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Groups Submit Fairly Drawn Senate Map

TALLAHASSEE, FL -- The League of Women Voters of Florida, National Council of La Raza, and Florida Common Cause today released a Senate redistricting plan that fully complies with and implements the Florida Supreme Court’s March 9th opinion.

“The Court gave the Senate a second chance, but the Senate just did exactly what it has done in every redistricting cycle - drawn districts to protect themselves and their political allies rather than protecting the voting rights of all Floridians. That is why we felt compelled to propose an alternative plan,” said President Deirdre Macnab of the League of Women Voters of Florida.

In its opinion interpreting the FairDistricts Amendments and reviewing the Legislature's original maps, the Court found that the Senate's plan was “rife with objective indicators of improper intent.” To secure the re-election of returning Senators, no incumbents were pitted against one another. Those Senators retained large portions of their former districts and the partisan slant of their districts was enhanced.

Disregarding much of what the Court wrote, on March 27, 2012 the Senate designed a new plan that recreates the same problems. In the Senate's new plan, all non-term-limited incumbents are still guaranteed their own districts in which to run for reelection. The Coalition based its new plan on the Court's interpretation of the FairDistricts Amendments and used the Senate's original plan as a starting point. The result is a plan that avoids political favoritism like that evident in the Senate's map. Some examples of such favoritism by the Senate are:

- The illusory pairing of Senators Gardiner and Simmons, when Simmons has admitted he plans to move to another home he already owns in a district that will include most of his prior constituents;
- An eleven mile tentacle that reaches up between two districts to grab the home of an incumbent;
- Splitting the African American population in Daytona into two districts to effectively eliminate its voting strength;
- Following the property line of an incumbent Senator's own residence to ensure she was drawn into the district from which she had previously run; and
- The last minute rearrangement of central Florida districts to ensure that prominent Republicans would not have to run against each other.

“Our proposed Senate map reflects the values of Floridians who by their votes have demanded a principled way to ensure that all voters can participate in the political process, have their votes matter and have their voices heard by political leaders,” said Eric Rodriguez of National Council of La Raza.

Peter Butzin, President of Common Cause Florida agreed: "We hope that the Coalition's alternative Senate plan will prove useful to the Court in demonstrating how a constitutional plan could and should have been drawn to comply with the Court's opinion. We have complied with every constitutional requirement. We have scrupulously utilized existing boundaries, and by using
counties as building blocks for districts we have kept more cities and counties whole than does the Legislature."

The Coalition's new Senate plan can be found [here](#).