

Raleigh City Council  
Public Comments  
November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021

Good evening, Mayor and Council members. My name is Cheryl Tung and I serve as president of the League of Women Voters of Wake County. I am presenting public comments today regarding the redistricting process that was approved at your meeting earlier today. The League applauds the efforts of this council to seek input from organizations like the League, Common Cause, NAACP, and others as you navigate the redistricting process. I would like to provide special thanks to council member Buffkin for holding the recent virtual Town Hall on Redistricting that provided the public with the opportunity to better understand the process and the importance of transparency. We are encouraged by the positive reception to our presentation and willingness to adopt many of the suggestions that were made.

The League supports a redistricting process that invites public participation at every stage. One where even determining the process includes public input. As such, we would like to offer a few additional suggestions to consider as you move forward, with the understanding that some of these may already be part of your ongoing discussions.

We encourage the council to develop a well-thought community engagement and outreach plan at the start. One that includes an easy-to-find redistricting web page and includes the following: A description of the process, criteria, census information, public comment portal, meeting notices, translator services information, a timeline of the process, and a detailed description of all persons who will be involved in carrying out the process. We ask that robust outreach efforts to be made to inform and educate. We ask that minority community representatives are given a seat at the table to ensure they too have a voice in the process. Simply put, the public must understand and trust the process in order to understand and trust the maps.

In addition, we encourage you to conduct public hearings both before AND after maps have been drawn. Citizens do want to speak to mapmakers about their communities and they want to provide input beforehand to allow maps to be drawn that reflect their concerns.

Thank you again for all your efforts and we hope you will continue to develop a process that engages the community and ensures both trust and transparency, which are crucial to our democracy.