



LWVMI PUBLIC COMMENTS TO MICRC: AUGUST 13, 2021

Good Morning, Commissioners.

I'm Susan Smith, Vice President for Advocacy for the League of Women Voters of Michigan, a non-partisan organization.

Thank you for this opportunity to address the Commission.

The League has been pleased at the Commission's efforts to maintain its non-partisan status, as it did recently when it selected EDS as its mapping consultant. EDS had drawn redistricting maps for Republican clients, but it teamed up with other experts who had worked for Democratic clients.

Now, the League is asking the Commission to follow this past practice when hiring Litigation Counsel.

As you know, the Commission received only one proposal for Litigation Counsel, Baker Hostetler, who was invited to make a presentation at today's meeting.

From reading Baker Hostetler's proposal, it's clear that they have represented only Republican clients, including 10 years as counsel for the Republican National Committee.

In keeping with the Commission's intent to maintain its non-partisan status, the League strongly recommends that the Commission follow its own past practice and ask Baker Hostetler to find a partner that has worked with Democratic clients.

We realize that the Commission has posted the request for proposals twice and there might be some concern about needing to hire Litigation Counsel soon.

However, according to the Timeline approved by the Commission, final maps won't be approved by the Commission until December 31.

The Commission won't have to defend its maps until 2022.

Given the importance of having a bi-partisan defense of the Commission's maps, it is imperative to take the time necessary to hire a Litigation team that together has represented both Republican and Democratic clients.

Thank you.

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