

Email 3-23-11
Statement of Herman Mayeux
House of Reps / Natchitoches

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March 23, 2011

Honorable Rick Nowlin
816 University Parkway
Natchitoches, LA 71457

Dear Representative Nowlin;

The purpose of this letter is express concern regarding the proposal to divide the City of Natchitoches into two districts, during the redistricting process. I understand the necessity to create majority-minority districts, but I do not support the plan to create one in an area where the population and racial proportions have not changed significantly according to the 2000 and 2010 censuses. I am especially concerned about the manner in which the current proposal separates those of us who live in or near the city proper from our friends to south, along Cane River. Most of us in the city have close cultural and other affinities to those folks living in the Cane River area, and, in fact, many kinships exist between the two areas. I am also concerned that the proposal may exclude NSU from the city's primary district. Those separations cannot be justified by any fundamental differences or real characteristics, and can only be based on political considerations. Racial characteristics should not be the only criteria considered here.

Creation of two districts, one populated mostly by minorities and the other by "majorities," flies in the face of long-standing efforts on the part of our citizens and city and parish governments to bring our cultures together. This proposal is likely to be divisive if executed, encouraging an "us and them" approach to government, which would not be in our best interests.

I appreciate the opportunity to communicate my opinion on this matter. I strongly hope that you will represent us after redistricting, and I know that you will continue to represent all of us fairly, regardless of race.

Sincerely,

Herman S. Mayeux
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