

BRIAN GRIFFITHS

BILL: HB1

POSITION: OPPOSED

December 2, 2021

The Honorable Anne Healey
Chair, Rules and Executive Nominations Committee
House Office Building, 6 Bladen St.
Annapolis, MD 21041

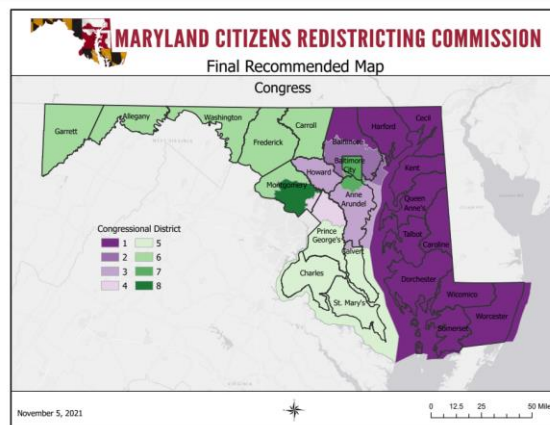
Dear Madame. Chair and members of the Committee,

I write to you today in **opposition** to **House Bill 1**, the Congressional Redistricting Plan introduced by the General Assembly.

The Maryland Legislative Redistricting Advisory Commission appears to have learned no lessons from their previous gerrymandering exploits. Somehow, they have produced a map even more gerrymandered than the existing, 2011 map. There are now more districts hopelessly gerrymandered than there were previously. Sure, the map looks cleaner, but explain to me and to voters why two districts border both D.C. and Pennsylvania, with a third coming rather close.

The new 4th District pulls the same stunts as the current 4th Districts, just moves the district into a more Republican area so a spear from across the Eastern Shore can follow US 50 across Anne Arundel County. The 1st District has been made more “competitive” by adding Central Anne Arundel County to it, while also swapping out northern Harford County for Southern Harford County. This of course was done for crassly political purposes and not because it benefits any of the residents impacted by these decisions.

Now again, compare these districts to what Governor Larry Hogan’s Maryland Redistricting Advisory Commission created.



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Which map looks more compact? Which map looks like it keeps more communities of interest together? Which map better represents the people of Maryland better? The Governor's Map, or the mess created by HB1?

It's not a coincidence that these maps were dropped right before Thanksgiving, a mere two weeks before this Special Session. These districts do not pass the smell test under any reasonable metric.

Sadly, [we knew months ago that the Legislative Redistricting Advisory Commission was going to end this way](#). The conclusions of this Commission were baked into the cake. Based on its membership, we knew that Legislative Commission would endorse the radical partisan gerrymandering that has been the hallmark of this process for decades. Political, racial, gender, and socioeconomic equality have again been sacrificed at the altar of power

No unbiased observer can look at the Governor's map and look at HB 1's map and think in any way the Legislative map is fair, balanced, compact, or justifiable. Ultimately if this plan is passed it will wind up in court. Again. *Benisek v. Lamone* went all the way to the Supreme Court, and the Supreme Court will likely again get involved based on these maps. This will create delays and confusion for candidates and voters alike, and will cost the state more and more money in legal fees as the state has to defend itself from a completely avoidable lawsuit. All because one side cares more about seats in Congress than they do about fair representation.

This bill is an insult to Marylanders. I urge you all to **vote no** on **House Bill 1**.

Respectfully

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

Brian Griffiths