

Melancon urges redistricting reform

Advocate Capitol Editor Mark Ballard's Sunday column ("Legislature's 'darkest hours,'" May 16) underscores the importance of taking the politics out of the reapportionment process.

Every 10 years, we go through the same old political game: politicians in the majority party — Republican or Democrat — seek to redraw state legislative and congressional district boundaries into lines that favor their own party.

It is a process that favors neither the people of Louisiana nor the best interests of our country. By stacking the deck and creating districts made up almost entirely of Democrats or entirely of Republicans, moderate, common-sense voices willing to work across party lines are drowned out in favor of the partisans.

MAY 25 2010 ADV
I have been and will continue to be an advocate for reforming the reapportionment process into a nonpartisan, nonpolitical one. I'm a sponsor of the bipartisan Fairness and Independence in Redistricting Act, which would require congressional redistricting plans be developed in each state by a nonpartisan, independent commission made up of equal numbers of Democratic and Republican appointees.

Until we enact redistricting reform, our country will continue to suffer from the partisan politics that consume this important process.

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