



Public Comments for Wake County Board of Commissioner Meeting
October 4th, 2021 5pm

Good afternoon, my name is Cheryl Tung and I serve as the president of the League of Women Voters of Wake County.

The League of Women Voters has advocated for a fair and transparent redistricting process for decades. We believe it is important and necessary for the citizens of Wake County to be front and center in the redistricting process in order to provide all of you, the commissioners as well as the mapmakers, valuable information regarding the communities you represent. A process that provides opportunities to engage the public results in better and more equitable maps.

There are well established best practices for redistricting, whether it is local or state and congressional. As you embark upon this process, I would like to present several key components that the League respectfully asks to be included in the upcoming process:

1. Criteria: It is the position of the League that Incumbency Protection should not be used as a criterion. In addition, we ask that you rank Communities of Interest at the top of your criteria.

Please also understand an accurate picture of communities of interest takes shape only through extensive public testimony and participation from a diverse set of community members. They should be invited to the table.

Please also be aware that refraining from using racial data in an effort to avoid racial gerrymandering, runs counter to ensuring minority communities of interest are represented and subsequently *should* be used in final map analysis to ensure fair representation.

2. We ask for Public Outreach & Transparency- Maps should not be drawn in private work rooms. They should be drawn in public with information obtained from public hearings. Citizens must have opportunities to provide input on the drawing of maps as well as to provide testimony on communities of interest. These hearings should be both BEFORE and AFTER maps are drawn. Hearings should be live streamed to allow for participation by those citizens who cannot attend in person but want to be part of the process.
3. We ask that adequate notice of at least 5 days for public hearings and scheduled preferably after 5pm to allow citizens to attend after work.

4. We ask for robust Public Outreach efforts that include:
 - a. Sharing redistricting information with media organizations, including media organizations that reach language minority communities.
 - b. Sharing information with civic engagement and community groups that are active in the jurisdiction, including groups that are actively involved with historically underserved communities.
 - c. An easy to locate redistricting website that provides citizens with redistricting educational tools, public notices, census data, map options, public comment portal and an outline of the process, including a schedule of public hearings.
5. Finally, we ask that all public comments sent electronically be made public.

While we understand that census delays have resulted in a shortened timeline, please do not leave the citizens of Wake County out of the redistricting process. The League of Women Voters of Wake County believes citizen engagement not only serves to better our communities but also strengthens our democracy. Thank you.