpartisan committees of unelected officials OR that have been submitted to the taxpayers affected for a vote</p>
Martha Jenkins	Chapel Hill, NC	<p>I dont' understand how federal law can require majority minority districts and then all the legislature down for using race to determine districts. Let the election proceed.</p>
Dwight Collins	Salisbury, NC	<p>Attempting to reform the 1st and 12th districts at this point is not a proper approach to assure voter inclusion. Redistricting may well be an exercise that needs to take place but not in the middle of an election that is already underway. The level of confusion will be too great. Both options run the risk of excluding some voter rights but the lesser of the two is to let this primary continue and make district changes after the elections.</p>
Cathy Wright	Chapel Hill, NC	<p>Why don't we question the constitutionality of the Voting Rights Act?</p>
maryanne friend	raleigh, NC	<p>From: Maryanne Friend [mailto:maryanne.friend@gmail.com] Sent: Monday, February 15, 2016 9:41 AM To: Sen. Bob Rucho Cc: Rep. David Lewis Subject: redistricting</p> <p>Dear Gentlemen: Sorry the weather will keep me from your session today regarding new redistricting. I am opposed to changes at this moment in time because voting has already begun, everyone can vote, no one is disenfranchised, and postponing congressional elections will only lead to lower voter engagement and turn-out as it will be more confusing. Review of the districts can take place more thoughtfully and carefully after this election cycle. Thank you~ Maryanne Friend Raleigh NC</p>
Richard Self	CARY, NC	<p>Few of the districts in NC are compact and routinely split neighborhoods into multiple districts - mine is a prime example. The two districts in question need to be dramatically compacted to remove the racial gerrymandering.</p>
Patrick Paige	Charlotte, NC	<p>The power to set political districts should be removed entirely from those entities that benefit from district lines, most notable the Democratic and Republican parties. Districts should be established by an independent commission that utilizes mathematic principals to establish boundary lines that give equal power and representation to every individual vote in the state.</p>
james mills	asheville , NC	<p>I vote NO to redistricting NC.</p>
Harold Nunn	Raeford, NC	<p>We SHOULD NOT be required to redraw congressional district maps in the middle of an election cycle. This is a blatant attempt to cause chaos in an election cycle, a standard procedure of the left!</p>
Jennifer Frye	Durham, NC	<p>Dear Lawmakers,</p> <p>I first want to say that I appreciate the gravity of the situation you are in</p>

with having to re-draw NC's district maps. I also want to acknowledge that the Republican Party in NC was not the first to use gerrymandering to draw lines that favor its own party. There is a long history of that from the Democrats in NC and from both parties across the country. That's the main problem - that you legislators draw the maps in the first place. The temptation is too great to rig the game in your favor and for you to select the voters versus having them select you. I am sincerely disappointed to hear many Republican lawmakers and party members, instead of taking responsibility and righting past wrong by working for greater fairness, parrot the excuse that "the Democrats did it, too" to justify the current maps. That's not taking responsibility - it's shirking responsibility - which goes against the stated ideals of your party.

That said, that's the situation we are in, and you have been ordered to redraw the maps. I'd like to weigh in as a dedicated, unaffiliated voting citizen with some understanding of how redistricting works.

I agree with the legal experts and judges who have said that the current maps go way to far in giving a partisan advantage by dividing the state along racial lines and severely diluting the voting power of Black voters. The Voting Rights Act was established to protect minority voters from this kind of diluting of their voting power as a group. The current maps segregate Black voters and further divide the voting citizens of our state in ways that can only lead to highly polarized, highly partisan elections rather than fair elections that lead to good governance.

District 1 and District 12 had both historically elected Black candidates by comfortable margins. There was no legal justification for increasing the percentage of these voters in these districts above 50% and certainly no justification from a standpoint of civil rights and protecting the vote. Packing black voters into these districts at the rate you all did means that taking their voting power away from other districts, making all of the districts less competitive. This is very similar to what happened in Alabama, where it was ruled that race was the primary motivation for increasing percentages of Black voters in districts where they were already winning.

To the concern about how close we are to the Primary election, I'll say this: It is far better to ask folks who have already voted absentee to re-send ballots at a later time, under fair maps, than to proceed with unconstitutional maps, as one of the speakers eloquently explained during the hearing this morning.

I will close by saying that I have heard my Republican leaders time and again talk about the need for competition and fairness in the economy, the need for responsible government leaders, the need for people to take responsibility for their lives. However, it seems when it comes to elections and civic participation, you prefer policies and practices that reduce competition and increase barriers to access and participation. These maps, along with the voting law you passed in 2013, make it easier for the Republican party to gain and maintain power. Legislators from both parties need to rise above this kind of partisan calculation and manipulation to make our elections as fair, competitive and accessible as possible.

		<p>People like me are losing faith in our elected leaders and our political system and yet we continue to show up and participate. I continue to vote even though my choices on the ballot box are pitiful sometimes. I contact my representatives, I listen to public hearings, I show up - time and again - because I believe that our government should truly reflect and represent the population of North Carolina, not just a portion of the population.</p> <p>I'm calling on whatever spirit of public service led you to run for office to rise above and give our state fair maps. Let the voters pick you, not the other way around.</p> <p>Sincerely, Jennifer L. Frye</p>
Richard Baldwin	Fletcher, NC	<p>Dear Committee Members,</p> <p>I am opposed to any further redistricting of Congressional Districts in North Carolina. Given the current distribution, my voice is heard. I feel that I am being represented at the state and federal level. Previous the the latest redistricting I was not being represented adequately at either a state or local level. The NC state house followed all guidelines set forth by the Department of Justice and the dictates of state and federal law.</p> <p>Rich Baldwin</p>
Samuel Santoianni	Swannanoa, NC	<p>This is, perhaps, premature, but I would like to offer birthday congratulations to Gerrymandering, which will turn 204 this March. That is, unless we decide to kill it here and now in NC.</p>
Lindsey Cooper	Raleigh, NC	<p>This attempt to dilute black voting power, and to pack black citizens into districts where they won't be able to exercise their voting rights, is horrific. The districts need to be redrawn, immediately, without regard to race.</p> <p>North Carolina, its politicians, and the NC GOP have a long history with racism and the KKK. Downtown Raleigh, and its affluent politicians and businessmen, were integral in turning NC into "Klansville USA" [not my term, used in recent documentary on the history of racism and oppression in North Carolina in the 1950s and 1960s].</p> <p>I fear that many of these racist ideas towards black people still remain in the hearts and minds of those running the NC GOP and the NC legislature. This gerrymandering and the SHAM voter ID laws prove that you still want to keep black North Carolinians subjugated and powerless by making their right to vote nearly impossible and their voting power non-existent.</p> <p>FIX THE DISTRICTS. EXAMINE YOUR PREJUDICES AND UNDERLYING RACISM and figure out why you're so intent on keeping black constituents "in their place" by literally packing them all into two main districts. Shameful. You have disgraced the ideals and commands of our Constitution, of North Carolina, and the Lord.</p>

	Irma Fiordalisi	Marshall, NC	I am opposed to redistricting! Please stop this election engineering and allow people to exercise their rights without the machinations of big government, control-loving progressives. PLEASE VOTE NO to redistricting.
	Lisa Baldwin	Fletcher, NC	<p>Dear Committee Members,</p> <p>I am opposed to any further redistricting of Congressional Districts in North Carolina. Given the current distribution, my voice is heard. I feel that I am being represented at the state and federal level. Previous the the latest redistricting I was not being represented adequately at either a state or local level. The NC state house followed all guidelines set forth by the Department of Justice and the dictates of state and federal law.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - North Carolina should not be forced to redraw its congressional districts in the middle of an election cycle, where people have already begun voting. - Delaying the congressional primaries for a court ordered redraw of the maps will cause massive voter confusion and disenfranchise thousands of voters who may not vote in a likely mid summer, stand alone congressional primary. (1998 Primary Elections: May 5th Primary for US Senate: 799,371 ballots cast and September 15th Primaries for US House: 161,596 ballots cast) - Republicans are largely satisfied with their current representation and the constituent services they are receiving. - The current 10-3 partisan split is a fair result of Republican election victories, which allows legislators to take partisan voting behavior into account when drawing districts. - A new congressional map should keep precincts and counties whole as much as possible. - Due to the reclining influence of North Carolina's rural communities, it is imperative that our state's smallest counties not be split. - Finally, as Chief Justice Roberts said in the opinion for Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District No. 1, "the way to stop discrimination on the basis of race is to stop discriminating on the basis of race." Any new districts should be drawn in a completely "color blind" fashion, with no regard to race or racial political quotas. <p>Lisa Baldwin</p>
	heather shane	charlotte, NC	<p>The fact that NC was found to be guilty of gerrymandering is shameful. The fact that the public hearings being held to address the redistricting are located in small venues in unaffected counties is an additional impediment to democracy! The constituents in NC deserve to have their vote count. Voter apathy is a sickness in our country and it needs to be remedied, not fomented.</p> <p>The posiitive to come out of all of this is that you still have a chance to reverse course and create fair districts that reflect the diversity within this great state. Democracy is from what all of the power in this country is derived, and it can be brought back to our great state. We do not all have to agree, but through discourse is where we will arrive at the best solutions and will bring about the best representatives. Civic engagement is a critical component to our governmental system and now is the time to recultivate it!</p>

Bonnie Bechard	Leland, NC	This time, please redistrict, not gerrymander. Gerrymandering is expensive for taxpayers. Dividing counties and towns does not honor local government. Due to extreme gerrymandering, North Carolina is no longer proportionately represented. The House is no longer "Representative" as envisioned by our Founding Fathers. It is time for a non-partisan redistricting commission.
Kristin Wing	Greensboro, NC	<p>The Voting Rights Act was established to protect minority voters, these maps not only undermine that intent, they effectively marginalize minority voters.</p> <p>When redistricting processes are controlled by legislators then political concerns will play a role. This plan, however, is more than just partisan politics. This plan segregates African-American voters rather than building African-American into the fabric of North Carolina. When you segregate the electorate by race you change the politics of the state for the worse.</p> <p>District 1 and District 12 had both historically elected African-Americans by comfortable margins. There was no legal justification for increasing the African-American percentage in these districts above 50% and it is clear that packing black voters into these districts was the primary goal of the plan – meaning that race was the most important factor in their creation.</p>
Ann Hass	Greensboro, NC	<p>It is just common decency to draw district lines impartially. Our districts now are so bizarre as to be a joke. They make us a laughingstock nationwide.</p> <p>Start over. Do it fairly and logically. Republicans will NOT always be in the majority. The sooner the job is done fairly (FAIRLY) the better for our beautiful state.</p>
Thomas Coulson	Marshall, NC	As a long time member of Common Cause/NC I supported the late Ham Horton's efforts to pass legislation creating a non partisan redistricting commission. This was when Democrats were in the majority and controlled the Legislature. Now that Republicans are in control I support the efforts to do away with the partisan gerrymandering of public offices. The challenges to redistricting legislation under the present system has resulted in court interventions with a frequency that makes that appeal look like an automatic part of the process. Join the twenty first century; pass redistricting reform!
Jeannette Cabanis-Brewin	Cullowhee, NC	When Asheville was excised from our district, it was done specifically for the purpose of separating the more progressive voters in the three university-hub counties from each other, thereby diminishing if not eliminating our voting clout. While in Eastern NC, this gerrymandering was done on racial lines, here it was done purely on political lines, but the effect is the same. Because the university-hub areas are also more diverse, it also has a silencing effect on all minorities (including the Cherokee) in our district. Asheville is the urban center for WNC, and belongs in our voting district. They have nothing in common economically or culturally with the counties they are now paired with. Put Asheville back in my voting district!
Amy Cortner	Connelly Springs, NC	One of the most difficult challenges in life is to do the right thing when doing so is not in your own best interest. Whether it is in the best interest of your political party or not, please support a non-partisan redistricting of North Carolina. Our state has been on the wrong side of history too often, and it is more than time to overturn the wrongs done by gerrymandering.

		All people need a voice-not just rich people.
Michelle Mitchell	Cornelius, NC	It's past time to take the politics out of congressional redistricting. No political party should hold sway over this process. Please work to change the process so that it's impartial and fair to voters. Thank you.
Candace Young	Bayboro, NC	Lines should be drawn without using the ploys of "cracking"or "packing" to deny minority voters an equal opportunity "to participate in the political process and to elect representatives of their choice. Basic fairness should be the rule.
David Brewin	Cullowhee, NC	Please look at redistricting in such a way that any candidate, regardless of party, has a fair shot of being elected by someone that really represents the constituency. An election should be decided by people who can look at an individual candidate and vote for whom they feel is the most qualified. Thank you for your consideration.
Jeanne Blethen	Marshall, NC	I am opposed to redistricting the state this close to an election.
Diana Bellgowan	Asheville, NC	<p>I am a citizen of the state of North Carolina and I agree with the recent Federal court ruling, and want North Carolina to redraw its congressional district maps to be more fair an equitable for all of our citizens.</p> <p>In 2011, the NC legislature redrew the maps – supposedly based on the 2010 census. I know very little about the other districts, but in the 10th and 11th North Carolina districts the changes had a partisan and racially discriminatory bent. That redistricting lead to moving the very Democratic-leaning city of Asheville to the 10th district combining it with the densely populated and very Republican Charlotte suburbs. It also added more Republican-leaning counties to the 11th district – creating a district that is now considered one of the most Republican in the South.</p> <p>Democrats and Republicans have each had a hand gerrymandering in North Carolina at various times in our history – but this recent redistricting has a definite racial component to it.</p> <p>According to the 2010 census data, Buncombe County where Asheville is located had +238,000 including 6.5% African American and 6.5% Hispanic/Latinos – making it both the most populated and racially diverse county in Western North Carolina. The Counties in the new 11th District (including Macon, Swain, Jackson, Haywood, Clay, Graham, Madison, Cherokee, Yancey, Avery, Burke, Henderson, Transylvania, McDowell, Caldwell and Mitchell) are very rural, lightly populated areas with very little racial diversity – with few exceptions these Counties have populations that are less than 2% African American and less than 5% Hispanic/Latino.</p> <p>By creating the new 10th and 11th districts, the legislature has in effect diluted the voice of African Americans and Hispanic/Latinos in western North Carolina which is illegal under section 2 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.</p> <p>We need to redraw the North Carolina maps and correct this problem.</p>
Sue Butcher	Willow Springs , NC	NO to changing districts.
Taylon Breeden	Leicester, NC	<p>My trust in the NC GOP is nonexistent.</p> <p>Splitting Asheville into NC 10 and 11 was a political move to maintain GOP control. and to act like this isn't the truth is only going to make the citizens</p>

		angry. I want legislation enacting the North Carolina independent redistricting commission.
Dakota Cary	Wilmington, NC	<p>North Carolina's congressional districts should be as competitive as possible to ensure good governance by elected officials. As districts move away from racial bias and towards competitive elections, citizens will benefit from less partisanship and more constructive policy dialogue.</p> <p>The scheduling of currently held public meetings is not a sincere attempt to govern well. but rather a partisan attempt to collect targeted feedback. Given the speed with which these meetings were announced and executed, it appears as though legislators were trying to pick their voters.</p> <p>Any third party to the map-drawing process should be made available during Committee meetings so the public may have a full understanding of their role, cost, and intent during the process.</p> <p>The North Carolina General Assembly should disclose all monies spent on the map-drawing process in an effort to provide the most transparency possible during this process. As is with other budgetary expenditures, the NCGA should strive to fulfil its fiduciary duty to North Carolinians and provide quality, comprehensive information about this process.</p> <p>Most importantly, the General Assembly should consider ways to make districts more geographically succinct, politically competitive, and racially nonbias. Our districts should represent fair elections, fair voting rights, and fair intent, as is the proper role of government.</p>
James Dingman	Greensboro, NC	The current gerrymandered districting distorts fair representation and does not reflect the will of the people by reducing the number of Democrats in the US Congress. It sends a message of lack of respect for the democratic process observed by foreign and domestic media reflecting on the state's image. North Carolina should strive to be a national leader through improved education and honest political processes.
Jeff Lominac	Conover, NC	People have done started voting here in Nort Carolina! Leave things as they are for now! Besides the fact that people are voting now, look at the cost this will be to the tax payers of this state if we have to redo this part of the election!
Tamara Jackson	Greensboro, NC	To wait until 30 days before the March Primary, then the picture ID & last but definitely not the least the redistricting of District 1 & 12. These Districts should not be taken away.
Lydia Long, LCSWA	RAMSEUR, NC	With the Civil Rights Movement and passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, Gerrymandering for the purpose of reducing the political influence of a racial or ethnic minority group was prohibited.The districts are not representing the people of NC and in fact racially based. This was ruled unconstitutional! . I know that you all care about this state and want the best so I urge to fix this as the way it is currently is unfair. We want money out of politics, we want a fair electoral process. I am asking you to re-draw the districts of NC to represent more accuracy.
Perry Woods	Raleigh, NC	Gerrymandering has always been around, but now with big data, it has been elevated to a science, and is among the biggest threats to our

		<p>democracy. Unless it changes, it will be done house to house.</p> <p>Anyone can draw districts. Does not have to be a Independent Commission. Staff can do it. What matters are the rules. Simply say in drawing districts, only thing that can be considered is population, no demographics, parties, voting histories, or big data. Say they much be compact, contiguous among communities of interests, and no splitting of counties or precincts unless needed to meet one man one vote.</p>
Patsy Poston	Shelby, NC	<p>Please commit now to redraw the two congressional districts found unconstitutional. I had rather have the March 15 primary delayed than hold another election unfair to voters in these districts. Given that other, likely adjacent districts will no doubt be affected, the legislature should move the primary to a later date and get to work immediately on making all districts fair. And while at it, the legislature should immediately commit to a non-partisan redistricting commission for the future.</p>
Andrew Goldberg	Asheville, NC	<p>Dear Sir or Madame,</p> <p>Thank you for considering my comments on the current congressional districts and redistricting issues. First, I feel like I have been gerrymandered with the most recent division of more populated Asheville area/region into two districts. I have nothing in common with people way over there in the rest of Rep. McHenry's district. And I have been cut from the people I share my life with in Asheville and Western North Carolina. Secondly, this strikes me as fundamentally bad for my community and undemocratic. I feel like the power has been taken from my community and my vote.</p> <p>Please make this process better, fairer, more democratic and less partisan. Please put me on any mailing list so I can be informed about next steps in this process.</p> <p>Thanks for your consideration.</p> <p>Andrew M. Goldberg</p>
Karon Harrold	Asheville, NC	<p>The decision to divide Asheville into two districts was a true act of absurdity. The only possible reason was to bolster political power in the 10th district and to dilute power in the 11th. This cynical act will be undone in 2020, but should be undone before that. I know that partisan gerrymandering has gone on for many years and each party can rightly say the other is guilty, but surely, at some point, justice and reason will prevail.</p>
Zachary Crotts	Winston Salem, NC	<p>I hope that we can hold off on any district changes until after the election in November. We have candidates who have been campaigning in these districts as well as citizens and tax payers who are already asking for absentee ballots. Our primary is only a month away and any changes will be a major issue as well as a huge cost to our state.</p> <p>If we must change the districts then please try to do so after the election and then remove any and all race or political portions from the lines. We should try to keep Counties and precincts in one district and not split them into multiple. I live in Davidson County and we have the 5th, 8th, and 12th that run through the County. I would prefer we only have one district.</p>
Laura Sinai	Charlotte, NC	<p>It is always the time to do the right thing. It is always the time for justice.</p>

		<p>Just because some paperwork and scheduling will be difficult does not mean justice should be delayed or ignored. Gerrymandering is wrong. Packing one race into a voting district is wrong. Redistricting must be done in an open and transparent way. And the courts have spoken. These unconstitutional districts in NC must be redrawn.</p>
Samantha Sarube	Wilmington, NC	<p>There are concerns over the fact that some absentee ballots have already been requested and submitted. I do not believe that the concern over this outweighs the damage that holding an election for the third time on a map that is unconstitutional would do. Our sole goal should be to have constitutional and fair elections. It should be worth the effort to make sure this happens regardless of the administrative difficulties. If the Republican majority had not abruptly changed the date of the election a few months ago the filing period would not even be over yet. Another issue I am having is the fact that this meeting was called and little notice was given and that it was held at a date and time that is completely unreasonable to those who have full-time jobs and those who are in school. I also have an issue with where it was held it was held on CFCC North Campus which is completely out of the way for most and in a room so small there was only standing room and most people were not even let in the room. A better location would have been CFCC's campus downtown or UNCW's campus where there are much larger rooms available and in a more convenient area for those who wanted to make it could. Obviously not much consideration was put in to this meeting for those who actually want action to be taken. I, myself came to the meeting today to be able to speak my mind but because of the time and way this meeting was held we had to sit there and listen to other sites speak as well. Because I am a student I had to leave in the middle of the meeting because it was taking too long and I had class. This meeting was not held in a standard that is conducive to actually hearing everyone out and attempting to make an attempt to solve the issue. The districts are not constitutional. They are a mess and they need to be cleaned up before another election takes place.</p>
Joyce Cotten	Pittsboro, NC	<p>The Voting Rights Act of 1965, and following a number of changes over the years, set the stage for establishing district lines in all the states. Even though it has been amended several times, it continues to be a force to guide states in the process of redistricting. It would appear to me that the courts are contradicting itself when it comes to the redistricting process. The courts ruled that states must consider demographics under the Civil Rights Act of 1965 and now the courts are telling us that we should not be considering demographics.</p> <p>The fact that a lower court has imposed such a mandate on North Carolina when we are in the midst of an election and given the North Carolina General Assembly just two weeks to redistrict disenfranchises the current voting process.</p> <p>Having served on a county Board of Elections for 16 years, I have followed this process closely and felt that dividing counties and at times precincts was not in the best interest of the voting citizens. If the North Carolina General Assembly must change its boundaries due to this court decision, I strongly urge the North Carolina General Assembly to keep precincts and counties whole as much as possible.</p> <p>Joyce Cotten</p>

		Chatham County February 15, 2016
Charlie Duckett	Hot Springs, NC	Keep our Congressional Districts as they are now.
Stephanie Hamrick	Charlotte, NC	It is unreasonable, not to mention unconstitutional and a slap in the face to our democratic process, the way that our districts have been drawn. There has been a deliberate emphasis on decreasing the influence of poor people, people of color, and students, in an intentional power grab by white Republicans. This cannot stand, and I ask that the committee submit a plan for immediate redistricting.
Marilyn Shaw	Hot Springs, NC	NO to redistricting!
Marlene Pratto	Greensboro, NC	I would like for everyone to have a choice in an election. We have far too many elections with only one person running. Sometimes we have elections when it is all over at the primary. We have two major parties and several smaller ones, but sometimes we only hear from one and that is in the primary. The general election has little meaning when everyone is running in a safe district. It is good to hear the views of at least two people before voting in a general election. How can we know what is good for our state or our country if we don't hear from more people? Lots of people have ideas, and some are excellent ideas yet Gerrymandering of districts is keeping us from hearing views. It also makes our votes less powerful. You can see why some say why bother? What choice have I in this district? That is wrong. You have the power to fix this now and for the future. Please see HB 92 cosponsored by a representative from Guilford County, Jon Hardister. Fix the districts now and then consider HB92 which will fix them for a very long time. Sincerely, Marlene Pratto
Amy Musser	Asheville, NC	I am a citizen of the state of North Carolina and I agree with the recent Federal court ruling, and want North Carolina to redraw its congressional district maps to be more fair and equitable for all of our citizens. In 2011, the NC legislature redrew the maps – supposedly based on the 2010 census. The changes in the 10th and 11th North Carolina districts the changes were partisan and racially discriminatory. That redistricting removed the very Democratic-leaning city of Asheville to the 10th district combining it with the densely populated and very Republican Charlotte suburbs. It also added more Republican-leaning counties to the 11th district – creating a district that is now considered one of the most Republican in the South. Democrats and Republicans have each had a hand gerrymandering in North Carolina at various times in our history – but this recent redistricting has a definite racial component to it. According to the 2010 census data, Buncombe County where Asheville is located had +238,000 including 6.5% African American and 6.5% Hispanic/Latinos – making it both the most populated and racially diverse county in Western North Carolina. The Counties in the new 11th District (including Macon, Swain, Jackson, Haywood, Clay, Graham, Madison, Cherokee, Yancey, Avery, Burke, Henderson, Transylvania, McDowell,

		<p>Caldwell and Mitchell) are very rural, lightly populated areas with very little racial diversity – with few exceptions these Counties have populations that are less than 2% African American and less than 5% Hispanic/Latino.</p> <p>By creating the new 10th and 11th districts, the legislature has in effect diluted the voice of African Americans and Hispanic/Latinos in western North Carolina which is illegal under section 2 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.</p> <p>We need to redraw the North Carolina maps and correct this problem. And to make sure this doesn't happen again in the future, we need independent redistricting in North Carolina. Do the right thing for your citizens.</p>
Shelby Rogers	Locust, NC	<p>These maps are the most cynical kind of politics. They meticulously divide the state along racial lines, dividing communities that have a proven record of working together towards common goals. The Voting Rights Act was established to protect minority voters, these maps not only undermine that intent, they effectively marginalize minority voters. When redistricting processes are controlled by legislators then political concerns will play a role. This plan, however, is more than just partisan politics. This plan segregates African-American voters rather than building African-American into the fabric of North Carolina. When you segregate the electorate by race you change the politics of the state for the worse. District 1 and District 12 had both historically elected African-Americans by comfortable margins. There was no legal justification for increasing the African-American percentage in these districts above 50% and it is clear that packing black voters into these districts was the primary goal of the plan – meaning that race was the most important factor in their creation. These districts move us back to a day of segregation that most of us thought we had moved away from. The net result of this redistricting plan is that it doesn't improve African-American election prospects at all because they were already winning. What it does is it minimizes the influence of African-Americans in surrounding districts. In the recent Supreme Court ruling regarding redistricting in Alabama the court found that Alabama's plans were illegal because they misapplied the Voting Rights Act and used race as the primary consideration rather than looking at what percentages were needed to elect the minority candidate's candidate of choice. The North Carolina plan follows the exact same flawed thinking.</p> <p>I also have a HUGE issue with the way this meeting was brought about. This meeting was called Friday night after 5pm and then held a little over 48 hours later during work, during school, and during a snow storm. People's lives were put in danger for this mediocre meeting that was called on a whim. There is no possible way that an accurate representation was present at this event. Not only that but we were also hoarded like animals into a room suitable for 20 people. In addition to these grievances we were not told beforehand about online registering to discuss our issues, and we were forced into a perpetual loop with five other locations to listen to others speak. This is completely inappropriate and a huge inconvenience to hard working people and students. I was unable to voice my opinion in a public setting and a lot of my peers were refused entrance into the room. I genuinely feel victimized by the state of North Carolina and I wholeheartedly believe the location, time, and speaking rules were used to restrain our voices.</p>

	Joseph Kelly	Charlotte, NC	It's of the utmost importance that we have fair congressional district lines, with with non-partisan selection and transparency of the process.
	Mary Wible	Durham, NC	<p>As a member of a non contested district, I find the zig zag of lines that encompass any district so very intentional to keep incumbents in office. Job security is great though many in the public don't have that luxury and decisions you all make affect that.</p> <p>Populations evolve. Politics evolve. I think this should be seen as a chance to redistrict the entire state (perhaps not for this election cycle) in a pragmatic arms length way. Perhaps by Zip Codes?</p> <p>I trust you all to do what is right for the people of this state, not for the sake of your job security.</p> <p>Many thanks, Mary Wible Independent, Durham NC</p>
	Patricia Rosencrantz	Oriental, NC	The current legislature does not realize the harm that it is doing to the state with their policies of redistricting (as well as as others). Among several of my Northern friends who once considered moving here, NC is now off their list as the state has become an embarrassment for its intolerance and racial profiling regarding districts. If NC wishes to grow, prosper and attract people, it will be necessary to rethink its current legislative action and return to a progressive and inclusive agenda. The current mindset is only making the state appear as a backward moving, hateful, intolerant place to live. The NC legislature needs cut the obvious gerrymandering if it wishes to be considered as a place of the future rather than a Jim Crow state of the past.
	Gary Kenton	Greensboro, NC	Although there will be "winners" and "losers" when districts are realigned, the only way to restore integrity and confidence in our electoral process is to assure that districts are established on the basis of verifiable demographics and overseen by an independent, non-partisan agency. That would be called democracy.
	Gerlinde Lindy	Cullowhee, NC	Stop the gerrymandering! Put Asheville back in District 11, where it belongs. This district has been blatantly and shamefully gerrymandered, as have many other districts throughout North Carolina. This is not Democracy!!
	Bradley Overcash	Belmont, NC	Thank you for your good work. The maps are thoughtful and constitutional. Please resist the calls to strip authority from our elected representatives and give it to unelected, unaccountable bureaucrats. All the best, Brad Overcash (Gaston County)
	Gerlinde Lindy	Cullowhee, NC	Stop the gerrymandering! Put Asheville back in District 11, where it belongs. This district has been blatantly and shamefully gerrymandered, as have many other districts throughout North Carolina. This is not Democracy!!
	Lyda Carpen	Greensboro, NC	<p>The current maps must be redrawn. They are unfair and undemocratic.</p> <p>It is clear that there is a need for North Carolina to establish a nonpartisan system for drawing our state's voting maps. North Carolina should adopt an independent redistricting process that does not allow the party in power (whomever that might be) to alter districts to suit themselves.</p>

	Cary Branthwaite	Durham, NC	<p>Durham County is divided up into four Congressional districts. I live in eastern Durham County and along with about 1% of the rest of Durham County residents, I am assigned to the 13th Congressional District. Although I would like to believe that elected officials represent the best interests of all his or her constituents, I find it hard to believe that any Representative of the 13th Congressional District is going to make the interests of Durham County a priority. Although not designated as unconstitutional, the 13th Congressional District's formation is just as convoluted and the 1st and 12th.</p>
	Charles Wallin	Asheville, NC	<p>I am a citizen of the state of North Carolina and I agree with the recent Federal court ruling, and want North Carolina to redraw its congressional district maps to be more fair and equitable for all of our citizens.</p> <p>In 2011, the NC legislature redrew the maps – supposedly based on the 2010 census. I know very little about the other districts, but in the 10th and 11th North Carolina districts the changes had a partisan and racially discriminatory bent. That redistricting led to moving the very Democratic-leaning city of Asheville to the 10th district combining it with the densely populated and very Republican Charlotte suburbs. This seriously limits the voice of Asheville now that it belongs to a district that does not represent its interests. It also added more Republican-leaning counties to the 11th district – creating a district that is now considered one of the most Republican in the South.</p> <p>Democrats and Republicans have each had a hand gerrymandering in North Carolina at various times in our history – but this recent redistricting has a definite racial component.</p> <p>According to the 2010 census data, Buncombe County where Asheville is located had +238,000 including 6.5% African American and 6.5% Hispanic/Latinos – making it both the most populated and racially diverse county in Western North Carolina. The Counties in the new 11th District (including Macon, Swain, Jackson, Haywood, Clay, Graham, Madison, Cherokee, Yancey, Avery, Burke, Henderson, Transylvania, McDowell, Caldwell and Mitchell) are very rural, lightly populated areas with very little racial diversity – with few exceptions these Counties have populations that are less than 2% African American and less than 5% Hispanic/Latino.</p> <p>By creating the new 10th and 11th districts, the legislature has in effect diluted the voice of African Americans and Hispanic/Latinos in western North Carolina which is illegal under section 2 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.</p> <p>We need to redraw the North Carolina maps and correct this problem.</p>
	Vernon McMinn	Brevard, NC	<p>I am really embarrassed by the way NC was redistricted after the 2010 census. An impartial panel is needed to do this every ten years. Districts should be compact, equal in population and respect existing political boundaries. Counties and communities shouldn't be split. Districts should not look like amoebas like the third or hernias like the tenth or ink blots like the first. Much of the heavy lifting has already been done at http://bdistricting.com/2010/. Please correct this injustice and fix it so that the process remains impartial.</p>
	James Wickes	Cary, NC	<p>Equal population, compactness, congruity, partisan fairness, racial equality and more, are the components for drawing district lines. Can districts be</p>

		<p>drawn so each of these is perfectly and equally balanced? If not, then compromises had to be made. Therefore, any one of these components could be challenged as less than perfect and, by definition, it would be true. That is the case here.</p> <p>The question should be, was there malicious intent. The challenger can't find fault with 11 of the 13 N.C. districts. That doesn't seem like the work of a group intent on disenfranchising voters. I believe compromises were made and best judgement applied by people who live in this state.</p> <p>However, one of the considerations used to determine if a district has been drawn fairly has been judged unacceptable by a court. Our legislature must redraw the lines to be more pleasing to the court, in the opinion of the court - after an election has begun. The process of redrawing those lines will impact the balance and fairness of all the bordering districts. That means those districts could be challenged, and then their adjacent districts challenged, and so on until the end of time. The fact is, this state should be judged as a whole - not by one or two districts and not by one or two of many considerations used to create a fair voting district, and especially not during an election.</p>
Stacey Selkin	Waxhaw, NC	<p>It's always time to the right thing. It's always the right time for justice. Gerrymandering is wrong and unconstitutional. The court has ruled on this and we must begin for filling our duty and obligations to the people of North Carolina!</p>
Thomas Hill	Zirconia, NC	<p>The most reasonable and expeditious approach for complying with the recent 4th Circuit Court Order is to revert to the district borders as they existed and were approved prior to the 2012 map. Otherwise, a new re-drawing cannot be accomplished in a timely manner, and the Court itself may choose to re-draw the districts. An untimely response would harm candidates of both parties. Moreover, the likelihood of a Supreme Court stay of the 4th Circuit Order is diminished due to the demise of Justice Antonin Scalia.</p>
Ellen Weiner	Greensboro, NC	<p>I would have been at GTCC today if the hearing had been held. Thank you for this opportunity to send in my thoughts. I have three:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I want NC's voting districts to be based on contiguous boundaries. I want our cities within their counties to be united, not divided. For Pete's sake, district #1 goes from Durham to New Bern! <p>I have no doubt the remedial redistricting maps are already drawn up and waiting to be submitted. I believe they were ready a week ago and could have been published immediately for citizen review. That they weren't is evidence to me these public hearings are just for show. How will I know any legislator(s) even read this?!</p> <p>A Greensboro resident, I learned how easy it is for one legislator alone to have maps re-drawn ... how effectively our legislative leaders can line up the dominoes (pitifully easy, I learned, with many of our legislators) to reach the end they want. They're c-l-e-a-r-l-y not even interested in their fellow citizens input!</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. I believe any current senators and representatives who don't believe in and protect the voice of the individual citizen, who instead allow

		<p>gerrymandering to exist, should be disqualified from elective office. Be lobbyists; at least be honest. This is my litmus test for a true patriot.</p> <p>3. I ask our NC legislators to approve a nonpartisan commission in place by the next census to re-draw our voting districts from now on. I hear and respond to the call issued by former NC Republican Charlotte mayor Richard Vinroot and NC Democratic Raleigh mayor Charles Meeker to end gerrymandering in our beloved NC. I have heard retiring Republican Rep. Skip Stam argue the time is now, particularly as population statistics projected for NC call indicate fresh new reasons to change the process, in addition to it being in his opinion the honorable thing for US elected representatives to support.</p> <p>I have seen HB92 with 61 bi-partisan supporters (!) die in committee. I'm so glad to see Rep. Jon Hardister, who has carried the flag on nonpartisan redistricting in NC, on this committee!</p>
Doris Kistler	Asheville, NC	<p>There is no question in my mind that these districts are unfairly drawn. Who in their right mind would construct a district that looks like 12. It is absurd and unfair. In my opinion the entire state should be reassessed by an independent organization....this should not be up to politicians.</p>
Ramona Dula	Asheboro, NC	<p>We the voters in NC should not be forced to change our voting during an election that has already begun. North Carolina should not be forced to redraw its congressional districts in the middle of an election cycle. By delaying and or changing the congressional primaries for a court ordered redraw of the maps will certainly cause massive voter confusion and disenfranchise thousands of voters who may not vote in a likely mid summer, stand alone congressional primary.</p> <p>We as Republicans are satisfied with their current representation and the constituent services they are receiving. They are excellent and should remain as is. Not changed and rearranged to suit a few unsatisfied people who will always be unsatisfied no matter how you change things.</p>
William Dula	Asheboro, NC	<p>North Carolina should not be forced to redraw its congressional districts in the middle of an election cycle, where people have already begun voting. If delayed the congressional primaries for a court ordered redraw of the maps will cause massive voter confusion and disenfranchise thousands of voters who may not vote in a likely mid summer, stand alone congressional primary.</p> <p>I am satisfied with their current representation and the constituent services they are receiving. Please leave the maps alone and let us VOTE!!</p>
Everett Dula	Asheboro, NC	<p>Leave the maps alone and let us vote! Voting has already begun. Don't change the rules in the middle. Not American!</p>
Rachel Patton	Waxhaw, NC	<p>Gerrymandering is WRONG! You need to reverse course and create fair districts that reflect the diversity within this great state. Democracy is from what all of the power in this country is derived, and it can be brought back to our great state. We do not all have to agree, but through discourse is where we will arrive at the best solutions and will bring about the best representatives. Civic engagement is a critical component to our governmental system and now is the time to re-cultivate it!</p>

Harvey Richmond	Cary, NC	The legislature should redraw the 1st and 12th districts and make adjustments to the neighboring congressional districts so that are more compact and not split precincts, towns and cities, and counties to the maximum extent possible. Creating districts that are not compact and that don't respect boundaries like precincts, cities and towns, and counties results in less effective representation. Its time to minimize the politics and create districts that are compact and make sense.
Bradley Littlefield	Raleigh, NC	I am opposed to redrawing the Congressional districts that are presently in place.
ANDRE D. VANN	DURHAM, NC	<p>First, thank you all so much for allowing me the opportunity to participate and give my voice to the Joint Select Committee on Congressional Redistricting.</p> <p>I oppose the districts as drawn as it is more than obvious that race was the determining factor in the creation of not just the Congressional Districts, but also in the General Assembly.</p> <p>As a resident of the First Congressional District I call on this committee to bring integrity back to this process by doing the right thing and listen to Rep. H. M. Michaux who ensured fairness and integrity during his years of serving on this committee. I urge you to call upon his wise counsel along with Sen. McKissick who have a true passion for fairness and justice for all concerned.</p> <p>I believe in one person one vote and we should not retreat from this as we are one people and one government. As a descendant of former enslaved Hawkins, Vann, Crutchfield, Hicks and Yarborough family members all from Henderson, North Carolina a part of the 1st District and former 2nd District. I call on you to honor their memory by removing obstacles and barriers to voting by their descendants. Please treat African American voters with respect and dignity that we have so valiantly worked to preserve.</p> <p>The decisions that you have made have placed the citizens of the State of North Carolina in a terrible place and have set us back for a hundred years of more. Your decisions have impacted our democracy and the Fourth Circuit has been our remedy and I urge you to move today to right this wrong as the time is now !!!!</p> <p>Let us work to get politics out of this process and the time is now to redistrict and do what is right as the citizens of this state are watching.</p>
Kevin Brock	Waynesville, NC	Government derives its just powers from the consent of the governed. That consent does not exist today in North Carolina, in current districts for Congress and both houses of the General Assembly. Our representation is grossly skewed by extreme gerrymandering. Now is the time to end this continued insult to representative government. Establish a non-partisan redistricting committee immediately, and give them the task to draw fair, representative, competitive district lines for Congress and the General Assembly.
Charles High	Asheville, NC	I attempted to attend the meeting on Congressional Redistricting at UNCA this morning in Asheville. Unfortunately, being on a college campus during classes, there was no parking. After driving around the main campus circle 4 times and going into many parking lots, all I found was "Permit Only"

		spaces. Why could you have not held this meeting at a location with more public parking or on campus after hours? The DMV held the Asheville connector meeting downtown at night early in the week and there was plenty of parking-even in downtown Asheville. Was the location and time an attempt to keep the public from attending?
Michael Lyons	Franklin, NC	As the decision of whether or not to stall our primary election is being considered this year, I am grateful that Raleigh has sought to get public opinion. As I see it, this primary election is (at all levels of government) a spectacular event, building great excitement and energy going into "Super Tuesday". Democrats and Republicans alike are on the edge of their seats in anticipation for the results. For legalities and beuractic statistics (highlighting technical problems with the smallest degree of percentiles) to get in the way of that; that's the definitive reason why people have already lost so much trust in the government. Please, I say, let us vote as we have been preparing to vote; don't throw the people you serve a curve-ball at the last minute.
Mia Prior	Chapel Hill, NC	Please redraw the district boundaries in a logical, non-partisan manner without regard to what race people in the counties and cities are. The current districts are totally unacceptable. Now the result it throwing our election into chaos. In the future, we need a NON PARTISAN committee to draw up the districts for NC. Without a fair election process, our democracy becomes a sham.
Gerald Houston	Kinston, NC	I support redrawing the Congressional districts. I would like to see a entire county be in one district rather than split the way they are now. I feel the current districts were drawn this way for only one purpose and that was to dilute the votes of certain classes of people. I also don't like the voter suppression that has been enacted in NC making it difficult to register to vote. Thirty state allow for online registration. Our legislators needs to get with the program of encouraging people to vote instead of creating every obstacles you can to prevent voting.
Jo Isler	Greensboro, NC	It is my opinion that this partisan redistricting needs to stop. The Democrats did it and now the Republicans have done it. I believe it has been worse under the Republicans and these lines were drawn by an outside political person or group to favor Republicans. All districts need to be drawn by nonpartisan persons or groups. Voting should be fair for all and not stacked against any one party or group. These changes need to be done prior to the March 15, 2016 Primary regardless of whether absentee ballots have started to return. Return the State Primary to its original May date. Republicans also need to disclose how much of our taxpayer money was spent on consultants to draw maps and on outside attorneys.
T. Rick Smith	Asheboro, NC	It is absurd for the court to disrupt North Carolina's election process which is already in process, with many absentee ballots already cast. The confusion and frustration caused by confusing or even delaying an election process which is already underway will only result in disenfranchising countless voters who will wind up not voting at all. The current districts as drawn give fair representation and constituent services to the people of North Carolina, with both political parties having appropriate representation. If and when New Districts are drawn, it should be done without regard to racial or political quotas. The practice of splitting counties to achieve those quotas should end. Thanks, Rick Smith, Asheboro, North Carolina.

	David Mildeberg	Charlotte, NC	Please establish an independent commission to oversee Congressional redistricting in North Carolina. The current districts are ridiculous by any measure, and shame on both parties for designing them. Majority party should get to select majority of commission members; minority party should be allowed to select others. Base the breakdown on the percentage of votes received in the previous gubernatorial election. (E.g, 52% for the Republicans, 48% for the Democrats would mean a slight majority on the commission - say 12-8 or 11-9 if it was a 20-member group). It won't eliminate politics, but it will be better than current approach. Goals should be communities of interest, fairness and common sense. Please do the right thing.
	Diane Smith	Asheboro, NC	Confusion or delay of the March 15 election to redraw congressional districts when the election is already in process with votes already cast is totally unfair and counter productive to its alleged purpose. This disruption of the process will frustrate and confuse voters resulting in less votes cast not more. N. C. Citizens are satisfied with their representation and constituent service as provided by the current districts. District should only be changed as the regular cycle matures and then they should be drawn without regard to political or racial quotas. Thanks, Diane Smith, Asheboro, N. C.
	Bernadette Chasteen	Durham, NC	Pretty clear that you need to move the primary election out to its original date, and redraw the voting districts to better represent the population of our State. The sooner the better.
	Hasan Harnett	Harrisburg, NC	<p>Mr Chairman, committee members and ladies and gentlemen both far and near.</p> <p>My name is Hasan Harnett, I am an American, a registered voter in the 8th District and THE Chairman of the GREAT North Carolina Republican Party.</p> <p>My SINGLE VOICE as the Republican Chairman represents large, diverse communities of the human race...nearly two million Republican voters strong.</p> <p>Overall, The North Carolina Republican Party strongly opposes the redrawing of the congressional maps in the MIDST of the an election cycle.</p> <p>-Likewise, we believe law makers, thru the General Assembly, have and will continue to protect the rights of NC voters.</p> <p>- We also believe law makers have previously established voting boundaries that are fair, reasonable and legal.</p> <p>Just for the record, General Assembly is not here to choose voters or even marginalized voters like some might have suggested. This type of thinking in itself...is offensive...and from an African American perspective, quite frankly, color has nothing to do with it. Therefore, it is completely LUDICROUS to think otherwise.</p> <p>Let me remind you, The North Carolina Supreme Court upheld the unanimous ruling of the three-judge panel that heard the case in NC Superior Court</p> <p>Let me remind you, that since 2011, every court that has issued an opinion</p>

and even the Obama Justice Department has reached the same conclusion. "North Carolina's redistricting maps are constitutional."

All in all, the Republican Party in North Carolina, is very diverse. We are largely satisfied with our present day representation and the constituent services we are receiving.

Mr. Chairman and committee members, present day congressional primaries must go on without judicial tinkering. Delaying the North Carolina congressional primaries for a court ordered redraw of the maps will cause MASSIVE voter confusion which will destabilize and UTTERLY destroy voter confidence all across the state.

Additionally, disenfranchise voters will not come out to vote in a stand alone congressional primary and this will end up costing the state close to 10 million dollars. For all the business owners and parents out there...what ever happened to financial accountability and responsibility?

Again, the North Carolina Republican Party opposes the redrawing of the congressional maps.

Democrat Roy Cooper won all 13 of these Congressional Districts showing they can be won by democrats. Of the 10 congressional districts currently held by republicans NONE have majority GOP registration.

Therefore, all must create a broad coalition between republicans, conservative democrats, and unaffiliate Voters to win. It is all about campaigns and candidates and the messages they present.

Therefore, the current 10-3 partisan split is a fair result of Republican election victories, which allows legislators to take partisan voting behavior into account when drawing districts.

IF North Carolina is forced to redraw its congressional districts, as a potential solution, the North Carolina Republican Party believes that any new congressional districts should:

- 1) Keep precincts and counties whole as much as possible
- 2) Congressional maps should be drawn in a completely "color blind" fashion, with no regard to race or racial political quotas.
- 3) Due to the reclining influence of North Carolina's rural communities, it is imperative that our state's smallest counties not be split.

In closing, the North Carolina Republican Party opposes the redrawing of Congressional maps in the midst of an election cycle. We have full-confidence in the North Carolina General Assembly. We thank you for this public hearing opportunity and for representing the citizens in this great state of North Carolina.

For these and other reasons, The Republican Party of North Carolina STRONGLY urges and RECOMMENDS that you leave maps the way they are

		so we don't interrupt the primary process that is already underway.
Matthew Witosky	Holly Springs, NC	<p>Stop gerrymandering. The only way to stop gerrymandering is to give the task of setting districts back to citizens. The next round of retaliatory gerrymandering will be just as shameful and damaging as the last, and until the power is given back to the people, it will not end.</p> <p>The legislature is locked in a permanent "Boys in the Dome" turf war, with the voters as the victims of constant drive-by gerrymandering. In the races underway today, far too many voters literally have no choice for whom to vote, because the districts have been drawn such that only one candidate even attempts to run. Do not underestimate the damage that your passive or active participation in gerrymandering does to our society. Merely because you inherited a corrupting system does not exonerate you for the damage it causes, if you fail to stop it. If you fail to stop it when you clearly could, you own it just as much as the corrupt officials that started the practice.</p> <p>I am a registered independent, and generally consider myself a moderate. I can support any moderate in some way, because I am assured that most moderate elected officials govern by the strength of compromise, and understand the inherent protection of the rights of any minority on any issue in our democratic system. Under the current boundaries, sitting legislators have no incentive to seek middle ground or moderate their rhetoric to seek compromise on vital issues facing our society. They face no viable opposition to their re-election no matter what they say or how they vote. This is not democracy.</p> <p>Given that Republicans are currently enthroned in power, I challenge the Republicans to live their convictions. If your opinions are truly held by the majority of citizens of this great state, you have nothing to fear from a commission of citizens to develop compact districts set by the citizenry. Should you cling to gerrymandering, you betray your own convictions that what you believe, most people believe.</p> <p>You should know that I have just as much loathing for unfettered gerrymandering by Democratic legislators. "He did it first" is the excuse for five year-olds and gang murderers, not for the caretakers of republican democracy. While typing this letter, I have been listening to the streaming audio of hearings across the state. The only speaker to support the status quo system, was a member of the legislature and Republican party. Go figure. Every other speaker supported some form of citizen commission or non-partisan format for drawing districts. Do not fail us, the citizens. Be a hero of democracy, show us you can live by your spoken convictions, rather than let your actions convict you of hypocrisy. Give us back the power to elect our representatives. Appoint a non-partisan citizens' commission, give them guidelines, and let the best ideas win.</p>
Christine Hardman	Chapel hill, NC	<p>I find it unnecessary to redistrict based on the cost and the fact the elections have already started.</p> <p>Don't cancel out my vote and confuse all the voters</p>
Pete Glidewell	Elon, NC	<p>In 2012 Democrats for the US House of Representatives from North Carolina got 50.5% of all the votes cast yet only 4 of the 13 seats were won by Democrats. When you say that the present results are the will of the people, you have made a disingenuous statement. Half the votes should</p>

		reflect 50% of the seats, not 30%. So I consider your district design a fraud.
Joseph Sistare	Charlotte, NC	It is obvious that there can be no bipartisan consideration and cooperation in redistricting. Therefore the only logical solution is to remove the politics from the process. Since the early 2000's...there have been many articles about research done on developing mathematical algorithms to determine how congressional districts could be drawn. If our democracy is to be saved from eventual civil unrest... and possibly a class war in the streets... you had better use a non partisan mathematical approach. You may not like the facts that scientific research prove... but this is one time that you should consider mathematics. As a voter in the 12th district... I do not appreciate what you have done to electoral politics in this state.
Liz Millsaps Haigler	Charlotte, NC	It's is quick and easy to redraw our gerrymandered congressional districts! Adopt these fairly drawn districts: http://bdistricting.com/2010/NC_Congress/map.png If not this map, then please choose an independent commission and make the process transparent with lots of public feedback. Thank you!
Melissa Bizzaro	Charlotte, NC	must have an independent bipartisan commission to redraw our gerrymandered congressional districts
Steven Taylor	Greensboro, NC	As a registered, unaffiliated voter in Greensboro, NC, I strongly urge the Joint Select Committee to put a stop immediately to the Gerrymandering that has been used and abused for decades by both parties in many states. The fact that it is a long-standing "common practice" does not make it "right." The continuation of Gerrymandering discriminates against and disenfranchises voters of all races, sexes, and political parties. The arguments that it would be "too difficult" and that "there's not time" simply don't hold water. In fact, Sen Rucho has stated that if redistricting were required, the elections could be delayed. It's that simple. A simple redistricting plan is also available. On Sunday, Feb. 15, the Greensboro News and Record published a sample map, compiled by scholars at Duke University, that is optimized for compactness and equal population. Go with that map. This is not the appropriate time for "action" to be defending the status quo. Rather, it's time for action to unravel long-standing wrong. Respectfully, Steven Taylor Reference: http://www.greensboro.com/gnr/public-hearings-on-congressional-redistricting-canceled-update/article_2d68ee11-ccfe-5017-8a19-584220086cce.html
Raisse Ward	Creedmoor, NC	Voting Districts in North Carolina should be drawn fairly. No district should be drawn to favor a particular political party.
Beth Liner	Bullock, NC	The districts - as they stand - are ridiculous and it a shame that one party is

		so afraid of losing that they would need to do something like this. There must be something wrong with your platform if you have cheat to win
Shel Anderson	Durham, NC	I am very concerned about fairly-drawn districts. I live in congressional district #1, and was moved in the last re-districting. Please do not destroy more public trust in the election process by creating districts that confirm one party or the other. I hope you will redraw districts on the basis of geographic connection. My county (Durham) was sliced and diced among 4 different districts. I see little reason for that.
Marsha Wray Lowry	Harrisburg, NC	REDRAW THE DISTRICTS through non partisan or bipartisan committee. NC GOP Stop passing unconstitutional laws and districts.
Mark Nance	Raleigh, NC	<p>My name is Mark Nance. I live in Raleigh; I'm married and have two kids, Simon and Anna; and I'm an assistant professor of political science at NC State's School of Public and International Affairs. I appreciate the opportunity to comment here this morning. Much like you, I'd guess, I'm still processing the implications of a court decision that declares electoral districts illegal in an election that is technically already underway. Logically, legislative leaders have appealed for a stay. That outcome was uncertain to begin with and is even more so following the death of Justice Scalia. My comment this morning is thus not based so much on how to re-draw the districts, but rather the bigger lessons that I think this points out.</p> <p>In that regard, I'd like to make one simple point: we have to reform how we draw electoral districts in this state. We have a long tradition, stretching now across both parties, of the courts finding districts drawn by our legislators to be unconstitutional. North Carolina has much to be proud of, but our representative districts frankly are a source of embarrassment. Let me focus on two key points here this morning regarding why that's one tradition that's in desperate need of being overturned.</p> <p>I understand that it's tempting to draw your own district and party into safety while putting the other party at a disadvantage. And God knows I understand that the Democrats did this for generations. But North Carolina is changing drastically, and with it the strategic value of gerrymandering. We know that there is a rapid urbanization and that rural counties are losing population; we know that North Carolina is becoming more diverse and we don't know how these new folks will vote; we know that the traditional racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic settling in urban centers versus suburbs versus exurbs are also breaking down at rapid rates. In short, your districts will look very different in 10 or 15 years than they do right now; the political make-up will be very different than it is right now. Finally, as Dr. Andrew Taylor in our department is fond of saying, we also know that primary strategy of gerrymandering is to win small and lose big. The sum total of all of that is that districts drawn by the majority party will be the first to be impacted by demographic shifts. There is, in other words, a tremendous amount of uncertainty the politics of North Carolina over the next 15 or 20 years.</p> <p>Again, as Dr. Taylor has said, it therefore behooves those in power to buy themselves an insurance policy by implementing a system of redistricting that is transparent, accountable, reliable, and fair, regardless of the party in charge.</p> <p>Second, this is not abstract political theory, but has a real impact on our economy and on our democracy. For those of you involved in the gritty, day-to-day of district drawing, this process seems to morph into a largely technical, wonky exercise: move a few voters here and there to get above</p>

		<p>the constitutional bar. Let me assure you: most people outside of these walls see it as the worst kind of political maneuvering. It feeds into an already strong cynicism about the ugliness and pettiness of our political process. My students just read the work of Robert Putnam, who conducted a landmark study of the regions of Italy to determine why some of the regions seemed to work better than others. The regions were all structured the same and given the same resources. His answer? There was a higher level of trust among citizens in better functioning regions: trust among themselves and trust that no one was rigging the system to the systematic advantage of some and the systematic disadvantage of others. As a result, they engage their fellow citizens and their representative institutions in a way that makes the whole system work much better. Partisan gerrymandering undermines that trust and hampers the functioning of our democracy.</p> <p>As Rep. Stam said last fall in a forum that I hosted at NC State, ending gerrymandering won't solve so many of our problems. But just as better interstates, railroads, ports, and schools are the infrastructure our state needs to build a stronger, more competitive economy, a fair and transparent redistricting process is the infrastructure that we need to build a stronger, better functioning democracy. In short, it makes for a stronger North Carolina. And surely that is an agenda that we can all fully endorse. We need an independent, bi-partisan redistricting commission now to prevent these debacles in the future.</p>
Brian Thornburg	Chapel Hill, NC	Current districts are unfair. Please create an independent means of drawing the map, please.
James Morris	Greensboro, NC	Keep the redistricting the way it is. Democrats think they can gerrymander but Republicans should not and follow a different set of rules.
Mary Klenz	Charlotte, NC	<p>My name is Mary Klenz and I am Co-president of the League of Women Voters of NC.</p> <p>The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan organization that has fought since 1920 to improve our government and engage citizens in the decisions that impact their lives. Formed from the movement that secured the right to vote for women, the centerpiece of the League's efforts remain to expand participation and give a voice to all Americans. We do this at all 3 levels of government, engaging in both broad educational efforts as well as advocacy. Our issues are ground in the history and the processes that make democracy work.</p> <p>So you can understand how dismayed we are that the democratic process of transparency, accountability and public input is compromised. It seems that having public input on maps that redraw the districts without ever producing the maps puts the cart before the horse.</p> <p>It is more than a week since the courts ordered the congressional maps be redrawn and they are due for submission to the federal courts in a mere 5 days. Yet, maps are nowhere to be seen. This further jeopardizes the process and erodes public trust and confidence that the elections will be fair.</p> <p>The evidence is clear: this redistricting plan causes harm to voters and the courts agree. More damage has already been done by the confusion and lack of transparency. When the process is in question the people of North Carolina are harmed.</p> <p>The League promised throughout this legal process that we will not give up</p>

		<p>in our fight to ensure that redistricting in this state is conducted in a fair and legal way. We've said it before and we say it again. Voters deserve new maps and fair elections to make democracy work here in North Carolina. This is not a Republican issue. It is not a Democratic issue. It is an issue of integrity and fairness. The League of Women Voters expect policymakers to live up to the responsibilities that have been entrusted to you by the voters and the law.</p>
Mark Prokop	Chapel Hill, NC	<p>Please don't change the districts at this time since the voting for our primary has already begun! Stop the politics and let our vote count!</p>
David Marshburn	Jacksonville, NC	<p>It is time for you to do the right thing and discard the gerrymandered maps you have created. You are not fooling anyone and now without Scalia to protect you, you might want to come up with some legitimate maps before the district court that just ruled against you makes you revert back to the old maps ! The eyes of the country are on you and more importantly the eyes of the North Carolina voters are on you !</p>
Patricia Rieser	Durham, NC	<p>I strongly support a non-partisan effort to re-draw NC's districts to accurately represent the state's diversity, which the current lines fail to do. If this means delaying the March primary, so be it. The party in power in Raleigh created this chaos, the taxpayers are footing the bill for the lawsuits that have ensued. This is your mess to deal with. There are ways to approach this in a truly non-partisan way, here's one example: http://bdistricting.com/2010/NC_Congress. There are others. Take this opportunity to behave like statesmen, not politicians. You know from the polls it's what the voters want. Thank you for your consideration.</p>
Kirk Folk	Charlotte, NC	<p>Thank you for accepting public comment online. I was at the CPCC forum in Charlotte, but after waiting 3 1/2 hours, I needed to leave the public comment hearing. There was, obviously, a lot of concern over the unconstitutional gerrymandered redistricting led by the ruling Republican Party.</p> <p>The way the districts are redrawn, decided by who wins office, is shamefully non-representative of the voice and voting of the people. I am among the growing population of unaffiliated voters in North Carolina that have been disenfranchised by these partisan politics at the expense of the people. The only reasonable, fair, democratic way of fixing the redistricting map is to conduct a non-partisan, independent redrawing from an outside agency and in an open and transparent forum with the public scrutinizing the process and results. While this makes sense, I fear, and believe there's proof to back up my concerns, that this is not what the parties vying for power in NC want. This is undemocratic and un-American. We the people vote for the representatives of the people. Politics which go against the will of the people hurts not only the people themselves from just representation but it hurts the system itself and perpetuates the divisiveness that undermines community solidarity and peace in society.</p> <p>I disagree with some of the comments being made in an attempt to justify keeping the system as illegal as it is. Several comments made concerned early voters and especially highlighted the military members serving overseas. The comments actually used the word disenfranchising of those NC voters. I cry foul to this claim. I am a 12 year veteran of the US Air</p>

Force and voted while overseas more than once. The disenfranchisement happens when a corrupt system is allowed to exist and drives people away from the polls and when voters know and understand that they are fighting for a corrupt system instead of the democracy they thought they were defending. Re-sending voter ballots is not a difficult task, and if it is expensive, those putting gerrymandered maps in place are responsible for misusing NC taxpayer dollars to bail themselves out of getting caught rigging the system. Those who have already cast votes will welcome resubmitting new votes in appropriately, legally drawn districts since they will have more faith that the system works to represent the people the service members overseas are fighting to protect. It was the current political establishment that put this currently unconstitutional redistricting map in place, and if members who voted early are now disenfranchised, it would necessarily be the responsibility of those who put the current maps in place.

Likewise, the "chaos" caused by a "last minute" court decision doesn't hold water, either. If there are unintended consequences caused by a legislature who unconstitutionally drew district maps based primarily on race, as the court rightfully found, the chaos is inherent in the system and doesn't change based on voting in this primary season. To not put a pause on the current elections and continue to rig the elections for the party in power will bring further turmoil as the population knows the districts have been drawn with politicians interests in mind, not the people's. The Legislature owes it to the people of NC to have fair elections that abide by the will of the people, not dirty political tricks. And, as some defending the unconstitutional maps have argued, the process allowed them to draw the redistricting lines based on race in a legal way and part of the current process in place, then the process needs major overhauling and the current system needs to be ruled illegal, as the federal court has found! In other words, even if it's "legal" now, it's still not right, and the laws need updated to reflect a non-racist process.

When districts are drawn in the inequitable way they are currently drawn, it undermines the people's vote and marginalizes large segments of the population. The current map is an inaccurate picture of the voting public and segregating voting blocks and communities based on color is still immoral and illegal. When the Supreme Court unwisely allowed a partisan attack on the Voting Rights Act and dismantled critical protections for the voting rights of people of color, their stated conclusion was we didn't need those protections in today's day. With gerrymandering districts, discriminatory voter ID laws, and other voter suppression tactics, it's quite obvious they were mistaken and we, in fact, do need those protections in place. This government is mandated to work for ALL the citizens, not just the ones who vote a certain way! When districts are segregated the way they are, the politics get changed in those areas, and that's where citizens then go unrepresented and their rights are infringed upon.

This NC Legislature owes it to the citizens of the state to redraw the districts in a way that includes more people in the political process. The lines need to be non-partisan, represent the voting blocks equally, and stop discriminating against large blocks of voters. Shame on those who suppress votes because they don't go toward them. Get a better platform and start working for the people instead of your own special interests if you want to

		stay in office!
Jessica Grey	Durham, NC	<p>As a recent transplant to North Carolina, I did not vote any of you into office (yet), but I am - now - a constituent and I find it appalling that before I've even had the chance to exercise my right to vote in a congressional election in this state, that my vote has already been marginalized by racist and partisan politics. Further, I find it deeply frustrating that after having already so egregiously gerrymandered congressional districts that any member of the General Assembly would cry foul - not just at having been caught doing it, but at the limited time constraint in which to fix it... when, in fact, it was a decision made by that same General Assembly that has so reduced the time available to step into compliance with the ruling of federal judges.</p> <p>These lines can and must be redrawn in a fair, non-partisan way and it must be done now. I've heard arguments that to delay the primary in order to redistrict first would disenfranchise voters, but is that not in fact what is already being done? and to a number of voters far larger than would be impacted by having to mail in another absentee ballot. This is a spurious argument, often made by pulling on patriotic heartstrings by invoking the right of our soldiers to vote. They absolutely do have the right to vote; but they, as well as every citizen in the state of North Carolina, have the right to vote in a constitutional election, something that will not occur should the elections continue forward with the lines drawn as they are. Further, this argument ignores the fact that many of those service members, in fact, hail from those districts that have been most marginalized by the 2011 redistricting.</p> <p>Delay the primary. Redraw the lines. Prove to your constituents that you value the Constitution, that you value the People, and that you value your own integrity. Prove your commitment to your oaths to the people of North Carolina. ALL the people of North Carolina.</p>
Jean Berrier-Tate	Charlotte, NC	<p>I hope this ruling will provide a good "kick in the pants" for all involved in this debacle. It is time to return democracy to the people. Districts should be drawn fairly based on geographical boundaries and ties (eg. cities, counties, etc.) not on race and political persuasion. Both parties have been guilty in the past and the time to stop this is NOW...Please do your duty as leaders of our state...</p>
Jeff Edwards	La Grange, NC	<p>I am 47. As a member of the 1st Congressional district in its present form and all previous ones, I have never voted in an election where the party of my representative wasn't already pre-determined in Raleigh. This was wrong when the Democrats did it and it is still wrong today. Almost every state Republican representative and Senator has been on record in the past for independent redistricting of ALL districts. The time has come to do the right thing and make it happen.</p>
Magaretha Herman	Durham, NC	<p>I reside in current District 1, and I feel very strongly that our congressional districts should be more compact. I had to drive to Elizabeth City to attend one citizen gathering in my district--that's too far. I oppose, on moral grounds, any district lines being drawn in order to promote the welfare of one political party over another. Let's have a non-partisan commission to draw district lines. When, through the mechanism of gerrymandered districts, one party wins more votes statewide, but has only 1/3 as many</p>

		congressional seats as the party that won fewer votes, that denies voters the representation they are due. I ask the NC legislature to create districts that respect the wishes of voters.
Carol Pierce	Seagrove, NC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - North Carolina should not be forced to redraw its congressional districts in the middle of an election cycle, where people have already begun voting. - Delaying the congressional primaries for a court ordered redraw of the maps will cause massive voter confusion and disenfranchise thousands of voters who may not vote in a likely mid summer, stand alone congressional primary. (1998 Primary Elections: May 5th Primary for US Senate: 799,371 ballots cast and September 15th Primaries for US House: 161,596 ballots cast) - Republicans are largely satisfied with their current representation and the constituent services they are receiving. <p>Again, the North Carolina Republican Party opposes the redrawing of the congressional maps. However, should the Courts require the maps be redrawn, the North Carolina Republican Party believes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The current 10-3 partisan split is a fair result of Republican election victories, which allows legislators to take partisan voting behavior into account when drawing districts. - A new congressional map should keep precincts and counties whole as much as possible. - Due to the reclining influence of North Carolina's rural communities, it is imperative that our state's smallest counties not be split. - Finally, as Chief Justice Roberts said in the opinion for Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District No. 1, "the way to stop discrimination on the basis of race is to stop discriminating on the basis of race." Any new districts should be drawn in a completely "color blind" fashion, with no regard to race or racial political quotas.
John Campbell	Carrboro, NC	Please get back to work now. It's time to get these districts redrawn in a fair and unbiased manor. Stop your racial and political bias and do what is right for our state not what makes you the most money from special interest groups.
Melani Winter	Raleigh, NC	End the discriminatory redistricting by redrawing the lines of Districts 1 and 12.
Theresa Nash	Greensboro, NC	I believe it is mandatory, in order to have a functioning democracy, to assure that all citizens' votes count equally. Gerrymandering reduces competition in elections and reduces the value of some citizens' votes. I urge you to adopt an ungerrymandered voting district map and pass HB 92, which would create a truly nonpartisan redistricting process.
Paula Stober	Greensboro, NC	In North Carolina's last congressional elections in 2014, due to gerrymandering, no North Carolinian's vote was very powerful but some votes were much less powerful than others by design. As a result of gerrymandering, no congressional candidate won by less than 14.5% of the vote, seven won by 30% or more and one even won with more than 92% of the vote. With majorities so large in every race, no election for North Carolina Representative in the US Congress was competitive in 2014 and hence individual votes were not very powerful. In the 2016 election 40 % of the representatives will have no opponents

		because gerrymandering made it impossible for opposing candidates to be competitive. In those districts, the votes of North Carolina citizens will have zero power unless an amazing write-in candidate bursts on the scene. The same is true for 13 of the election contests for seats in the North Carolina Senate.
Susan Dodder	Kernersville, NC	<p>North Carolina needs redistricting that is transparent, fair, impartial, and non-partisan.</p> <p>Redistricting that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures fairness for ALL North Carolinians • Makes every vote count • Promotes public confidence in our political system • Makes government in North Carolina work for everyone • Reduces bitter partisan divisions in the NC General Assembly and avoids costly, lengthy legal battles • Serves the best interests of our state. <p>A poll by the North Carolina-based Public Policy Polling found that those surveyed 45 percent of registered North Carolina voters support nonpartisan redistricting, while just 18 percent oppose it. There is support among Democrats (48 percent to 14), Republicans (37 to 25), and independents (49 to 17).</p>
Patricia Beaman	Black Mtn, NC	<p>Please recognize my strong objection to the current redistricting attempt within an already active voting period and the middle of a voting cycle. We do not need this type of political intrusion. We have enough very challenging issues to address! without this type of confusion.</p> <p>Respectfully submitted, Patricia Beaman</p>
Amy Trawick	North Wilkesboro, NC	I am thrilled with the court's decision and unhappy with the gerrymandering that has existed in this state for years. The district lines need to be redrawn before the primary, hopefully by an independent redistricting commission, with the use of government computers (not Republican reps'), and with transparency in the process. Please take this opportunity and your responsibility to the citizenry of this state seriously. Thank you for your service.
Robert Carey	Burnsville, NC	Redistricting should be done immediately
Thurman Hubbard	Ramseur, NC	Please do the right thing and simply redraw new lines based on natural boundaries such as rivers, major highway medians, and county lines in accordance with the intent of the authors of our state constitution. Doing so can be accomplished quickly. Stop tinkering with our elections to benefit yourselves and your benefactors and do the right thing before we have to force you.
Anne Hummel	Greensboro, NC	We must end to gerrymandering once and for all. Why? To be in compliance with the VRA, all voters should enjoy the same constitutional protections to fair elections, so that they have equally powerful votes. I urge you to adopt an ungerrymandered voting district map, and then, adopt a bill like HB 92 which Representative Jon Hardister has co-sponsored, a bill that would create a truly nonpartisan redistricting process.
Manisha Devasthali	Fayetteville, NC	Be transparent: Just follow the county lines. Stop laboring over what the demographic composition of the various regions are. This is not a task that

		requires as much effort as education and women's rights.
Martha Brouwer	Troutman, NC	Please have redistricting done by an indepent agency.
Elena Snavelly	Durham, NC	Please draw some districts that make sense (and not just politically). Thanks! Elena
Victoria Weeke	Winston Sale , NC	Redistricting needs to be done immediatly. Lawlessness by continuing these districts is wrong and unconstitutional.
John Balla	Raleigh, NC	Please redistrict N.C. districts for US Congress and NC Legislature in the most compact way possible and stop using racial, partisan or any other considerations when redrawing districts. I have more common interests with my nearest neighbors in Raleigh (no matter which party affiliation) than with people many miles away in rural areas or other cities. Thank you! John Balla
Melissa Murphy	Asheville, NC	I urge you to comply with the mandate and redraw the maps. North Carolina deserves a non-partisan system for drawing congressional districts. This is another embarrassing moment for our state; and coupled with all of the confusion and complications around voter ID and the rest of the voting restrictions the legislature has enacted, this is a serious hindrance to our democracy. North Carolina deserves better. We deserve fair maps that represent us and we deserve easy access to the ballot. If the election needs to be postponed to redraw our maps fairly, then that is what we should do. Please do it right this time.
Carl Johnson	Garner, NC	Redraw FAIRLY and EQUITABLY ALL DISTRICTS. And begin the process to allow an nonpartisan independent commission to draw them based on the decennial census results. I have no trust in the GOP led NCGA.
Leslie Kirby	Albemarle, NC	There should be fair districts because A. It makes a minority (regardless of party, race, etc.) equal to others and B. I'd rather see competition than an easy win for the political parties.
Patricia Sawin	Chapel Hill, NC	The redistricting must produce geographically compact districts where citizens will be diverse in terms of political position and race but have common interests in local communities and the needs and concerns particular to their area of our state.
Melinda Davis	Durham, NC	I support the redistricting the lines.
Holly Francis	Durham, NC	It's not hard, you're lying about that (not surprised) and you caused the problem in the first place! Check out this Website: https://www.washingtonpost.com/.../this-computer.../
Janine Rouson	Raleigh, NC	I believe the districts should be re-drawn before the March 15th primary. When I saw the maps this week from the news stories, it just makes no sense to see how districts 1 and 12 were drawn without some extreme bias in mind. Do the right thing.
Barbara Beard	Durham, NC	The situation was corrected five years ago. This is nothing more than effort to disrupt an election that is already in progress.
Bruce Emory	Asheville, NC	2014 election results demonstrate the unfairness of the current districts. Number of seats in Congress for each party should be roughly proportional

		to the statewide vote for that party. Start from scratch; don't just adjust current districts. Ignore where incumbent representatives live. Redistricting should follow county lines wherever possible, and districts should be compact as possible. Where counties must be split (no more than 13 counties should be split), lines should follow natural boundaries or municipal boundaries as much as possible. All of Buncombe County should be in one district.
Barbara Beard	Durham, NC	The situation was corrected five years ago. This is nothing more than effort to disrupt an election that is already in progress.
Cathi Bert-Roussel	Raleigh, NC	Dear Committee Chairmen, Please try to do a better job this time at drawing the boundaries of the 1st and 12th congressional districts. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to see these two districts were gerrymandered. I would rather the elections be postponed than vote in an election with unconstitutional districts. As a voter and resident of North Carolina I am ashamed that so many of the laws and actions completed by the General Assembly end up being challenged in court. It would certainly seem as if many of our legislators are incompetent. Sincerely, Cathi Bert-Roussel
Margaret Krome-Lukens	Chapel Hill, NC	The redistricting which resulted in Districts 1 and 12 was a shameful process with shameful results: the disenfranchisement of Black voters. The drawing of districts must be a non-partisan, independent process free from the influence of political groups, including the Republican State Leadership Committee. Anything less is a blatant perversion of democracy.
David Armstrong	Durham, NC	Its not rocket science to figure out what the federal judges want to see. They need to see something reasonable. What you did previously was not reasonable else you would not now have hearings or solicit comments. You can't turn your sow's ear into a silk purse. Stop gerrymandering. Can you be competent? Scalia picked a great time to die.
Zan Bunn	Cary, NC	It is unconscionable for Federal Courts to interrupt an election underway. The current districts and district lines have passed the scrutiny of NC courts at all levels, and the current Justice Department (pre-clearance approval previously given). The districts, as drawn, are FAIR and LEGAL. The disenfranchisement of those who have already voted absentee ballots for the primary election of March 15 would be tremendous. I am personally happy with the district lines. The districts DO NOT need to be redrawn. If the court sees fit to demand such, then they can do so AFTER the election is finished. KEEP THE DISTRICT LINES - KEEP THE DISTRICTS - LEAVE NORTH CAROLINA ALONE!
Jeffrey Egerton	Gibsonville, NC	Gerrymandering, no matter which party draws the lines, is an affront to democracy. Please fix this in an honest and fair way.
Beverly Meek	Durham, NC	I write to request that the legislature follow the court's order and move

		<p>forward with a fair redrawing of voting maps that are now gerrymandered along racial lines. The current maps do not support open and fair elections and devalue my vote and that of NC citizens.</p> <p>Any challenges creating fair voting districts is worth it because with the current map it is unfair and has been for years.</p> <p>Redraw with fairness to all.</p>
Linda Spallone	Chapel hill, NC	<p>Do the right thing. Quickly redistrict these so we don't lose our right to a primary vote. You should let an independent group decide the new boundaries Do not disallow people from voting because you legislatures did the wrong thing and tried to prevent people from voting</p>
Teresa Grunwald	Raleigh, NC	<p>We need a totally independent body to draw the new districts. The partisan maps that create completely partisan districts undermine our democracy. It doesn't matter which party is in power. When voters have so little choice because districts overwhelmingly favor one party, we do not believe we have a voice in our government. I expect you to do the right thing.</p>
George Hague	Elizabeth City, NC	<p>For many years I lived in Rep.Butterfield's old district and felt that I did not have representation in Congress. I am now represented by Rep. Walter Jones in Pasquotank county. I look forward to Republican primaries now! Giving Pasquotank two different representatives give us more clout in Congress. Please leave Pasquotank as is.</p>
Marian Abernathy	Durham, NC	<p>We need fair and representative districts. I live in district one, but my neighbors across the street do not. Let's get legitimate, constitutional districts in place!</p>
Alisa Johnson	Durham, NC	<p>We need to delay the primary so that there is time to redraw districts. We also need to reform the way districts are drawn.</p>
Bart Goswick	Durham, NC	<p>Tell Judge Cogburn and the rest of the Federal Judiciary to mind their own business. They have NO AUTHORITY over the NC Election Process nor how NC draws its congressional districts. If they THINK they have that authority, please show it to me in the "Enumerated Powers" listed in the US Constitution. (Art.I Sec. 8) Also, these federal judges need to re-read Art. III.</p> <p>In closing, allow me to add that Art I. Sec. 4 does not apply here... I don't care WHAT you lawyers might have been indoctrinated with during law school.</p> <p>Thank you for your time.</p>
Thomas Stark	Chapel Hill, NC	<p>Mr. Chairman and Members of the Joint Select Committee:</p> <p>My name is Tom Stark. I practice law in Durham, North Carolina, where I have practiced for 34 years. I am a native son of this state. I find it ironic that the Democrats, after years of gerrymandering our congressional districts, now seek to defeat the current district pursuant to a ruling which appears to exhibit a heavily partisan imprint. This type of district came into being to satisfy the voting rights act, and was substantially abused by democrats. Today, We have districts that appear to be both fair and legal. Democrats complain because of the proportion of congressional seats held by each party. This, however, is reflective of the voters of our state. We</p>

			<p>should be mindful of the following:</p> <p>First, we have elections already under way. It would be prejudicial to the state (due to the extreme costs and disruption of a changed or split primary), to the candidates, whose campaigns will be thrown into chaos as they move through the final days before an election, and who in a moved election would have to face a much smaller turnout, and to voters, who will be confused by any changes in voting schedule, especially if filing periods are reopened and new or different candidates present. It is highly prejudicial most of all to the voters for a court to arrest the elections in the middle, in order to impose its will. It is hard to imagine such a move can pass muster under either the North Carolina or the United States Constitution.</p> <p>The difficulties are exacerbated by the fact that both parties elect national convention delegates and electors by congressional districts.</p> <p>Second, if new districts are to be considered care must be taken to give rural voters an adequate voice in a time when the tyranny of urban voters, who have no appreciation for rural living having long sense lost contact with their own rural roots, dominate political decision making. Rural Counties in particular should be left intact, and grouped to give a reasonable voice in the districts.</p> <p>Third, political subdivisions should be honored in drawing districts. We should avoid dividing precincts and Counties, which are the political subdivisions by which voters normally vote. We should also attempt to group voters into media markets so that we can keep down the cost of campaigns.</p> <p>Fourth, if we are to remove race as a grounds for complaints or discrimination in our society, we must stop making race the basis for treating people differently. The voting rights act made it acceptable to look at race, and one could argue that approach has made the situation worse. At a minimum, constantly focusing on race has made our society race conscious. We must deal with voters on an individual basis, and remove race from the consideration. Political views may be considered, but not race.</p> <p>I live in the Fourth Congressional District. While I am represented by a Democrat, but would prefer a Republican, that does not make the district necessarily unfair. The current districts should be left alone until redrawn in the next census, or at a minimum, redrawn now but without application to the pending election.</p> <p>Thank you Tom Stark</p>
Kelley Torbett	High Point, NC		Gerrymandering is a blatant threat to democracy and is unconstitutional. Our state deserves better.
Courtney Brown	Durham, NC		I live in district 1, that used to be four. Downtown Durham is developing and changing and should be represented by people who. Have to campaign here and not need to split time, north repast and down to Fayetteville. Delay congressional primary only Dix weeks so no one disenfranchised. Revert to old map for two years while you redraw in nonpartisan manner, one that regonizes the changing nature of urban areas, and hope SCOTUS doesn't incalidate the election I'd law in meantime.
Fay Hoggard	Greensboro, NC		I live in Guilford Country and very concerned about the recent ruling that will require a new redistricting map for Disticts 1 & 12 be drawn prior to our

		<p>primary, scheduled for March 15th. The deadline to redraw the maps in such a short period is unrealistic and should not be required before this election. Of course, the existing map allows for fair representation for NC voters and the map prior to the existing map was drawn to favor the Democratic party. NC voters want and should be allowed full voting rights in the upcoming primary/election cycle. Leave the district map as is until the Supreme Court issues a ruling. please don't disenfranchise the Voters in NC!! Absentee ballots have already been submitted, the primary is a few weeks away and politics interfering with 'We the People' will be a mark on NC.</p>
Ernest Roane	Burlington , NC	<p>Simplify voting for all North Carolina's citizens by eliminating Gerrymandering and making all voting districts party-neutral.</p>
Gary Rosche	Durham, NC	<p>I live in the horribly gerrymandered District 1 and I demand that the General Assembly do their job and follow the court's order to redraw these districts that were meant to isolate and diminish the votes of African Americans in North Carolina. What other interest does urban Durham voters have with rural northeastern NC voters other than race? Shame on the GOP for cynically using race to cement their majority in congress. It is time to step up and do the right thing. Redraw the districts so that they fairly represent the political, geographical and racial realities of this state.</p>
Bonnie Kristoff	Greensboro, NC	<p>I have disagreed with gerrymandering for many years, and am very disappointed that the General Assembly has felt the need to continue this biased process. If you are representatives of the citizens of North Carolina, you should heed your promises and stand on your merits and fair competition. The current process disenfranchises citizens and does not provide equal representation and power to citizens. It is a travesty that so many candidates are unopposed. I join many other North Carolina citizens in urging you correct the current districts quickly, and to adopt a bill like HB92 to create a non-partisan redistricting process. NC citizens need this to happen in the next legislative session so that we feel all of the voting population is represented and have their voices heard through voting.</p>
Dennis Meek	Durham, NC	<p>Despite the fact that both parties have gerrymandered districts to protect incumbents in the past, the districts drawn by the legislature this time around blatantly disenfranchise democratic leaning, minority populations, who would more than likely vote many of you out of office. This process either needs to be non-partisan, as has been successfully implemented in some other states, or needs to be reviewed by the federal government under a strengthened voting rights bill.</p>
Tod Puckett	Rougemont, NC	<p>The districts have been drawn within the limits of the law and should stand as is. Should the NCGA choose to redraw, as permitted by the NC Constitution, then so be it, however the Federal Government nor the Federal Courts have no Constitutional authority to involve themselves in the electoral system of NC</p>
Russell Haddad	Elizabeth City, NC	<p>The new districts should be void of vengeance. They should be drawn with a non political process. Republicans and democrats should live and die by the vote and not rig the system.</p>
Rebecca Cary	Durham, NC	<p>Rep. David Price used to be my Congressman. The redistricting changed that -- I went from sharing a Congressman with my friends and acquaintances in the Triangle to sharing a Congressman with my mother. My mother lives in Hertford County. That's a long way from Durham.</p>

		Hertford County has very little in common with Durham, other than the fact that both places have a lot of black people. Additionally, I checked a map, and most of the members of North Carolina's US Congressional delegation live closer to me than my own Congressman does. That's just not right.
Jennifer Palmer	Durham, NC	The 2011 redistricting that rounds up all the African Americans and jams them into district 12 and 1 to limit their influence is disgustingly racist. This is SO not OK with me. Redraw them, postpone the primary, deal with the fallout from that with contacting the absentee ballots, and get off any high horse you might have about how little time you have to do so. The tight timeline is 100% the fault of those of you who made the racist maps in the first place. And the same ones who then moved up the primary to March. So stop whining, and go let someone else do your job like you should have in the first place. We need a non-partisan, outside group to fairly redistrict NC.
Natalie Beyer	Durham, NC	I am an unaffiliated voter living in Congressional District 1. I am extremely concerned about the extremely gerrymandered Congressional and State House & Senate districts in our state. The General Assembly should enable an independent, nonpartisan group to draw district maps now and in the future. Fair maps result in fair elections and are the foundation for our democracy. Please enable public comment before drawing new maps. Thank you!
Heather Stevens	Whittier, NC	I live in Western North Carolina where the districts were redrawn along political lines such that Asheville was removed from my district in order to wash out and reduce the voice of democrats and others with more liberal leanings. This had the effect of washing out both the progressive voices in Asheville as well as those further west and was clearly politically motivated. Districts should be based upon where people live and not changed periodically based upon the current ruling party's political motivations. This practice should be illegal and smacks of voter fraud as it has the effect of making it so that every vote is not counted in the way that it should be.
Jennifer Richmond-Bryant	Chapel Hill, NC	The only way to resolve the issue with voting districts is to create an independent panel. This panel will favor neither party and therefore will serve the voice of the people more effectively. The current gerrymandered districts are a violation of our democratic values.
Robert Sparks	Advance, NC	There is absolutely no reason that elected officials should have the power to draw electoral district lines. The fact that the argued justification for the challenged districts was to create a partisan slant is disgusting, and contrary to the spirit and purpose of democracy. We have the power to draw fair, completely unbiased districts by any number of algorithms. Take, for examples, the "Shortest Splitline" algorithm, or Brian Olson's "Optimally Compact" algorithm. The fact that the General Assembly insists on drawing district lines themselves is an incredible display of cowardice and awareness that the current 10-3 delegation would look a lot different if the lines were drawn with any sense of neutrality. We have the ability to draw fair districts. Our elected officials just lack the political will.
Hope Nicholls	Charlotte, NC	I do believe the current districts are gerrymandered and need to be redrawn to make them more racially balanced, and more balanced between rural and urban areas.
Suzie Dollar	Durham, NC	Get this redistributing done ad done fairly. It is not right for any party to

		change the voting districts in order to exclude certain people from Adair representation of their voting block. It is never ethical to rig the system in order to favor one party over another; that undermines democracy and what we stand for as US citizens and North Carolinians. This state has become a laughing stock under this legislature and governor. I beg you to hire an unaffiliated nonpartisan group to use statistical analysis to resort and redraw these districts. Please fix this mess.
Woody Holliman	Durham, NC	The racial gerrymandering and race-based voter suppression tricks have become clear to most N.C. voters. Your failure to share draft maps and seek meaningful feedback until five days before the deadline the Court provided is evidence that your extremist leaders continue to act in bad faith, as they did in the 2011 redistricting process. It is absurd, as the Federal Court pointed out, for public servants to engage in cynical tricks to choose their voters, rather than introducing and passing policies that will inspire voters to choose them. It is a farce to schedule public hearings a few days before the Court's deadline. Push the primary back to May. I demand the Court use its power to draw constitutional districts.
Teraysa Grasty	Charlotte, NC	Please create a independent bipartisan commission to redraw our gerrymandered congressional districts!
Joanne Heckel	Clemmons, NC	I am asking that redistricting be changed so as to eliminate race from the system.
Alex Crist	Greensboro , NC	I think the time is long overdue to set up equal areas regardless of voting patterns, and do it non partisan, out of the legislatures hands, so that the people within each voting district have a fair chance to vote who they think is the right person for them, and not have it predetermined due to unfair districting.
Kevin Farmer	Clemmons, NC	NC's congressional districts must be redrawn by a non-partisan election commission. NC's legislative districts will be subject to the same scrutiny and will suffer similar fate in the courts. Those must also be redrawn by a non-partisan election commission. The presidential primary can proceed on March 15th, as can any other races that are not affected by district boundaries. Let's do this right! Thank you.
Audrey Smith	Stem, NC	First District looks impossible for a Republican to win.
Tal Lewin Wittle	Chapel Hill, NC	As a longtime resident of NC, I implore the committee to fulfill its duty and draw constitutional voting districts for all North Carolinians. It seems that a reasonable proposal has been put forth to delay the first primary until the May date for the second primary, thus giving the committee ample time to complete its work and for ballots to be correct for the new districts.
David Smith	Cary, NC	North Carolina should create an independent, non partisan commission with the purpose of creating compact non-gerrymandered congressional districts.
Jennifer Battle	Cary, NC	Stop the unfair redistricting!!
Beth McKee-Huger	Greensboro, NC	Democracy is injured when districts are drawn to include or exclude by race. Elected officials can get away with ignoring constituents who do not agree with them because they are confident that they have enough support from voters drawn into their districts by the current districting plan. There is no need for them to consider the good of the whole or to compromise to find solutions that benefit the whole state. Racial lines presume segregated residential patterns and political affiliation, rather than making decisions

		based on the merit of candidates or issues. I urge redistricting that is fair, with equal population and without splitting precincts or defining by race.
Paul Richer	Holly Springs , NC	Congressional districts should be drawn by a non-partisan committee. Race and political position should not be characteristics considered when determining district lines.
jeffery gorski	chapel hill, NC	Please move with all haste to re-draw voting district lines to meet voting deadline and not impede the voting rights of the citizens of those districts. Political gamesmanship should not shadow the rights of the local voters!
Ellen Dagenhart	Durham, NC	Please do not delay in redrawing these districts in a more compact manner so that voters may choose their elected officials, instead of politicians choosing their voters. If the primary must be delayed to May, so be it. If you find you cannot remove partisan considerations from this work, you need to turn it over to non-partisan representatives to get the job done for ALL the voters of this great state.
Edward Sheary	Weaverville, NC	All districts must be drawn to meet the constitutional test of one man one vote. That means they must be geographically logical and drawn to ensure that they produce competitive races that give no particular constituency or party a strong advantage. The current sets of congressional and legislative districts make obvious a rigged election system and that breeds cynicism and voter apathy. The time has come for a nonpartisan redistricting commission
Tina Rodriguez	Newport, NC	The primary must be delayed to allow the redistricting to take place to ensure the fairness and integrity of the vote. Anything less is not acceptable. This could have been avoided in so many ways. It is very disappointing to see our state made fun of in late night comedy shows. It must end. Do the right thing; postpone the congressional primary and draw these maps correctly and fairly.
Elizabeth Propst	Mooresboro, NC	Please redistrict fairly on natural or county lines, not on what any politicians want. Rigging elections should not happen in a democracy.
Scott Jones	Whitsett , NC	Please do this right and put aside all the Political Party bull and represent all of NC not local political parties!!!
Lora Light	Sanford, NC	The current maps are FAIR and LEGAL. They've been cleared in the past, we don't need to change ANY of them in the middle of the election.
Bonnie Foster	Raleigh, NC	As a product of Wake County Public School System, mother, asvocate, and NC System, I want our school system to rremain the best. Living in Charlotte I see what resembles schools of yesteryear. All blacks or minority schools, no text books, loss of good teachers, and just blame non education of minority students due to bias redistricting that segregates, separates, and divides; whereas, manifesting inequality and prejudices of yesterday. The same in drawing district voting lines and requiring ID to vote. You as our elected officials can make a difference. Please do. I sit here after an accident with 6 broken bones writing due to need your help being needed to support what is best for the citizens of NC. Therefore, a significant Teacher pay increase is needed; as well as, programs to help individuals with a degree to go into education if they have a desire to teach.
Tiffany Birkner	Apex, NC	Please do the right thing and leave the districts as they were written by the NCleg. There is nothing wrong with these districts, and in the middle of the Presidential primary is NOT the time to do this debate. Getting this all caught up in legislation would only disenfranchise voters, who many have

		already submitted their absentee ballots!! It would create ridiculous, unnecessary confusion. I'm NOT ok with having this important election stolen by these banana republic tactics of redrawing lines this late in the game. PLEASE KEEP THE MAP AS IS!! Thank you, Tiffany
GAIL CHANDLER	CLAYTON, NC	Republicans will not always control the NC legislature. NOW is the time to create a nonpartisan panel to handle redistricting! It is what is best for ALL North Carolinians!
Gwendolyn Wilkins	Rocky Mount, NC	1st District should be as it was before the redistricting, I.E., which did not include Durham County. Packing majority AA in one District does not give them a voice; instead, it stifles voices to one central area. This is not the North Carolina way...it is NOT the American way.
Robin Ellis	spruce pine, NC	Please consider returning our primary election to the original date in May. This continued effort to hinder ease of voting must stop. I am looking forward to having equitably drawn voting districts.
Amelia McComas	Mooreville, NC	It might be worth considering the 2014 Washington Post article where districts were drawn based on census data. Here's the link for your reference: https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2014/06/03/this-computer-programmer-solved-gerrymandering-in-his-spare-time/ Thank you.
Leslie Frost	Durham, NC	I am writing to encourage the committee to draw representative boundaries that do credit to our state's commitment to the voting rights of all of our citizens and to the legislature's commitment to representing the will of all citizens. Hopefully we will soon have nonpartisan redistricting of the entire state -- something all citizens who want the best for our state support -- but until then please redistrict fairly.
Christina Ward	Cary, NC	Please remember that fair and constitutional voting districts are at the very heart of our democracy. Too many people had to fight for (and suffer and die for) their basic right to vote in this country. It would be disgraceful to intentionally weigh some votes more than others, simply to ensure uneven representation among Republicans and Democrats. Do what is morally and ethically right, even if that takes courage.
Mary Ann Manning	Whispering Pines, NC	You need to hold off on redistricting until after the November election. Many people have already voted absentee in their given districts. By redistricting now, you will effectively deprive them of their right to vote and to have it counted. Additionally, candidates have spent money in their districts and if you change them, it gives an unfair advantage to some and not to others. If redistricting needs to be done, it should have been done last year or after the general election in November. Redistricting now does not represent the people you were elected to serve.
Amy Sherman	Holly Ridge , NC	I strongly believe NC should be divided by a 3rd party contract. I consider the current map racist and should be illegal. I'm ashamed of what the current GA and Gov have done to our State.
William Hurt	Greensboro, NC	The state of North Carolina needs an impartial organization to develop or implement plans that are based on population not party affiliation.
Richard J. Manning	Whispering Pines, NC	No redistricting until after the elections in November. Once campaigning has started and people have submitted absentee ballots, it's too late to change the district. Changing anything now does not serve the best interests of the voters or of the candidates, who have essentially wasted money and time

		campaigning/advertising in areas which are now part of a new district.
Ronald Hatman	raeford, NC	To move forward now to redraw districts with elections already underway will bring confusion to the voters, extra expense to the counties and and a lot of extra work for county workers during a high pressure time. This has the potential to affect every district in the state not just the 2 addressed. I appeal to wisdom and address this issue after the primary election is over. Most races now are for party candidates.
Kathryn Blaylock	Clayton, NC	All maps need to be drawn by an independent commission. Delay the elections until the new maps are reviewed and approved.
Jessie Larkins	Durham, NC	Delay the primary till the original May date so that this can be done fairly! Draw boundary lines that make sense and do not reflect racial or economic bias.
Sara Bausch	Durham, NC	I absolutely think the Supreme Court's was correct, the redistricting creates racially gerrymandering and to say that they are fair is utterly laughable. Do the right thing and redraw the districts fairly.
Bryon Settle	Hillsborough, NC	Redistricting should benefit the people. Not the candidates. That sums it up nicely. Stupid politics.
Alma Adams	Greensboro, NC	<p>In November 2014, voters of North Carolina's 12th Congressional District elected me to serve as their federal representative in the U.S. Congress and entrusted me to be their voice. It's been my pleasure to serve.</p> <p>Since it's inception, voters in the 12th Congressional District have challenged the District's constitutionality on the basis that race was the predominate factor in drawing the lines. Two weeks ago, the 4th District Circuit Court ruled against the current lines of the 12th and the 1st Congressional Districts.</p> <p>Our Congressional map is unconstitutional and it is the responsibility of our General Assembly to fix it before another voter is impacted. I am deeply troubled that our Great State has allowed race to unduly impact our Congressional map and I urge the General Assembly to redraw these lines and do what is right by the people you've been elected to serve.</p> <p>I encourage you to move with all deliberate speed to remedy a wrong that has inflicted grave harm upon the people of the 12th and 1st Congressional Districts. This easily preventable miscarriage of justice can no longer be tolerated.</p> <p>The 4TH Circuit issued its opinion ten days ago on Feb. 5th, and instead of taking immediate action to correct the wrongs inflicted on North Carolina's voters, the General Assembly launched a fight to uphold their unconstitutional gerrymanders. This only adds further insult to injury and is a tremendous waste of time and resources.</p> <p>I now implore the General Assembly to now move with all due speed to create a Congressional map that comports to the Constitutional requirements outlined by the 4th Circuit.</p> <p>However, the General Assembly must not draw these lines without first hearing from the people. The General Assembly must quickly put forth</p>

		<p>potential Congressional maps and allow the voters to provide their input and suggestions.</p> <p>While the General Assembly wants to rewrite the Constitution and have citizens o believe that elected officials have the right to choose their voters – I am hear to tell every North Carolinian that is absolutely incorrect.</p> <p>The cornerstone of our Democracy relies on the fact that every person has a voice and every person has the power to elect his or her representatives. The power is with the people and in this case the people have spoken and so have the Courts.</p> <p>The General Assembly should move all Primary elections to the second Primary date, May 24th. This will ensure that our legislators have time to redraw the Congressional map with public input and reduce cost on the State and confusion amongst the electorate. This will ensure that the power remains with the people and that our state is operating within the confines of our scared Constitution.</p> <p>Let us now come together and move forward to remedy a wrong that has inflicted grave harm upon our people.</p>
Mary Huggins	Belmont, NC	Fair and legal; no need for questioning.
Simon Percival	Raleigh, NC	For decades, the gerrymandering of voting districts was criticized at times but never contested to this degree. It would appear that is now only warranted when a different political party is in control of the process. Ultimately, I would agree that the process should be left to a non-partisan, independent process but it is difficult to see how that would be achieved if appointees to that process are to be determined by partisans. In the meantime, the Obama-stacked Federal Courts are being unreasonable and it now would appear impossible to get a stay from the SCOTUS. Nevertheless, with the election process already in progress to some extent for 2016, I would strongly recommend against making any changes before the next legislature convenes in 2017 at the earliest.
John Harvilla	Cary, NC	There is no need for redistricting the congressional districts they are fine and we should move forward with the election cycle. This would add confusion to an election cycle that has already started!
Robert Hord	Cherryville, NC	All districts should be drawn in contiguous blocks, following county lines as much as possible, that minimize their boundaries.
Beth Rosen	Cary, NC	This needs to happen... North Carolinians deserve a fair and unobstructed way to vote.
Ann Sullivan	Goldsboro , NC	This map has already been approved by the Obama justice dept. Yes it was drawn according to race Because of the 1965 (4) Voting Rights Bill to have 2 Minority Districts. This was done, we even tried to get that thrown out BEFORE the maps were drawn! You would have thought we planned to lynch someone. Is it gerrymandered? Yes because of the law! You can't have it both ways! You move a line and it affects other Districts! It amazes me they waited until now to object.
Michelle Bannon	Wilmington, NC	When looking at my current congressional district, it is clear that the

		boundaries were drawn for a political purpose. Those of us living within the district are not neighbors and do not live in the same general area. We do not have common concerns or needs and therefore our Congressman/woman cannot provide us with adequate representation. The congressional districts should be determined by a nonpartisan panel and be based on the geographical borders of cities, counties and neighborhoods. I want to feel as those I am represented fairly rather than the pawn of whomever happens to be in office when the districts are drawn. Thank you,
Alan Herlands	Oriental, NC	When drawing the Congressional District boundaries: 1. Race and political party affiliation should not be included in the data used to make the boundaries. 2. County boundaries should be used whenever feasible.
Josh Parshall	Carrboro, NC	The redistricting must produce geographically compact districts where citizens will be diverse in terms of political position and race but have common interests in local communities and the needs and concerns particular to their area of our state.
Randy Neighbarger	durham, NC	The districts as they now stand are illegal and should be redrawn in a more representative fashion.
Melissa Lennon	Fuquay Varina, NC	Please put gerrymandering aside and draw fair districts that fairly represents the voters and citizens of NC. Then pass legislation creating an impartial Redistricting Commission to draw districts in the future. Let your legacy be one of ending gerrymandered districts in NC.
Deborah Krueger	Salisbury, NC	I want my vote to count. Why can't districts be drawn on county lines?
Mirthela Villanueva	garner, NC	Toward we can make a difference
Robert Brinson	Garner, NC	No redistricting until after the 2016 elections and then only if the Federal government gets out of the business of the States and their elections.
Total	381	