

Roanoke Times  
Letter to the Editor

We were happy to see your editorial "Promises to Keep." We asked the Governor during our televised debate last fall for his support of redistricting reform, he has yet to fulfill his campaign promise.

In the last line of the editorial, you declare, "It's too late now to put the entire process in independent hands. . ." We think the Governor and the General Assembly leadership can still help do a better job of drawing the lines.

In fact, lacking an amendment to the Virginia Constitution-- which would have had to pass initially in the General Assembly some time ago-- an independent process has not been possible. As it is, the drawing of district lines remains firmly in the hands of the parties controlling each body in the State House. Thus legislators essentially have the power to choose their own voters, we think this is a conflict.

However, it's not too late for the Governor to appoint a party-neutral commission to draw up a redistricting plan-- and publicize it. This would make it harder for the Senate and House to collude in supporting each others' efforts in Gerrymandering.

We encourage all citizens to attend the redistricting public hearings around the state to voice their concerns. The next one will be held Wednesday, Sept. 8th at the Natural Science Center of the Virginia Western Community College at 7 PM.

Citizens can still petition the Governor to act.

Sincerely,

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*"The League of Women Voters of Virginia, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy."*

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