

RESOLUTION NO. 10022017-1

A RESOLUTION FOR INDEPENDENT REDISTRICTING

WHEREAS, the current redistricting process creates a conflict of interest-as state legislators are effectively choosing their own constituents; and

WHEREAS, the redistricting process should be conducted in an open manner with real opportunities for public dialogue and feedback, not behind closed doors; and

WHEREAS, public input and involvement in the redistricting process will empower our communities by allowing them to elect representatives who represent their interests on issues that are important to their lives; and

WHEREAS, the boundaries of state districts are currently drawn by legislative incumbents, often sacrificing the integrity of neighborhoods and cities; and

WHEREAS, important principles such as the protections of the federal Voting Right Act of 1965 and respect for neighborhoods and cities should be clearly listed for a Commission to abide by;

WHEREAS, voters are more likely to participate when they feel that their vote will count and that they have a reasonable chance of electing candidates who represent their interests; and

WHEREAS, elected officials are more responsive to constituents when voters have a choice of candidates, thus increasing accountability and serving the best interests of the voters of Indiana; and

NOW, THEREFORE, the Council of the City of New Castle does resolve as follows:

We hereby urge the Indiana General Assembly to support comprehensive redistricting reform which incorporates the following:

1. The state of Indiana should establish a citizens led commission composed of Indiana voters who are representative of the state's diversity, partisan balance, and geography, for all future redistricting. This Commission will oversee the process to draw the lines of the state Senate, state House of Representatives and Congressional districts.
2. District boundaries should be drawn according to clearly described criteria, including respect for:
 - a. The U.S. Constitution's requirement of one person, one vote;
 - b. The Voting Rights Act (VRA);
 - c. Contiguity requirements (to draw districts as one connected area);
 - d. Communities of interest, city and county boundaries;
 - e. Political competition, where this does not conflict with the above criteria
 - f. Compactness, where this does not conflict with the above criteria;
3. The addresses of any individual, including an incumbent officeholder or candidate, shall not be considered when any district is drawn.
4. The Commission should conduct transparent redistricting process with full opportunities for public participation. All redistricting plan information should be available in a timely fashion, free of charge, via a public website and other means. The public should be provided the ability to draw and submit maps for Commission consideration.
5. The public should be given ample notice to participate in any Commission meetings and meetings should be held in at least 3 different geographic regions of the state.
6. Members of the Commission must be prohibited from all off-the-record communications with anyone (including lobbyists, political party officials, elected officeholders and candidates), except staff and legal counsel.

REPEALER: All resolutions or parts of resolutions in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

SEVERABILITY: Any provision herein contained which is found by a court of competent jurisdiction to be unlawful or which by operation shall be inapplicable, shall be deemed omitted but the rest and remainder of this resolution, to the extent feasible, shall remain in full force and effect.

EFFECTIVE DATE: This resolution shall become effective immediately upon passage.

ADOPTED BY THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW CASTLE THIS ____ DAY OF _____, 2017.

Greg York, PRESIDING OFFICER
COMMON COUNCIL, NEW CASTLE, IN

ATTEST:

CHRISTY YORK, CLERK-TREASURER

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APPROVED BY ME THIS ____ DAY OF _____, 2017.

Greg York, Mayor
City of New Castle, Indiana

ATTEST:

CHRISTY YORK, CLERK-TREASURER