

NORTH CAROLINA SUPREME COURT GOT IT WRONG
League of Women Voters of North Carolina: VOTERS DESERVE A NEW MAP

Raleigh, NC — Today the North Carolina Supreme Court will hear arguments for a second time in a redistricting case that involves racial gerrymanders. The case was remanded by the U. S. Supreme Court last April after a ruling in an Alabama case on a similar set of issues.

“We are pleased the U.S. Supreme Court agrees that the North Carolina Supreme Court got it wrong last December,” said Mary Klenz, President of the League of Women Voters of North Carolina. “North Carolina voters deserve better and we are here to say what we have been saying since 2011: The legislature should not be allowed to carve up this state on the basis of race. It is wrong and the U.S. Supreme Court clearly saw enough to send this back for another look.”

“We’ve promised throughout this legal process that we will not give up in our fight to ensure that redistricting in this state is conducted in a fair and legal way,” Klenz said. “The voters deserve new maps and it is still possible to help secure this before the 2016 elections.”

Post-election analysis conducted by the nonpartisan Southern Coalition for Social Justice shows that the 2011 redistricting plan did damage to voters, with those living in minority communities being particularly hard-hit.

“The evidence has been clear: this redistricting plan was intended to cause harm to voters, and it did. We’ve shown enough of this damage already through each step of this process. Our elections deserve to be free, fair, and accessible for all. We urge the Court to send the legislature back to the drawing board with a clear message: craft a redistricting plan that doesn’t discriminate and allows voters to choose their leaders, not the other way around,” Klenz concluded.

The League of Women Voters of North Carolina first sued in 2011 alleging that redistricting plans for Congress, State Senate and State House violated the state constitution and were racial gerrymanders that violated the federal and state constitutions. A three-judge panel upheld the plans in July 2013 and in December 2014 the state supreme court ruled that the plans do not violate the state constitutional whole county requirements. The U.S. Supreme Court vacated the opinion telling the court to consider anew whether the North Carolina Legislature relied too heavily on race when it redrew voting districts following the 2010 census.

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