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Freedom Fund Applauds Lawsuit Seeking to Stop Commission from Disenfranchising Michiganians

Redistricting Commission Restrictions Violate Residents' 1st Amendment, 14th Amendment Constitutional Rights

LANSING MI, July 30, 2019 – Michigan Freedom Fund Senior Advisor Angela Meyers applauded the filing of a lawsuit today in U.S. District Court for the Western District of Michigan to prevent the Michigan Citizens Redistricting Commission, established by last year's Proposal 2, from violating Michiganians' Constitutional rights. Michigan Freedom Fund Executive Director Tony Daut, in his role as a private citizen impacted by these violations, is the lead plaintiff in the lawsuit.

The Commission unconstitutionally prohibits residents from joining if they or a family member serve or have in the last 6 years served their communities in any one of a number of roles, including as a precinct delegate to the state Democratic or Republican Parties. The rules, which brazenly violate the Constitution's 1st Amendment right to freely associate and the 14th Amendment's equal protection guarantees, would disenfranchise at least a half-million current Michigan residents, illegally excluding them from serving their community on the Commission.

"The so-called Michigan Citizens Redistricting Commission is both unconstitutional and disenfranchises more than a half-million Michigan residents," said Meyers. "No one should be punished because of who they are related to, where they work, or their or their loved-one's willingness to serve their communities. We applaud Tony's willingness to stand up and fight these blatant Constitutional violations."

Proposal 2 of 2018 set up the rules for creation of a 13-member commission to draw new legislative and congressional district maps beginning in 2021. According to the proposal, the commission would be made up of 4 Republicans, 4 Democrats and 5 members of no or other political parties.

Despite its openly partisan make-up, the Commission **unconstitutionally bars individuals and family members of individuals** – even those with wildly different political opinions – who in the last 6 years have served as:

- An elected or political party official
- A candidate for office
- A political consultant or lobbyist, or someone who works for one
- A legislative or unclassified state employee

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“Michigan residents’ Constitutional rights do not end when their son or mother decides to take a new job or to represent their neighborhood at a local political party meeting,” said Daunt. “The Commission is an attack on every Michiganiaan, and I am confident the Court will put a stop to it.”