

2 March 2020

From: Patric S. Enright
To: Rules and Executive Nominations Committee, Maryland House of Delegates
Subject: Support for House Bill 1491 (HB-1491) (Constitutional Amendment)

If ever a time for correcting Maryland's serious congressional district gerrymandering problem has arrived, it is now. I believe HB-1491 is a good solution.

For more than eight years, Maryland has been embroiled in lawsuits, and ensuing federal court cases, concerning Maryland's redistricting endeavor subsequent to the 2010 census. All the lawsuits, based on partisan political gerrymandering, found their way to the Supreme Court of the United States (Court). Maryland's latest lawsuit Lamone et al. v. Benisek et al. (No.18-726), combined with North Carolina's Rucho et al. v. Common Cause et al. (No.18-422), were argued on 26 March 2019, with the Court's decision rendered on 27 June 2019.

The Court's decision abrogated any ability it might have to become involved in adjudicating issues involving partisan political gerrymandering in any state. Neither the Court nor any federal court will participate in correcting any defects in partisan political redistricting endeavors nationwide. In the Rucho decision, the Court stated, *inter alia*, the following:

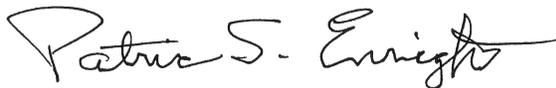
“Partisan gerrymandering claims rest on an instinct that groups with a certain level of political support should enjoy a commensurate level of political power and influence. Such claims invariably sound in a desire for proportional representation, but the Constitution does not require proportional representation, and federal courts are neither equipped nor authorized to apportion political power as a matter of fairness.”

Thus, in the face of this decision, it is up to Maryland voters to correct our partisan politically gerrymandered state. It is up to our General Assembly to provide our voters the most fair, efficient and succinct vehicle to accomplish this. I strongly believe that HB-1491 is an

excellent vehicle. This proposed amendment to Maryland's Constitution will constrain our redistricting process, subsequent to the 2020 census, to the stated parameters which should, hopefully, eliminate any specter of deliberate disproportionate skewing of future congressional district restructuring.

I fully support this amendment proposal, HB-1491, and urge this Committee to render a favorable report. In addition, I also urge all House of Delegates members to vote for HB-1491 and send it to the Maryland voters for the November 2020 election.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Patric S. Enright". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the text "Respectfully submitted,".

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