



**TESTIMONY TO THE SENATE REAPPORTIONMENT AND REDISTRICTING AND HOUSE RULES AND EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS COMMITTEES**

**SJ3/HJ2 Maryland Citizens' Legislative Districting Plan**

**POSITION: Oppose**

**BY: Nancy Soreng, President**

**DATE: January 18, 2022 (Virtual)**

My name is Beth Hufnagel; I am representing the League of Women Voters of Maryland, a nonpartisan organization that has worked for over a century to empower voters by increasing citizen's understanding of public policy issues and advocating for transparency and best practices. Based on careful study and internal consensus, the League has developed a position and advocates for a decennial redistricting process that reduces political polarization and builds trust among communities of interest

Maryland's redistricting process has improved compared to 2011. The membership of the Commission that drew this map aligned with all four of our position's membership requirements. The transparency, accessibility and timing of the three rounds of state-wide hearings afforded "... maximum opportunity for public scrutiny." More importantly, this map frequently does reflect the testimony received. This map also improved on our "substantially equal population" position. We also appreciate that full GIS formats were released for the interim and final maps.

However, in one key way the process did not align with our position of "an independent commission as the preferred redistricting body" because the processes and standards whereby the Governor appointed the three co-chairs, who then selected the remaining six members, were never explained.

The non-partisan Princeton Gerrymandering Project (PGP) [awarded a Grade-A](#) to the State Senate map based on partisan fairness, competitiveness among other redrawn maps, and compactness and county splits. Another non-partisan group, the Campaign Legal Center (CLC) used their software [PlanScore to evaluate](#) partisan advantage using the 2020 Presidential election results and for the State Senate "Predicted 70% D/30% R seat share across scenarios" vs. 62% D/38% R vote share." *PlanScore* predicts 11 Republican seats plus 3 seats "leaning Republican," and 30 Democratic seats plus 3 seats "leaning Democratic."

The Maryland House of Delegates map cannot be statistically analyzed because it has a variable number of districts per state senator. The [Governor's executive order](#) "To the extent possible ... [senate districts should be] subdivided into single-member delegate

districts“ resulted in 19 of 47 districts being multi-member districts, compared to the current 43 multi-member districts. This is consistent with [the League’s position](#) calling for “a mix of single and multi-member districts” and “Delegate districts nesting within Senate districts.”

Maryland needs redistricting reforms codified in law or its Constitution, establishing standards for who can serve on the commission and criteria that must be followed when drawing district maps. LWVMD, representing over 1,500 concerned citizens throughout Maryland, urges an unfavorable report on SJ3/HJ2 Maryland Citizens’ Legislative Redistricting Plan.