



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF FLORIDA

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League Calls on Florida Legislature to Restructure the Redistricting Process

Tallahassee, FL -- Following the redistricting hearings held throughout the Florida Panhandle on Monday and Tuesday, the League of Women Voters of Florida continues to call for some immediate changes to the legislature's redistricting timeline.

"Florida taxpayers are getting a poor return on their investment," says League president Deirdre Macnab, "as they foot the bill for an all-expense-paid tour for legislators to travel throughout the state to 26 cities over three months to listen to citizen input about redistricting, even though no new district maps have been provided for public comment. The League believes asking for input without a draft of the maps represents an expensive and potentially explosive delay that will cost voters dearly, both now and during the 2012 election season."

"Florida voters already gave the legislature marching orders when 63% of them voted 'yes' on Amendments 5 and 6," says Macnab. "We call on the legislature to make good use of these public hearings by putting some maps forward for comment that utilize the rules and standards that Floridians set forth in the state's Constitution."

The League also calls on legislators to stop fighting the will of the voters and drop the lawsuit against the amendments which is causing taxpayers to cover the legal costs for both sides of the same suit. "Between paying to both fight and defend a lawsuit challenging the voters' voice, and paying for a 'listening tour' with no maps, Florida voters are not getting their money's worth," says Macnab. "This is something Floridians should not tolerate, particularly as we see precious funding dry up for things such as education, health care, and environmental protection."

During the first round of hearings, legislators demonstrated their reluctance to interact with the public and foster a meaningful dialogue about redistricting by remaining silent when citizens in attendance raised questions.

The League encourages the legislature to make good use of the public's time and money by drawing maps now and accelerating the redistricting timeline in order to prevent a chaotic and

confusing election season in 2012.

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The League of Women Voters of Florida, 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. For more information about the League, visit www.TheFloridaVoter.org.