

November 30, 2018

Dear Member of the 218th New Jersey Legislature,

We write to express our concern and to request you reject Senate and Assembly proposals SCR43 and ACR60, which from our shared vantage points represent the definition of partisan gerrymandering and unfairness that we as a state and nation should be rejecting. Across the nation, states are taking actions to create increasingly independent commissions that remove partisan considerations and politics from their redistricting processes. They are doing so because they understand that independent commissions lead to more competitive districts, which are ultimately healthy for the functioning of our democracy. In an inexplicable move, New Jersey is poised to reverse course, and instead, increase the exact measures that experts agree lead to greater gerrymandering.

We stand united in the belief that SCR43 and ACR60 are fatally flawed given they:

- For the first time since its formation in 1971, demand the participation and give disproportionate influence to legislators in the redistricting commission; for whom self-interest would dictate placing their own re-elections ahead of the rights of the voters they serve.
- Ties the hands of the independent, non-partisan, court appointed tie-breaker, relegating their role to no more than a checklist prefect.
- Establishes and mandates the precedence of a mathematical model, that while seemingly fair on paper, is not rigorous enough to prevent unjust manipulation of the formula by parties with vested interest.
- Provides a constitutionally codified tool, which can be weaponized, allowing legislative leadership to appoint committee members capable of punishing dissent amongst their own ranks. An issue that would not exist if legislators were not in fact drawing their own maps.

The above are egregious, run counter to what we as an informed citizenry should abide by and what's worse, would be cemented into our state's constitution, making their eradication costly and difficult for the people.

These efforts are un-American.

The perception, if not the perpetration, of self-interest amongst redistricting committee members will have a damaging impact on the legitimacy of New Jersey's democratic process. The future of our democracy depends on your rejection of SCR43/ ACR60.

Signed

Name

Organization/Position*

Alan Binenstock
Alexis Larkin

Union County Grassroots Activist
New Jersey Grassroots Activist

*Organization and position for identification purposes only.

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