

Testimony for September 30 Hearing before the Legislative Redistricting Advisory Commission

My name is Michaela Burgnon and have lived at 8616 Wintergreen Court, Unit 303, Odenton, Maryland 21113 for over nine years.

In the time that I have been a resident of Odenton, the population in the Western part of Anne Arundel County has continued to grow as a result of the Base Realignment (BRAC) growth at Fort Meade, as well as other factors. Housing demand is high and infrastructure requirements are significant to keep up with this growth. However, I note that none of this area's representatives in the State legislature in Annapolis live in the Odenton/Gambrills/Waugh Chapel area.

I believe that the Gambrills/Odenton area may be better served if it had its own member in the State legislature because of population growth and the demands of servicing this area.

I suggest that a new legislative sub-district could be drawn that encompasses the Gambrills/Odenton area as this would enable one of the fastest growing parts of Anne Arundel County representation.

The Commission should take a strong look at population centers and their interests.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my testimony.

Chilson, Jodie

From: Joe Franco <joemfranco@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 30, 2021 10:05 AM
To: Testimony LRAC
Subject: Odenton Needs To Be A Whole Legislative District

Hello,

My name is Joe Franco and I am a voter that resides at 370 Baltimore Avenue in Odenton Maryland. Right now Odenton is split into 3 legislative districts and two counties, causing us to have diluted representation at the state level. I strongly urge that Odenton and Piney Orchard be placed into Legislative District 32 or 33. Having more of Odenton in Legislative District 21 raises issues that is a legislative district that has a history and is based in Prince George's County.

Please keep Odenton and surrounding areas in one legislative district as we have many issues in west Anne Arundel County that need to be addressed and having diluted representation does not help the interests of this growing area around Ft. Meade and Odenton.

Sincerely,
Joe Franco
370 Baltimore Avenue
Odenton, MD 21113

Joe Franco
202-492-0063

Testimony

Legislative Redistricting Advisory Commission

Sept. 30, 2021

My name is Howard Freedlander. My wife and I live in Annapolis after 44 years in Easton in the 1st Congressional District, having commuted 30 of those years to Baltimore and Annapolis. I have lived in both worlds.

I strongly recommend that Annapolis and the Eastern Shore be placed in the 1st Congressional District to provide fair and equitable representation in the House of Representatives.

Gerrymandering has robbed 1st District residents of balanced, moderate representation in Congress. We have been treated as second-class citizens with meaningless votes and policy choices. Our political standing is tenuous. Our faith in democracy is strained.

Redistricting would restore the value of our vote and policy concerns. The 1st District no longer would be a political desert for moderate-leaning Democrats and Independents. The nexus between Annapolis and the Eastern Shore is a natural and logical one.

Thank you for your public service. Thank you for helping to make Maryland a politically healthier state. Please restore a credible democracy to the 1st Congressional District.

Chilson, Jodie

From: Howard Freedlander <freedfriends@goeaston.net>
Sent: Wednesday, September 29, 2021 2:13 PM
To: Testimony LRAC
Subject: Testimony-9/30/21

Chairman Aro—

My name is Howard Freedlander. My wife and I live in Annapolis after 44 years in Easton in the 1st Congressional District, having commuted 30 of those years to Baltimore and Annapolis. I have lived in both worlds. Gerrymandering has robbed 1st District residents of balanced, moderate representation in Congress.

We have been treated as second-class citizens with meaningless votes and policy choices. Our political standing is tenuous. Our faith in democracy is strained. Redistricting would restore the value of our vote and concerns. The 1st District no longer would be a political desert for moderate-leaning Democrats and Independents.

Thank you for your public service. Thank you for helping to make Maryland a politically healthier state. Please restore a credible democracy to the 1st Congressional District.

Sent from my iPhone

Howard/Howdy
410-991-4254

BRIAN GRIFFITHS

September 29, 2021

TESTIMONY OF BRIAN GRIFFITHS TO THE LEGISLATIVE REDISTRICTING ADVISORY COMMISSION

Dear Commission Members,

Six years ago, I testified before the Governor's Redistricting Reform Commission supporting the Governor's vision for permanent reform in our redistricting process. It is unfortunate that the General Assembly did not join the Governor in supporting these worthwhile measures.

Ten years ago, Governor Martin O'Malley introduced Congressional and Legislative Districts that were shamefully partisan. Our Congressional districts are among the most gerrymandered in the country, particularly the shameful 3rd Congressional District.

It is unfortunate that the Chairman of this Legislative Redistricting Advisory Commissions was the architect of those unfair, biased, and embarrassing plans. Hopefully, learning has occurred from these mistakes.

Of particular importance to myself and many others is the pressing need for members of the House of Delegates to be elected in single-member districts. As a resident of District 31, prior to the post-2010 redistricting plan I was represented by three members in the House of Delegates. After 2014, I have lived in a two-member subdistrict. The previous Governor's Redistrict Advisory Committee appointed in 2011 stripped me of one of my elected members of the House of Delegates. All across the state, Marylanders have varying amounts of representation depending on where they live. That is unfair, that is wrong, and it violates the spirit of "One Person, One Vote".

Single-member districts will eliminate these discrepancies in representation.

In addition to equalizing representation, single-member districts will increase diversity in the House of Delegates. Marylanders will be better represented politically, culturally, racially, and socio-economically with this change in philosophy. Single-member districts will create lower barriers to entry for political participation for new leaders, and will allow members of the House of Delegates to be more representative of the communities which they serve.

As it relates to Congressional Redistricting, what can I say that has not already been said? Maryland's Congressional Districts are a comical embarrassment and a disgrace to our state.

Here in Anne Arundel County, we have not had a member of Congress from our county in nearly thirty years. This county keeps being sliced and diced in order to meet the political needs of previous administrations and legislative leaders. This has created farcical situations for county residents.

201 9th Street, Pasadena, MD 21122 ★ brian.griffiths.media@gmail.com

Twitter: @briangriffiths ★ Facebook: @briangriffithsmd ★ Instagram: @briangriffithsmd ★ TikTok: @briangriffithsmd

When I first began voting, I was a resident of the 3rd Congressional District. My polling place, barely a mile away, was located in the 1st Congressional District. And I had to drive through a portion of the 2nd Congressional District to get from my home to the polling place.

Now, my Member of Congress resides in Prince George's County. The rest of the county is represented by Members residing in Baltimore City, Baltimore County, and St. Mary's County. Who among them is going to represent the interests of Anne Arundel County voters when none of them reside in our county and the majority of their districts are centered elsewhere?

It is preposterous that a county like Anne Arundel, which can be safely fit within an entire Congressional District, has been sliced up in a manner that ensures no county resident can be elected to the House of Representatives.

I urge this Commission to propose Congressional Districts that are both as compact as possible and respecting community and geographic boundaries to the extent possible. Furthermore, I recommend that a Congressional District be created that includes the entirety of Anne Arundel County within its borders in order to ensure that county residents have the opportunity to receive representation for the first time in decades.

I encourage you to ensure that for once Marylanders get represented by fair and balanced districts that accurately represents the people of our state.

Respectfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian Griffiths", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Brian Griffiths

Abby Root

League of Women Voters of Anne Arundel County

1336 Chicory Way

Odenton, MD 21113

LRAC TESTIMONY

SEPTEMBER 30, 2021

Good evening.

My name is Abby Root; I'm representing the League of Women Voters of Anne Arundel County.

The League supports "A state redistricting process and standards that promote fair and effective representation in the state legislature and House of Representatives with maximum opportunity for public scrutiny." The League is asking this commission to:

Draft maps that will be available for public comment prior to the special session.

Draw new lines for a clean start and to not begin with the current district lines.

Use current Census data for the base map and keep counties, towns, and communities of interest together to favor residents and not a specific political party or their donors.

The Anne Arundel County population of around 585,000 currently comprises four different Congressional districts. Recognizing that the county's population is not large enough to have one Congressional district, it is also not large enough to have 4 Congressional districts. County residents need dedicated representation, not more representation.

The Chesapeake Bay, Anne Arundel County's eastern border, faces serious ecological and environmental problems due to unchecked human activities. The residents who live along the Bay need to have cohesive representation on the local as well as Congressional levels.

Maryland hasn't taken a fresh look at legislative district lines since 1970, when districts stopped being assigned to counties and started being assigned by population. A lot about Maryland and its voters has changed in 50 years, yet the legislative approach to drawing districts has been to continue tweaking the existing dividing lines, mostly for political gain.

The League respectfully requests that the maps this commission submits are fair and effective in representing the citizens of the county and state. Thank you.

To: Legislative Redistricting Advisory Commission
From: Westbrook Murphy
Edgewater, MD
Date: September 30, 2021
Subject: Maryland's 1st Congressional District

Maryland's First Congressional District includes Maryland's entire Eastern Shore: nine counties from Cecil on the north to Somerset and Worcester on the south. The 2020 Census puts total population of these nine counties at 456,432.

To be equally apportioned, each of Maryland's eight congressional districts should have a population of between 770,000 and 775,000. Thus, if the Eastern Shore counties remain the First District's base, the district's boundaries must be expanded to capture about another 316,000 people

There are two ways contiguously to expand the First District's boundaries:

- Into Harford and Carrol Counties using the land bridge between the Maryland State Line and the head of the Chesapeake Bay, as is done with the existing boundary; and/or
- Into Anne Arundel County using the two steel bridges that cross the Chesapeake Bay.

I suggest that demographic and economic ties between Anne Arundel and the Eastern Shore make that the better choice. Or, in simpler terms: neither Taneytown nor Bel Air is as closely tied as is Annapolis to Easton and Cambridge.

Indeed, the ties are particularly strong between Annapolis and what the Maryland Department of Labor calls the five Upper Shore counties: Kent, Queen Anne's, Caroline, Talbot, & Dorchester. Those five counties have a population of 172,076—or 38% of the Eastern Shore.

The latest data available from the Department of Labor shows that in 2018 9,000 residents from the five Upper Shore counties commuted daily to Anne Arundel County. Many of them obviously worked at one of A.A. County's large employers:

- Fort Meade
- BWI Thurgood Marshall Airport (including airlines)
- Hospitals
 - Anne Arundel Medical Center
 - U. of MD Baltimore Washington Hospital
- Maryland State Government
- Northrup Grumman
- Live! Casino & Hotel
- U.S. Naval Academy

There also are reverse commuters. For example, the Annapolis Chorale Music Director lives in Arnold, but also teaches at Washington College in Chestertown.

The many business connections between Anne Arundel and the Upper Shore Counties include:

- Severn Savings Bank of Annapolis is being acquired by/ Shore Bancshares. Inc. Easton


- Shopping:
 - Anne Arundel County residents go to the outlet mall in Quenstown
 - Upper Shore residents come to Arundel Mills
- Health care providers: Each of the following based in Annapolis has one or more offices on the Eastern Shore
 - Anne Arundel Medical Center
 - Anne Arundel Urology
 - Annapolis Neurology Assoc.
 - Anne Arundel Dermatology
 - Anne Arundel Diagnostics

Last—but not least—are the many maritime connections between Anne Arundel County and its neighbors across the Bay. These are illustrated by:

- Publications (see photos next page)
 - PortBook “Annapolis & Eastern Shore”
 - My most used navigation chart “Annapolis to Cambridge”
- My own, but far from unique, personal experiences. I have—
 - For three decades hauled my boat annually at a marina in Tilghman
 - Taken my propeller to be reconditioned in Stevensville
 - Visited multiple times both by water and by land:
 - Georgetown on the Sassafras River
 - Chestertown on the Chester River
 - Rock Hall on Swan Creek
 - Saint Michaels on the Miles River
 - Oxford on the Tred Avon River
 - Cambridge on the Choptank River
 - Two marine business I patronize in Annapolis are owned or staffed by Upper Shore residents


I hope the Commission finds this information helpful in determining the appropriate boundaries for Maryland’s First Congressional District





MAPTECH
WATERPROOF CHARTS

Annapolis to Cambridge




Number **44** Edition 1

Key to Symbols



















-  Courses & Distances
-  Ramps
-  Waypoints

Finding Your Way

1. Always follow the numbered sequence of navigational buoys and markers in ascending order (1-2-3) when going into a harbor or up a river.
 2. **RED** buoys always have even numbers. **GREEN** buoys always have odd numbers.
 3. Keep the **RED** (cone-shaped) buoys (called "buns") to the **RIGHT** (starboard) side of your vessel when **RETURNING** to land or going up a river. Keep the **GREEN** (bowl-shaped) buoys (called "bans") to the **LEFT** (port) side of your vessel when **RETURNING** to land or going up a river.
- If you are going out to sea or down river, do the reverse.



Legend

-  Bridge, or swing bridge with vertical clearance in feet at high tide, and horizontal clearance.
-  Red and green line: "R" - preferred channel is to the left of the line.
-  Partially submerged wreck.
-  Range Markers - line up both markers for a safe approach to harbor.
-  Mooring posts, slips and finger piers.
-  Compass roses - mooring buoys - usually large, upright, and both ends of narrow channel.
-  White, orange and black buoys - buoy with narrow channel, danger or other sections.
-  Green buoys - "1" or "2" or "3".
-  Towers, buoys, water towers, etc.
-  Light buoys "1" or "2".
-  Sound or depth of water (in feet) at low tide.
-  Yellow buoys "1" marking a preferred channel to commercial dock.
-  Shallow water to show in blue, deeper water in white.
-  Red buoys "1".
-  White, shallow, sand bars and mud flats which are visible at low tide, covered by water at high tide.
-  White depth contour line.
-  Green buoys "1".
-  Shipping channel or way. Always pass to the right.
-  Green and red buoys - preferred channel is to the right of the line.
-  Red light "1" at low tide.
-  25 foot tall tower with a green light flashing every 2 seconds, visible for 5 miles, and surrounded by protective rings of buoys.
-  Lighted red ball buoy "1" with a red light flashing every 4 seconds.
-  Lighted green buoy "1" with a green light flashing every 4 seconds.

Hello, my name is Ronald Poole I live at 292 Charles Hall Dr. Millersville Md. 21108. I want to write a short testimony about the legislative redistricting. I would like to see the West County area kept in mind when drawing lines. Representation in this area is needed due to the increased growth in the past years. Lines need to be drawn to reflect the citizen in the area. I like this to be considered when making decisions.

Thank You

Ronald Poole

Paul Sundell's Testimony to Legislative Redistricting Advisory Commission

(retired federal government economist and registered democrat)

Redistricting Reform and Fair Districts Are Much Needed in Maryland

I Extreme Current Gerrymandering In Maryland

Maryland Congressional Districts viewed the worst Gerrymandered of all states
(Azavea 2012 p.7)

Maryland State Senate and House Seats among the 10 Worst Gerrymandered (Azavea
2010, p.16)

- A. Gerrymandering Causing Great Harm: Gerrymandering Prevents fair elections and local representation. Voter's should choose the politicians not the politicians choosing the voters.
 - 1. Politicians choosing the voters makes politicians far less responsive to preferences of local voters.
 - 2. Increases partisanship: less effort to find common ground to solve issues.
 - 3. Increases voter frustration and apathy. Elected politicians often do not reflect the beliefs, needs, or the geography of the core voters of the area.

- B. Extremely unlikely to get national reform unless voters demand it at the state level first.
 - 1. Majority party has to agree to it and overall historically has been unwilling to voluntarily give up its political advantage in most states and at the federal level. (Eberly (2015). Sadly, political self-interest has dominated the need for compact, contiguous, and boundaries that obey political and geographical boundaries
 - 2. Both Parties share blame. Democrats did not back redistricting reform when it fully controlled all three elected branches of national government in 2009 and 2010 and a filibuster proof majority in the Senate. Currently, Republicans control the more state legislatures and their congressional republican representatives have not backed the Four the People Act in Congress that provides anti-gerrymandering standards and independent commissions. Numerous republican dominated states have pushed extreme gerrymandering as well. However two wrongs never make a right and Marylanders deserve fair state wide elections that respect the local will of the voter not the power of state politicians to gerrymander the state.
 - 3. Other states adjacent or near us have made gerrymandering reforms. Ohio in 2017 and Virginia on 2020.

4. Maryland has no state wide initiative procedure so voters have limited ability for direct reform in this area. Other states have set up independent redistricting commissions when their politicians have failed them by using their state wide initiative procedures.

- C. Voters overwhelming strongly support redistricting reform and support has grown over the last 6 years.

Goucher Feb. 27 2017 Poll: 75 percent of Marylanders Favor independent Commission while only 19 favor the legislature doing it. Very Strong support Across Party Lines, Sex, Age, and Race. 73 percent of democrats, 77 percent of independents, 76 percent of republicans.

http://www.goucher.edu/Documents/Poli_Sci/hughes/Spring_2017_Goucher_Poll_Release_2_FINAL.pdf

Goucher Oct. 15 2015 Poll: 73 percent of Marylanders Favor independent Commission while only 22 favor the legislature doing it. Very Strong support Across Party Lines Age, and Race. 71 percent of democrats, 83 percent of independents, 75 percent of republicans

https://www.goucher.edu/Documents/Poli_Sci/hughes/Fall%202015%20Goucher%20Poll%20Release%20%28Monday%29%20FINAL.pdf

- II. Anne Arundel County has been greatly harmed by the legislature drawing the lines for congressional and legislative districts

- A. Anne Arundel County Is the Fourth Largest County in Terms of Population

- B. Anne Arundel County is carved up into 4 congressional mostly non-compact districts. Anne Arundel is not represented by anyone from Anne Arundel County in Congress. I am a registered democrat in district four and no Anne Arundel democrat ran in the primaries and fall elections in recent election cycles. I am not aware that any Anne Arundel County republicans that have ran in district four in recent elections either. No one running from Anne Arundel County is not surprising given the gerrymandering and certain election defeat for an Anne Arundel resident running in in Prince Georges dominated district 4.

- C. Legislative district map is extremely gerrymandered as well. In Anne Arundel County, Prince Georges has a 20 percent share of Anne Arundel Counties delegates and state senators. Major reasons is district 21, a large district is dominated by Prince Georges County. District 21 is not compact has three delegate members and one state senator. In 2018, 74 percent of the vote in district 21 for its state house delegation came from Prince George's County with 83 percent of the vote from the Prince Georges segment of district 21 being democratic for delegate. In 2018, for governor the balloting was near opposite on a county basis with Hogan getting 28.2 percent of the vote in all of P.G County and 68.6 percent in

all of Anne Arundel County.2018 respectively. Legislative districts crossing multiple counties should be avoided whenever possible. Multicounty districts far too often invite gerrymandering due to differences in voter preference and differing needs of counties.

- D. Result: The majority views of most Anne Arundel residents are often ignored by its delegation due to PG County having 20 percent of the counties delegation. Anne Arundel delegation is splintered and often cannot get county supported legislation approved by the legislature. It was not until 2018 until Anne Arundel voters could elect school board members.
- III. Quantitative Measures of Compactness Should Be Used to Reduce Gerrymandering.
- IV. Multicounty Districts should be Avoided Whenever Possible. They invite gerrymandering and politicians get to vote in both county delegation. This creates excessive political influence and violates the idea of one person one vote.
- V. Time for Politicians to Stand for Principle over Politics and Self Interest and Stop Supporting Gerrymandering. Principle and standing up for the common good are what most voters respect in a politician.
- VI. Voters need to Stop Supporting Politicians that Vote for Gerrymandering. Gerrymandering is a very self-serving political act and likely is indicative of other likely self-serving votes to come that harm the county, state, and the nation. Voters of both parties need to say enough and do all they can to end gerrymandering. Voters need to stop supporting politicians of either party that vote and support gerrymandering in their state.

Sources

Azavea, Redrawing the Map on Redistricting Addendum 2012, Philadelphia Pa..

Azavea, Redrawing the Map on Redistricting 2010: A National Study, 2009, Philadelphia Pa.

Eberly Todd “Questioning Maryland Democrats New Found Religion on Redistricting Reform, Maryland Reporter 082015, <http://marylandreporter.com/2015/08/20/questioning-md-democrats-new-found-religion-on-redistricting-reform/>

For the People Act House Bill H.R. 117 congress<https://www.congress.gov/117/bills/hr1/BILLS-117hr1ih.pdf>