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Statement of J. Wayne
Anderson
House of Reps / Dist 81
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J. WAYNE ANDERSON
TWELVE TOKALON PLACE
METAIRIE, LA 70001-3020

March 23, 2011
via email and U.S. Postal Service

Hon. Jim Tucker, Speaker of the House
Louisiana House of Representatives
P.O. Box 44486
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-4486
email: larep086@legis.state.la.us

Hon. Richard "Rick" Gallot Jr., Chairman
House & Governmental Affairs Comm.
Louisiana House of Representatives
P. O. Box 1117
Ruston, LA 71273-1117
email: larep011@legis.state.la.us

Re: Proposal to eliminate House District 81 as constituted currently and to
conflate its constituents with Orleans Parish constituents in a new District

Dear Representatives Tucker and Gallot:

My wife and I reside in House District 81. Yesterday we learned for the first time of a redistricting proposal that would eliminate House District 81 and conflate its constituents with the constituents of House District 94 in a new district.

We are opposed to the redistricting proposal that would alter House District 81.

Below we set out some of the reasons for our opposition. Also, we have a some very rudimentary questions and we request that either of your offices (or some member of one of your staffs) provide brief, written answers to these questions, via either email (jwayneanderson@gmail.com) or the Postal Service, to the address listed above.

The most fundamental problem we have with the proposal (as we understand it) is that it will call upon the elected representative of the new district to serve two masters: (1) the interests of Jefferson Parish and (2) the interests of Orleans Parish. The interests of those two Parishes have conflicted in the past and will do so again. This will produce an unnecessary and irreconcilable conflict of interest for a representative of a "combined" district. The Districts (81 and 94) form the interface for the East Bank of Orleans and

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Jefferson Parishes at their most densely populated point; this interface, among other things will create a conflict of interest. A few examples would include:

1. The interface of roads and bridges connecting these Parishes, such as Interstate 10's and Veterans Highway's roadways and bridges;
2. The issues of drainage and the disparity of flood damage within these Parishes owing to the failure of drainage canal banks during Hurricane Katrina;
3. The differing needs of the Parishes on such matters as public transportation and education;
4. The different governing structures – one area is unincorporated parochial and the other is governed by a Home Rule Charter, as well as
5. The relative political clout that Orleans Parish traditionally has exercised in state matters.

These and other issues point to future conflicts of interest if a single State Representative had to serve two masters (East Bank Jefferson and East Bank Orleans constituents) simultaneously.

I realize that Speaker Tucker's district straddles the Jefferson/Orleans boundary; however, his district covers an area of the West Bank where many of the issues facing those constituents are fairly well aligned owing to the topography created by the Mississippi River. Similarly in the case of Chairman Gallot, many of the issues facing his constituents in relatively rural Bienville, Claiborne, and Lincoln Parishes are fairly well aligned. Still, the conflict of issues problem must exist for Speaker Tucker and Chairman Gallot on occasion. There is no reason to create additional conflicts problems, particularly if there are any other reasonable solutions to whatever problems caused this "remedy" to be proposed.

Our opposition has nothing to do with the relative merit of either Representative LaBruzzo or Representative Lorusso; both of these gentlemen appear qualified, but given term limits, by definition, we cannot know who will be representing a combined district, were one to exist in the future, or how that person would discharge his or her duties in the face of this conflict of competing interests. Moreover, we don't know how the population density of current House District 94 may change relative to current House District 81 once New Orleans repopulates post Hurricane Katrina.

How some future Representative would be able to respond to the inevitable conflict between what serves the best interests of these two Parishes is what concerns my wife and I about this proposal (as we understand it). Therefore, we are strongly opposed to this redistricting proposal.

In addition, we have a some very rudimentary questions that we are hoping some recipient (or member of a recipient's staff) could answer for us. These questions are:

1. What was the census 2000 population of District 94?
2. What was the census 2000 population of Orleans Parish?

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3. What was the census 2010 population of District 94?
4. What was the census 2010 population of Orleans Parish?
5. What was the census 2000 population of District 81?
6. What was the census 2000 population of Jefferson Parish?
7. What was the census 2010 population of District 81?
8. What was the census 2010 population of Jefferson Parish?
9. Has the "Ideal District" population been determined to be 43,171?
10. How, and when, was notice of this particular redistricting proposal given to residents of House District 81?
11. Are there pending other redistricting proposals that might influence House District 81?
12. If there are other redistricting proposals pending, where may we see those for our review?
13. If no other redistricting proposals are pending, what is the deadline for such to be proposed?
14. When is this matter expected to come up for a vote by the Louisiana Legislature?

My wife and I genuinely appreciate your time and that of your respective staffs in reading this letter and in addressing our concerns, and we look forward to receiving brief, written answers to our simple questions. Thanking you in advance for your time and attention, I remain,

Sincerely,

J. Wayne Anderson

JWA:cfe

cc: Hon. John F. LaBruzzo, Representative, District 81
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Metairie, LA 70002
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