



MAYOR

Kenneth J. Hopkins

Cranston City Hall
869 Park Avenue
Cranston, Rhode Island 02910

Dear Chairmen and Honorable Members of the Special Commission on Reapportionment:

On December 14 and 21, 2021, Nicholas Lima, the Registrar of the Cranston City, submitted documents to the Reapportionment Commission in which he proposed various changes to House Plan C and Senate Plan C. I am writing to request that the Commission adopt our Registrar's changes.

First, these changes would reduce the number of election precincts for Cranston. Eliminating these various pocket precincts will save money for Cranston taxpayers for the next ten years.

Second, these changes reduce the number of Cranston neighborhoods, which will be broken up into different representative districts. Under House Plan C, three major Cranston neighborhoods, Meshanticut, Forest Hills, and Stadium, are to be broken up into different representative districts. The changes proposed by our Register ensures that all three neighborhoods are kept intact.

Third, these changes will help ensure that the redistricting plan fully complies with the Rhode Island Constitution. It is my understanding that "any deviation ... from natural, historical, geographical, and political lines for the purpose of achieving a political gerrymander is constitutionally prohibited by the mandate of compactness." See e.g. Opinion to the Governor, 221 A.2d 799, 803 (R.I. 1966); Licht v. Quattrocchi, (1982 R.I. Super. LEXIS 61, *13); Farnum v. Burns, 561 F.Supp. 83, 91 (D.R.I. 1983). Furthermore, any "deviations must be explainable by rational and legitimate considerations; they must be in good faith" and they must be "free from any taint of arbitrariness or discrimination." Basically, breaking up these three neighborhoods, and therefore deviating from historical (neighborhood) boundaries, can only occur for legitimate reasons. The Cranston Registrar has suggested changes to House Plan C which will keep these three neighborhoods intact, meets the population requirements for each of these districts required by law, and primarily affects only three Cranston representative districts. There appears to be no legitimate reason for the Reapportionment Commission to refuse to adopt the Cranston Registrar's recommended changes.

In conclusion, the Reapportionment, Commission should adopt the Cranston Registrar's recommended changes to House and Senate Plans C because they will: (1) save taxpayer money; (2) keep more neighborhoods intact; and (3) ensure full legal compliance with the Rhode Island Constitution.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


Mayor Kenneth J. Hopkins

