



LARRY HOGAN
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MARYLAND OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

December 6, 2021

Senate Bill 2 & House Bill 2 - Congressional Redistricting Plan

Position: Strongly Support

Dear Members of the Senate Reapportionment and Redistricting Committee and the House Rules and Executive Nominations Committee:

Free and fair elections are the very foundation of American democracy and the most basic promise that those in power can pledge to citizens. Here in Maryland, nonpartisan redistricting reform has been overdue for decades and has saddled our state with the unfortunate distinction of being home to the most gerrymandered districts in the nation.

Since taking office, my administration has been actively working to eliminate gerrymandering and restore fairness in our electoral system. During my first year as governor, we established the nonpartisan Maryland Redistricting Reform Commission, whose members traveled the state to hear what Marylanders wanted. The Commission recommended that the state establish an independent commission to draw congressional and legislative districts, eliminating the influence of elected officials and political parties. As a result of those recommendations, I introduced redistricting reform legislation in an effort to remove partisan politics from the redistricting process, which the General Assembly ultimately failed to pass.

Despite the lack of action by the Maryland General Assembly, in January 2021, I took historic action and formed the first ever Maryland Citizens Redistricting Commission, which consisted of an equal mix of Democrats, Republicans, and Unaffiliated members. This Commission allowed citizens, instead of politicians, to draw congressional and legislative district lines in a fair and impartial manner. The Commission created new district boundaries, reflected in Senate Bill 2 & House Bill 2, that are free from political influence and offer the opportunity for fair elections in Maryland.

The Commission held 36 public meetings, with more than 4,000 attendees, including citizens as well as organizational leaders and elected officials. The Commission also provided an online mapping applications portal for the public to prepare and submit maps, which resulted in a total of 86 map considerations from the public. The Commission was tasked with creating maps that complied with the U.S. Constitution and Voting Rights Act of 1965, respected natural boundaries and geographic integrity, and did not take into account citizens' party affiliation.

Unfortunately, the General Assembly created the Legislative Redistricting Advisory Commission, which consisted of elected officials who failed to operate in a transparent manner and created maps, resulting in House Bill 1 and Senate Bill 1. These maps were given an 'F' rating for fairness by the Princeton Gerrymandering Project, unlike the Maryland Citizens Redistricting Commission's maps, which received an 'A' rating for fairness.

I sincerely ask you to pass Senate Bill 2 & House Bill 2, which will create free and fair elections that have been long overdue in Maryland and that voters deserve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Larry Hogan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Larry" and the last name "Hogan" clearly distinguishable.

Larry Hogan
Governor