

Statement from James Mullen, White Marsh, Maryland resident, in opposition of the proposed gerrymandered Congressional District map.

Good afternoon. I am writing this statement in staunch opposition to the proposed gerrymandered Congressional map. As a lifelong Marylander (51 years), I have seen some good and some very poor governance. The maps have changed over the course of my adult life, mostly tilting towards Democrats in plain-to-see gerrymandered districts. At the turn of the century, 2000, the state had a balanced number of Republican and Democrat led districts at 4-4. In 2002, Governor Glendenning, proposed and pushed through a map that changed the landscape from 4-4 to a 6-2 advantage for Democrats. Governor O'Malley continued this push and in 2012 tried to gerrymander the map further. He was successful in moving the map to 7-1. Later, even he admitted that "gerrymandering is a cancer on our democracy." Now, a decade later, we are watching the Democrat supermajority decide that Maryland Republicans do not deserve a voice in Washington DC.

We listened to Governor Moore during his first campaign talk about fighting for the rights of "all Marylanders". We clearly see that he never intended to keep that campaign promise. Leadership is hard, that's why most are not able to do it. Real leadership required courage and resolve. It requires you do stop serving self-interests at times and look at who you are leading and be sure they have a voice. Leadership rarely is stating that you "don't have a choice" and must do things in response to others. That is a an excuse to justify your bad behavior and judgement, or lack of leadership. Should President Trump have asked for states to gerrymander districts, absolutely not. Should Marylander lose their representation in Congress because another state did something they shouldn't have, again, absolutely not. Full stop.

This is nothing but weakness and a lack of courage from the Governor to all who favor this partisan, gerrymandered map. You can say that you fight for the rights of citizens while taking that voice from those who disagree with you. What other states do is their business, but that should not change what we do here or you are no better than they are. So, in the end, this is exactly what we have. The "leadership" in Maryland is no better than that of Texas. You can tell yourself you are, convince yourselves you are doing the right thing, and justify your moral failure to yourself all you want. But in the end, you are all the same as Donald Trump, who you claim to hate. I will end with this. My four teenagers are all smart enough to understand that if Texas takes someone's right to representation away, it does not require that we do the same. That is intellectually illogical and dishonest. Too bad anyone who votes for this cannot have that basic moral clarity, or candidly, they just chose

to do it because they wanted to. Either way, Maryland is worse off for it and proven that the state has a lack of Courage and Leadership.