

Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission
Dec 17, 2020 Meeting Public Comment

Date of Submission: Thursday, December 17, 2020 001:50AM

Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>

Name: Karen Pratt

Subject: Un-Gerrymandering of Kent County for the Third Congressional District

Attached are the comments of a Michigan voter, to be provided to each of the Commissioners and made a part of the public record. Please confirm that you have received my comments and provided them to the Commissioners.

Wayne F. Pratt


Grosse Pointe Park, MI 48230

*Attachment

MAXIMIZE THE NUMBER OF COMPETITIVE DISTRICTS

In carrying out its constitutional obligation to “not provide a disproportionate advantage to any political party,” this Commission should intentionally draw as many competitive districts as possible. By competitive, I mean districts with an equal percentage of voters who would vote for a generic Republican candidate and a generic Democratic candidate. One could refer to these districts as 50/50 districts, except with third party supporters, these districts might actually be 49/49 districts or 48/48 districts.

Maximizing the number of competitive districts destroys two evils of gerrymandering. One result of gerrymandering is that a party with a minority of the voters may elect a majority of the representatives, or a party with a small majority of voters may elect a super- majority of the representatives. An even worse result of gerrymandering is that most districts are simply not competitive. Gerrymandering “packs” a few districts with 80% to 90% of the voters of one party, and most of the rest of the districts are drawn with about 55% to 45% of voters in favor of the controlling party. Since none of the districts are intended to be competitive, the election results in each district are well known before Election Day. If you district is not competitive, your vote does not matter.

I am fearful that this Commission will create many non-competitive districts by simply drawing boxes on the map with equal sized populations. If the Commission does not explicitly consider the partisan split in each district, it will unintentionally draw the same type of districts that exist under a gerrymander. Some geographic areas are strongly Democratic and others are strongly Republican. If the Commission simply follows city and county lines, it will pack Democrats into non-competitive urban districts and Republicans into non-competitive rural districts. This would be a disaster for the voters of this State, and for the redistricting process.

I urge this Commission to obtain the party affiliation data necessary to create as many competitive or balanced districts as possible. This will be a difficult task. It will probably require looking at precinct-level voting patterns over a number of years. I urge the Commission to vote that creating

competitively balanced districts is a priority, and a plan for obtaining the necessary data should be implemented as soon as possible.

The expert you hire must be able to do a sophisticated analysis so that districts are competitive in both high turnout and low turnout elections. In looking at the data, one cannot simply assume that how a precinct voted in 2020 is how it will vote in the future, especially in years that are not presidential election years. And input from the Democratic and Republican parties about how competitive the proposed districts are should be obtained. Careful attention should be taken to reject “competitive” districts that are actually 52/48 in favor of one party.

I believe the constitutional requirement to reflect “the state’s diverse population and communities of interest” is entirely consistent with competitive districts. In many places, we have a political divide between urban and rural areas. Representatives from completely urban districts (Democrats) and representatives from completely rural districts (Republicans) do not reflect our diverse population. They see the world in such fundamentally different ways that they are unable to compromise with each other. But a district that was 50% urban and 50% rural would reflect a community that needs to come together and resolve the difficult issues that divide us. A representative who needs votes from both urban and rural areas is less likely to engage in divisive rhetoric. Such a representative is more likely to compromise. And voters in both Detroit (Democratic) and Macomb County (Republican) have a community of interest in how to deal with issues on both sides of the Eight Mile Road community.

I recognize that it is impossible to make all districts competitive. The U.S. Representative seat that includes the Upper Peninsula and the northern part of the Lower Peninsula cannot be drawn much differently. Some State representative districts within the City of Detroit cannot be made competitive. But with careful attention to the Republican/Democratic tilt of each district, many districts can be made competitive.

In order to maximize the number of competitive districts, they will not be drawn into neat squares. Some Congressional districts might be drawn to include two or more cities, even if they are somewhat apart, in order to create a competitive district. That is permissible. The Constitution says only that the districts must be “reasonably” compact. And that requirement is the last one- far below the requirement that districts not advantage either party.

Please evaluate each proposed plan by how many competitive districts it holds. You could even require that analysis- how many competitive seats does it have- be done before each plan is considered by the Commission. Then adopt the plan that has the most truly competitive districts.

Thank you for taking on this important and historic task.

Date of Submission: Wednesday, December 16, 2020

Method of Submission: SurveyMonkey ICRC Committee Meetings 12/17 – Public Comment Submission Form

Name: Jim Lax

Written Public Comment:

Un-Gerrymandering of Kent County for the Third Congressional District
Hello,

My name is Jim Lax, and I live in Sparta, Michigan, Kent County.

I am writing because I object to the current Congressional district boundaries which needlessly divide up Kent County, one part going to the 2nd Congressional district and another going to the 3rd Congressional district. I support Kent County being entirely in the 3rd Congressional district.

The splitting up of Kent County is designed to diminish the urban vote. It is also designed to diminish the impact of minority voters on the Congressional elections. Dividing Kent County in this manner is inherently racist.

The greater Grand Rapids community and Kent County deserve solid representation worthy of their contribution to the wealth and well-being to the state of Michigan. For these reasons, I support Kent County being entirely in the 3rd Congressional district.

Jim Lax


Date of Submission: Wednesday, December 16, 2020

Method of Submission: SurveyMonkey ICRC Committee Meetings 12/17 – Public Comment Submission Form

Name: Jeffrey Padden

Written Public Comment:

Dear Commission Chair Lett and Members,

I write to encourage you to select James R. Lancaster as General Counsel for the Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission. His knowledge, experience, demeanor, and strategic legal sense make him an exceptionally well-qualified candidate, one with unparalleled ability to serve as advocate for your interests.

The question you face is simple:

Where should you turn to find the person you need to defend your work?

And, the answer is quite apparent:

Turn to the person who helped to write Proposal 2 and has successfully defended it at every turn.

Mr. Lancaster's relevant legal experience is prodigious. Having served as General Counsel for the Voters Not Politicians (VNP), he was deeply involved in drafting what became Proposal 2 of 2018 and eventually part of the Michigan Constitution. At every turn, he advised VNP on how to defend against relentless efforts to keep the proposal off the ballot, to prevent its implementation, and to undermine its effectiveness. He has been remarkably successful in fending off these assaults on the will of the Michigan voters. The attacks continue, and the Commission will need a General Counsel who is deeply familiar with both the substance of the prior and current legal challenges and the strategies of the organizations that launched them. Your General Counsel must be your staunch ally and advocate and, in being so, the advocate for Michigan's voters.

Legal strategy involves more than simply defending lawsuits. You cannot afford to wait for challenges to arise; instead, you and your counsel must anticipate and prepare in advance to thwart them. Mr. Lancaster has precisely this strategic legal sense. If you ask him why opponents took one approach versus another, he will know. If you ask him what legal challenges lie in the future and from whence then they will arise, he will know that, too. He will not simply spend his days responding to challenges, he will be constantly imagining, anticipating, and preparing for those likely to occur. In the legal battles

yet to be fought, you need to understand the terrain and see over the next hill. Mr. Lancaster can help you do that.

Some allege that, because Mr. Lancaster made financial contributions to Democratic candidates, he cannot be impartial in his work for the Commission. This criticism is specious. The commission is comprised of four Democrats, four Republicans, and five unaffiliated members; thus, any attempt to inject partisanship into the work of any General Counsel would quickly be detected and corrected by the Commissioners. Moreover, your counsel's job will not be to tell you which plan to adopt, instead, that person must defend your decisions, whatever they may be.

Fortunately, you have only to examine Mr. Lancaster's record as Chief Legal Counsel for VNP to see how he has conducted himself. That nonpartisan group would never have tolerated partisanship from its counsel; they expected that person to reflect their nonpartisan foundation and goals. That is precisely what he delivered. The leaders and members of VNP were extraordinarily pleased with his work in that respect and in terms of his effectiveness in advocating for them in the myriad legal proceedings in which the group became engaged. I am a Democrat and Mr. Lancaster knows that, yet in my many conversations with him about redistricting, I have never heard him advocate for gaining a partisan advantage for Democrats. Not once. Instead, he has consistently reflected on the need for a districting plan to fairly reflect the voters of the state.

I urge you to appoint James R. Lancaster as your General Counsel. Do this because of his deep knowledge of the issues that face you, his experience in defending our constitutional districting process, his nonpartisan perspective, and his strategic understanding of the legal landscape before you. He is the right person to defend the important work in which you are engaged.

Finally, I wish to note that Jim is a truly fine and honorable individual. He will act with integrity and honor, representing the Commission as an exceptional public servant.

Thank you for considering these thoughts.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey D. Padden

Date of Submission: Wednesday, December 16, 2020

Method of Submission: SurveyMonkey ICRC Committee Meetings 12/17 – Public Comment Submission Form

Name: G. Daniel Hawkins

Written Public Comment:

I have two suggestion for the Commission to consider:

1. Ignore political boundaries in the creation of voting districts to allow more evenly populated districts, and
2. Choose a point in the state at random and create rectangular districts (where possible) radiating from that point with approximately equal populations.

Date of Submission: Wednesday, December 16, 2020

Method of Submission: SurveyMonkey ICRC Committee Meetings 12/17 – Public Comment Submission Form

Name: Pamela Bethune

Written Public Comment:

I hope that the Republican Party in their redistricting efforts this year will acknowledge that the people of Michigan do NOT want blatantly partisan districts, but I hold little hope of that. I expect virulently partisan redistricting.

Date of Submission: Wednesday, December 16, 2020

Method of Submission: SurveyMonkey ICRC Committee Meetings 12/17 – Public Comment Submission Form

Name: Linda S Warner

Written Public Comment:

If it is not already planning to do so, I strongly encourage the Commission to consider the use of GIS software in the redistricting process. The Commission could decide ahead of drafting new districts what factors should take priority - county lines, zip-codes, city limits, previous congressional districts, Census tracts, school districts, etc. Establishing the relative importance and priority of these different ways to divide territory before seeking to draw proportional population maps would not only guide (and hopefully simplify) the process, but prove the exercise is being conducted in good faith and transparency.

Date of Submission: Wednesday, December 16, 2020 005:12PM

Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>

Name: Jim Lax

Subject: Un-Gerrymandering of Kent County for the Third Congressional District

Hello,

My name is Jim Lax and I live in Sparta, Michigan, Kent County.

I am writing because I object to the current Congressional district boundaries which needlessly divide up Kent County, one part going to the 2nd Congressional district and another going to the 3rd Congressional district. I support Kent County being entirely in the 3rd Congressional district.

The splitting up of Kent County is designed to diminish the urban vote. It is also designed to diminish the impact of minority voters on the Congressional elections. Dividing Kent County in this manner is inherently racist.

The greater Grand Rapids community and Kent County deserve solid representation worthy of their contribution to the wealth and well-being to the state of Michigan. For these reasons, I support Kent County being entirely in the 3rd Congressional district.

Jim Lax
[REDACTED]

Date of Submission: Wednesday, December 16, 2020 005:12PM

Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>

Name: Gregory Thompson

Subject: Jim Lancaster

Salutations Commissioners,

My name is Greg Thompson and I am a small business owner and a big supporter of the commission and have been following your meetings. I just wanted to give some advice on who to hire for the attorney position for the commission.

I know when I hire someone I look for the best qualified person. It seems to me that given your limited time frame hiring the most qualified person who already knows the ins and outs of redistricting is the best option for the commission. Among all the choices Mr. Lancaster is the most qualified.

I know he has a partisan background but with his work on behalf of voters, not politicians, I think he has proved that he can work in a nonpartisan fashion and that he believes in the commissions work.

In a way, having the person in this role having some background in politics will be an advantage to the commission. I saw the 50 or so form letters from some organization opposing Mr Lancaster getting the job and to me that seems more about politics than what Mr Lancaster is.

Cheers,

GT

Date of Submission: Wednesday, December 16, 2020 004:56PM

Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>

Name: susanprakkensmith Smith

Subject: Written Comment to ICRC from League of Women Voters of Michigan

Dear Commissioners,

I am Susan Smith, Vice President for Advocacy for the League of Women Voters of Michigan.

The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan organization. We do not support or oppose political parties or candidates.

We do take positions on public policy issues we have studied.

Redistricting Reform in Michigan is one of those issues.

After the state Legislature approved the current maps in 2011, our members studied redistricting in Michigan and across the country.

That study resulted in the League's decision to work for redistricting reform, including passing an amendment to the Michigan Constitution that would create an Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission.

We worked for the passage of Proposal Two and were thrilled when it passed in 2018.

Since last September, our team of 12 trained League members has been observing and reporting on your Commission meetings.

As you know, Communities of Interest are an important part of the map drawing process.

With 27 local Leagues in over 40 counties across the state including the Upper Peninsula, we are uniquely equipped to help identify those communities. Local League members will be identifying, educating and supporting Communities of Interest in preparation for their testifying at the Commission's public hearings.

We look forward to assisting the Commission in its outreach during the coming year.

Thank you for this opportunity to address you.

I would be glad to try and answer any questions you might have.

Susan Smith, VP for Advocacy
League of Women Voters of Michigan

Date of Submission: Wednesday, December 16, 2020 004:00PM

Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>

Name: Steve Pasbjerg

Subject: Making Sense of Redistricting Michigan

Greetings State Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission,

I'm writing in support of James (Jim) Lancaster's candidacy for General Council of the State Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission. I believe Jim's background and legal knowledge makes him a great candidate for this position.

I've known Jim for the past 6 years and consider him a friend. He's the type of common sense, level headed voice needed in this highly divisive environment. As a former school board president for Southfield Public Schools, I know firsthand how having a sound legal council can impact public policy. His extensive legal experience has prepared him for a role like this. A role that will provide the legal guidance necessary for the Commission to execute its very important mission. I believe that mission is to protect our democracy by ensuring that everyone's voice matters.

As an African American, it's important to me that everyone's voice is heard. I have a growing concern with the way our political districts are drawn. I'm hopeful that as we go through the next redistricting cycle, I will be represented on the commission by fair minded people that also think that's important. I need them to believe that elections shouldn't be decided by those that draw the lines but by those that live within them. I'm also hopeful that they'll be advised by sharp legal minds like Jim Lancaster. He's someone I trust and have confidence in that all aspects are considered to ensure a fair outcome.

As an officer in the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, I wear my uniform with pride and take my oath to our nation seriously. I know that the flag I serve under represents a country that guarantees everyone's voice is heard when electing government officials. Our representative government is the foundation of our Republic. It's what the framers of the Constitution had in mind. It's what makes us a strong state and the greatest country in the world.

I'm confident that with Jim Lancaster onboard, the Commission will be on the proper course to ensure Michigan is the model for the nation of what fair and just redistricting should look like. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or need additional information. I appreciate your consideration of Jim's candidacy and your service to our state.

Very respectfully,
James V. Jackson
Southfield, MI

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JVJ

Date of Submission: Wednesday, December 16, 2020 001:19PM
Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>
Name: Steve Pasbjerg
Subject: Making Sense of Redistricting Michigan

Dear Commission,

When I volunteered for consideration of being on the commission my main consideration was that any redistricting make sense to the people who live in that district. It seems simple but I am sure it can get more complex. I would like to recommend the following practices be put in place:

1. Districts should contain the entire US Postal 5 Digit Zip Code when possible.
2. Districts should contain the entire city or town when possible.
3. Districts should contain the entire county when possible and appropriate.
4. Districts should contain an entire region when possible and appropriate.
5. Districts should be regular square or rectangles to the degree possible. Irregular shaped districts are to be avoided if at all possible.
6. District lines should be easily recognizable boundaries or roads.

I think that if the commission approaches the redistricting with these concepts districts will be much more representative of the people that live in the district.

Thank you for your service and consideration!

Best regards,

Steve Pasbjerg

Date of Submission: Wednesday, December 16, 2020 11:54AM

Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>

Name: SuperiorSunshine

Subject: Topic for consideration when redistricting MI

Good morning,

I have registered to watch the meeting on 12/17/20. I do not know a lot about how MI is districted, what area(s)/populations comprise a district, nor what the goals of redistricting are, and I would love to hear a brief synopsis of it at some point during the meeting. Trouble is, I might be late in joining due to a medical appt. and I suspect I won't be able to join the meeting until 9:30.

Also, with respect to my ignorance due to limited knowledge, if possible, I would like to suggest that university students NOT be clumped into a single district within one area, as I feel they would provide a skewed emotional vote and this would NOT be an even representation of the desire of the general population.

My case in point: I have been an election inspector for over 20 years. I have worked in various precincts throughout MI. There has traditionally been a low turnout of students interested in voting --- EXCEPT, when MI voted on whether or not to allow recreational marijuana to become legal. During that election, we were inundated with students who decided to vote ... and in most cases (based on their questions to us and the brief amount of time they took voting), apparently only showed up to predominately vote only for that one race. I do not know how university populations are weighted in the districting areas, but I do know that now, after our City Commissioners banned cigarette smoking in restaurants and outside at parks, to prevent second hand smoke for the benefit of all concerned, and thereby allowing us to enjoy the sweet scent of nature ... that has since been abruptly corrupted by the frequent now-legal scent of marijuana! It wafts through our own backyards; I can often smell it as I exit my place of employment, or when passing a fellow shopper in the supermarket! It is an unpleasant acrid smell that instantly leaves me with a headache! I do believe this proposal was passed due to an overwhelming turnout of students and lack of initiative of the older population, thereby skewing the normal amount of voter turnout and, I am assuming, the desire of the general population. Those who chose not to cast their vote are no doubt part of the problem and have no right to complain if they did not exercise their right, but I am only using this example to showcase my concern for how to redistrict the population, with respect to heavy concentrations of individuals in the age range 18-26 years, in relatively small geographic areas (in/near universities), regardless of whatever topic may be put to a future vote.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I again apologize if my concern is off-course. I do admit my ignorance. Perhaps you can send me a quick reply when you get the chance. Thank you for all your efforts in this endeavor!

Sincerely,

Victoria M. Dinkin

Date of Submission: Tuesday, December 15, 2020 08:43PM
Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>
Name: G P Witteveen
Subject: comment, upcoming Dec. 17, 2020 meeting

Please do benchmark other states (of USA, but also those leaders of nation-states) in order to (a) place Michigan within the big picture as typical, outlier, or somewhere between these regions; and (b) to point the way to best alternatives to the matter of redistricting for equity, for the common good, NOT for gaming the system.

Sincerely,

Guven Witteveen, former redistricting commission 2020 applicant


Grand Rapids, MI 49505-3812

Date of Submission: Tuesday, December 15, 2020 11:55AM
Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>
Name: beverly fields
Subject: Please Reject Mr. Lancaster From Further Consideration

Dear Redistricting Commissioners,

I am writing to you to request that the Michigan Redistricting Commissioner members deny any further consideration for the General Counsel position the current candidate under consideration, James Lancaster.

It is widely known that Mr. Lancaster is a partisan attorney. Under Proposal I passed in 2018, the residents of Michigan made their voices clear that redistricting was to be done in a non-partisan matter away from partisan politics. There is no doubt that Mr. Lancaster cannot provide unbiased recommendations regarding the Commission's legal matters.

Looking through Mr. Lancaster's political contributions, it is clear that he strongly favors Democratic candidates and liberal activist organizations. Again, the Independent Redistricting Commission has a mission that is based around the fundamental belief that they are to act as a non-partisan entity. Having the Commission's General Counsel be a clear partisan individual will undermine the Commission's integrity.

Mr. Lancaster also has a clear conflict of interest as he served as one of the main legal attorneys for the political organization that drafted and supported Proposal I's passage in 2018. This creates a situation

where the individual who drafted the language would now have to give neutral legal advice on the language he helped write.

I encourage the Commission to select a different individual who can serve in a more non-partisan and natural manner.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Beverly Fields
[Redacted]
Brighton Twp, MI 48114
[Name]
[Address]

Date of Submission: Tuesday, December 15, 2020 11:53AM
Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>
Name: beverly fields
Subject: Please Reject From Consideration Mr. Lancaster

Dear Redistricting Commissioners,

I am writing to you to request that the Michigan Redistricting Commissioner members deny any further consideration for the General Counsel position the current candidate under consideration, James Lancaster.

It is widely known that Mr. Lancaster is a partisan attorney. Under Proposal I passed in 2018, the residents of Michigan made their voices clear that redistricting was to be done in a non-partisan matter away from partisan politics. There is no doubt that Mr. Lancaster cannot provide unbiased recommendations regarding the Commission's legal matters.

Looking through Mr. Lancaster's political contributions, it is clear that he strongly favors democrat candidates and liberal activist organizations. Again, the Independent Redistricting Commission has a mission that is based around the fundamental belief that they are to act as a non-partisan entity. Having the Commission's General Counsel be a clear partisan individual will undermine the Commission's integrity.

Mr. Lancaster also has a clear conflict of interest as he served as one of the main legal attorneys for the political organization that drafted and supported Proposal I's passage in 2018. This creates a situation where the individual who drafted the language would now have to give neutral legal advice on the language he helped write.

I encourage the Commission to select a different individual who can serve in a more non-partisan and natural manner.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Beverly Fields[Name]

[REDACTED]

Brighton Twp, MI 48114Address]

Date of Submission: Monday, December 14, 2020 8:45AM

Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>

Name: Sandra C. Saxman

Subject: Please Reject Mr. Lancaster From Further Consideration

As a voting citizen of Michigan, I oppose James Lancaster's appointment to your commission. With his past political affiliations, I do not believe he will provide a partisan approach to the state's redistricting efforts.

Sandra Saxman
Manistee County

Date of Submission: Sunday, December 13, 2020 11:15PM

Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>

Name: Kari HarbarcukOlds

Subject: Please Reject Mr. Lancaster From Further Consideration

Dear Redistricting Commissioners,

I am writing to you to request that the Michigan Redistricting Commissioner members deny any further consideration for the General Counsel position the current candidate under consideration, James Lancaster. It is widely known that Mr. Lancaster is a partisan attorney. Under Proposal I passed in 2018, the residents of Michigan made their voices clear that redistricting was to be done in a non-partisan matter away from partisan politics. There is no doubt that Mr. Lancaster cannot provide unbiased recommendations regarding the Commission's legal matters.

Looking through Mr. Lancaster's political contributions, it is clear that he strongly favors Democratic candidates and liberal activist organizations. Again, the Independent Redistricting Commission has a mission that is based around the fundamental belief that they are to act as a non-partisan entity. Having the Commission's General Counsel be a clear partisan individual will undermine the Commission's integrity. Mr. Lancaster also has a clear conflict of interest as he served as one of the main legal attorneys for the political organization that drafted and supported Proposal I's passage in 2018. This creates a situation where the individual who drafted the language would now have to give neutral legal advice on the language he helped write.

I encourage the Commission to select a different individual who can serve in a more non-partisan and natural manner.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Kari Olds

[REDACTED]
Pinckney, MI 48169

Date of Submission: Sunday, December 13, 2020 9:33PM
Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>
Name: Deborah Kuzdal
Subject: Regarding general counsel position

I understand that the MI Redistricting Commission has James Lancaster as one of the two finalists for the General Counsel position.

If one looks at the theme of his campaign contributions, it is obvious he will be unable to give nonpartisan advice. He is very polarized left.

I urge you to not hire him for the General Counsel position.

Thank you

Jim & Debbie Kuzdal
[REDACTED]
Wyoming, MI 49418

Sent from my iPhone

Date of Submission: Sunday, December 13, 2020 8:23PM
Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>
Name: Tom E. Amor
Subject: James Lancaster

I fervently urge you not to hire Mr. Lancaster! He will not be a non partisan. Left wing radical.
Tom Amor

Sent via the Samsung Galaxy Note20 Ultra 5G, an AT&T 5G smartphone

Date of Submission: Sunday, December 13, 2020 8:22PM
Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>
Name: Marc Caroselli
Subject: James Lancaster

Please don't pick Mr Lancaster for General Counsel. He is a partisan.

Sent from my iPad

Date of Submission: Sunday, December 13, 2020 7:16PM
Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>
Name: Sandy Caroselli
Subject: James Lancaster

Please do not hire him for the Redistricting for the a general Council. He is a partisan.

Sandra Caroselli

Sent from my iPhone

Date of Submission: Sunday, December 13, 2020 7:13PM
Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>
Name: Maralyn Gable
Subject: James Lancaster

As a voting citizen of Michigan I urge you NOT to appoint James Lancaster to the redistricting council. I don't believe he would be impartial. Judging from his financial ties. Please do not appoint James Lancaster.

Maralyn Gable
LUDINGTON MI



Date of Submission: Sunday, December 13, 2020 4:13PM
Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>
Name: anthony spagnuolo
Subject: Please Reject Mr. Lancaster From Further Consideration

Members of the Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission:

This email is regarding the application by Walter Sorg to be the Commission's staff adviser on communications and community outreach. I enthusiastically recommend him to you for this position.

In November, I was honored by the voters of Clinton County (just north of Lansing) by being elected as their prosecuting attorney. Although I am a Republican, on the advice of my campaign consultants, I interviewed and ultimately welcomed Mr. Sorg as a volunteer to my campaign, to provide me with strategic advice. While I knew of him primarily because of his leadership in the Proposal 2 movement, I was aware that he had also been active as an official under Democratic state government administrations. After a short conversation, I had no doubts about adding him to our campaign.

Throughout his long, distinguished career Mr. Sorg has only worked for clients and causes in which he wholeheartedly believed in. He told me he would not “take a gig just for the money” if he did not believe in the client/cause. I was honored that he felt I was the best choice for prosecuting attorney. In retrospect, it was the right decision. His assistance in getting my message to the voters was invaluable.

Mr. Sorg’s passion about Michigan’s redistricting process is irrefutable. He worked for 8 years as an unpaid advocate for enactment of redistricting that combines transparency, independence from overtly partisan influences and resulting in fair maps. One of the things he did for me during the campaign was speak to my constituent groups about the change in Michigan’s constitution and how it impacted the representation they would receive in the future. Obviously my audiences leaned to the Republican side of the aisle; his presentations were uniformly well received for their depth of knowledge and non-partisan content. Even persons who were generally hostile to changing the system spoke positively of his presentation.

You will be well served by retaining Mr. Sorg as your communications/community relations director. Please contact me if you have any questions or need further information on Mr. Sorg’s qualifications.

Sincerely,

Tony Spagnuolo

Prosecuting Attorney-elect, Clinton County Michigan

Date of Submission: Sunday, December 13, 2020 2:01PM

Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>

Name: Caecpu

Subject: Please Reject Mr. Lancaster From Further Consideration

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away from partisan politics. There is no doubt that Mr. Lancaster cannot provide unbiased recommendations regarding the Commission's legal matters.

Looking through Mr. Lancaster's political contributions, it is clear that he strongly favors Democratic candidates and liberal activist organizations. Again, the Independent Redistricting Commission has a mission that is based around the fundamental belief that they are to act as a non-partisan entity. Having the Commission's General Counsel be a clear partisan individual will undermine the Commission's integrity.

Mr. Lancaster also has a clear conflict of interest as he served as one of the main legal attorneys for the political organization that drafted and supported Proposal I's passage in 2018. This creates a situation where the individual who drafted the language would now have to give neutral legal advice on the language he helped write.

I encourage the Commission to select a different individual who can serve in a mor

Tom Tecco

Date of Submission: Saturday, December 12, 2020 2:28PM
Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>
Name: Barbara Tonkovich
Subject: Please Reject Mr. Lancaster From Further Consideration

Dear Redistricting Commissioners,

Mr. Lancaster is part of the problem . . . send him packing.

I am writing to you to request that the Michigan Redistricting Commissioner members deny any further consideration for the General Counsel position the current candidate under consideration, James Lancaster.

It is widely known that Mr. Lancaster is a partisan attorney. Under Proposal I passed in 2018, the residents of Michigan made their voices clear that redistricting was to be done in a non-partisan matter away from partisan politics. There is no doubt that Mr. Lancaster cannot provide unbiased recommendations regarding the Commission's legal matters.

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I encourage the Commission to select a different individual who can serve in a more non-partisan and natural manner.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

[Name]

[Address]

Date of Submission: Friday, December 11, 2020 8:07PM

Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>

Name: Marek Kalinowski

Subject: Please Reject Mr. Lancaster From Further Consideration

Dear Redistricting Commissioners, I am writing to you to request that the Michigan Redistricting Commissioner members deny any further consideration for the General Counsel position the current candidate under consideration, James Lancaster. It is widely known that Mr. Lancaster is a partisan attorney. Under Proposal I passed in 2018, the residents of Michigan made their voices clear that redistricting was to be done in a non-partisan matter away from partisan politics. There is no doubt that Mr. Lancaster cannot provide unbiased recommendations regarding the Commission's legal matters. Looking through Mr. Lancaster's political contributions, it is clear that he strongly favors Democratic candidates and liberal activist organizations. Again, the Independent Redistricting Commission has a mission that is based around the fundamental belief that they are to act as a non-partisan entity. Having the Commission's General Counsel be a clear partisan individual will undermine the Commission's integrity. Mr. Lancaster also has a clear conflict of interest as he served as one of the main legal attorneys for the political organization that drafted and supported Proposal I's passage in 2018. This creates a situation where the individual who drafted the language would now have to give neutral legal advice on the language he helped write. I encourage the Commission to select a different individual who can serve in a more non-partisan and natural manner. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Marek Kalinowski



Sterling Heights Mi 48310

Date of Submission: Friday, December 11, 2020 7:44AM

Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>

Name: Lance Cican

Subject: Please Reject Mr. Lancaster From Further Consideration

Dear Redistricting Commissioners,

I am writing to you to request that the Michigan Redistricting Commissioner members deny any further consideration for the General Counsel position the current candidate under consideration, James Lancaster.

It is widely known that Mr. Lancaster is a partisan attorney. Under Proposal I passed in 2018, the residents of Michigan made their voices clear that redistricting was to be done in a non-partisan matter away from partisan politics. There is no doubt that Mr. Lancaster cannot provide unbiased recommendations regarding the Commission's legal matters.

Looking through Mr. Lancaster's political contributions, it is clear that he strongly favors Democratic candidates and liberal activist organizations. Again, the Independent Redistricting Commission has a mission that is based around the fundamental belief that they are to act as a non-partisan entity. Having the Commission's General Counsel be a clear partisan individual will undermine the Commission's integrity.

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I encourage the Commission to select a different individual who can serve in a more non-partisan and natural manner.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

[Lance Cican]

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

Date of Submission: Friday, December 11, 2020 1:35AM

Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>

Name: Rick C.

Subject: Please Reject Mr. Lancaster From Further Consideration

To the Honorable Commissioners.

I respectfully request that the Commission not hire Mr. Lancaster as their General Counsel. There is no doubt that Mr. Lancaster's political leanings would grossly undermine the non-partisan mission of the

Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission. I urge the Commission to consider the "Voice of the People" of our Great State of Michigan in your decision in this and all matters.

Respectfully,
Richard Cunningham

Date of Submission: Thursday, December 10, 2020 9:30PM

Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>

Name: David Lambright

Subject: Please Reject Mr. Lancaster From Further Consideration

Dear Redistricting Commissioners,

I am writing to you to request that the Michigan Redistricting Commissioner members deny any further consideration for the General Counsel position the current candidate under consideration, James Lancaster.

It is widely known that Mr. Lancaster is a partisan attorney. Under Proposal I passed in 2018, the residents of Michigan made their voices clear that redistricting was to be done in a non-partisan matter away from partisan politics. There is no doubt that Mr. Lancaster cannot provide unbiased recommendations regarding the Commission's legal matters.

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I encourage the Commission to select a different individual who can serve in a more non-partisan and natural manner.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Ellen Lambright


Charlotte, MI 48813

Sent from my iPhone

Date of Submission: Thursday, December 10, 2020 3:54PM
Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>
Name: Evelyn Archer
Subject: Please Reject Mr. Lancaster From Further Consideration

Dear Redistricting Commissioners,

I am writing to you to request that the Michigan Redistricting Commissioner members deny any further consideration for the General Counsel position the current candidate under consideration, James Lancaster.

It is widely known that Mr. Lancaster is a partisan attorney. Under Proposal I passed in 2018, the residents of Michigan made their voices clear that redistricting was to be done in a non-partisan matter away from partisan politics. There is no doubt that Mr. Lancaster cannot provide unbiased recommendations regarding the Commission's legal matters.

Looking through Mr. Lancaster's political contributions, it is clear that he strongly favors Democratic candidates and liberal activist organizations. Again, the Independent Redistricting Commission has a mission that is based around the fundamental belief that they are to act as a non-partisan entity. Having the Commission's General Counsel be a clear partisan individual will undermine the Commission's integrity.

Mr. Lancaster also has a clear conflict of interest as he served as one of the main legal attorneys for the political organization that drafted and supported Proposal I's passage in 2018. This creates a situation where the individual who drafted the language would now have to give neutral legal advice on the language he helped write.

I encourage the Commission to select a different individual who can serve in a more non-partisan and natural manner.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

[Name]
[Address]

Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android

Date of Submission: Thursday, December 10, 2020 1:42PM
Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>
Name: Maria Sandford
Subject: Please Reject Mr. Lancaster From Further Consideration

Dear Redistricting Commissioners,

I am writing to you to request that the Michigan Redistricting Commissioner members deny any further consideration for the General Counsel position the current candidate under consideration, James Lancaster.

It is widely known that Mr. Lancaster is a partisan attorney. Under Proposal I passed in 2018, the residents of Michigan made their voices clear that redistricting was to be done in a non-partisan matter away from partisan politics. There is no doubt that Mr. Lancaster cannot provide unbiased recommendations regarding the Commission's legal matters.

Looking through Mr. Lancaster's political contributions, it is clear that he strongly favors Democratic candidates and liberal activist organizations. Again, the Independent Redistricting Commission has a mission that is based around the fundamental belief that they are to act as a non-partisan entity. Having the Commission's General Counsel be a clear partisan individual will undermine the Commission's integrity.

Mr. Lancaster also has a clear conflict of interest as he served as one of the main legal attorneys for the political organization that drafted and supported Proposal I's passage in 2018. This creates a situation where the individual who drafted the language would now have to give neutral legal advice on the language he helped write.

I encourage the Commission to select a different individual who can serve in a more non-partisan and natural manner.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

[Name] Maria Sandford

[Address] [REDACTED]
Lansing, MI 48910

Date of Submission: Thursday, December 10, 2020 1:42PM

Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>

Name: Ann Curry

Subject: Please Reject Mr. Lancaster From Further Consideration

Dear Redistricting Commissioners,

I am writing to you to request that the Michigan Redistricting Commissioner members deny any further consideration for the General Counsel position the current candidate under consideration, James Lancaster.

It is widely known that Mr. Lancaster is a partisan attorney. Under Proposal I passed in 2018, the residents of Michigan made their voices clear that redistricting was to be done in a non-partisan matter

away from partisan politics. There is no doubt that Mr. Lancaster cannot provide unbiased recommendations regarding the Commission's legal matters.

Looking through Mr. Lancaster's political contributions, it is clear that he strongly favors Democratic candidates and liberal activist organizations. Again, the Independent Redistricting Commission has a mission that is based around the fundamental belief that they are to act as a non-partisan entity. Having the Commission's General Counsel be a clear partisan individual will undermine the Commission's integrity.

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I encourage the Commission to select a different individual who can serve in a more non-partisan and natural manner.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

[Name]Ann Curry

[Address] [REDACTED]
Monroe, Mi 48161

Sent from my Ann's iPhone

Date of Submission: Thursday, December 10, 2020 1:37PM
Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>
Name: Suzi Macaluso
Subject: Please Reject From Consideration Mr. Lancaster

Dear Redistricting Commissioners,

I am writing to you to request that the Michigan Redistricting Commissioner members deny any further consideration for the General Counsel position the current candidate under consideration, James Lancaster.

It is widely known that Mr. Lancaster is a partisan attorney. Under Proposal I passed in 2018, the residents of Michigan made their voices clear that redistricting was to be done in a non-partisan matter away from partisan politics. There is no doubt that Mr. Lancaster cannot provide unbiased recommendations regarding the Commission's legal matters.

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mission that is based around the fundamental belief that they are to act as a non-partisan entity. Having the Commission's General Counsel be a clear partisan individual will undermined the Commission's integrity.

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I encourage the Commission to select a different individual who can serve in a more non-partisan and natural manner.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Suzanne E Macaluso

Howell, MI 48843

Date of Submission: Thursday, December 10, 2020 1:34PM

Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>

Name: Allan Lutes

Subject: Please Reject Mr. Lancaster From Further Consideration

Dear Redistricting Commissioners,

I am writing to you to request that the Michigan Redistricting Commissioner members deny any further consideration for the General Counsel position the current candidate under consideration, James Lancaster.

It is widely known that Mr. Lancaster is a partisan attorney. Under Proposal I passed in 2018, the residents of Michigan made their voices clear that redistricting was to be done in a non-partisan matter away from partisan politics. There is no doubt that Mr. Lancaster cannot provide unbiased recommendations regarding the Commission's legal matters.

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I encourage the Commission to select a different individual who can serve in a more non-partisan and natural manner.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Allan Lutes
[REDACTED]
Brighton, MI 48114

Date of Submission: Thursday, December 10, 2020 12:49PM
Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>
Name: ROSE ROOK
Subject: Please Reject Mr. Lancaster From Further Consideration

Dear Redistricting Commissioners, I am writing to you to request that the Michigan Redistricting Commissioner members deny any further consideration for the General Counsel position the current candidate under consideration, James Lancaster. It is widely known that Mr. Lancaster is a partisan attorney. Under Proposal I passed in 2018, the residents of Michigan made their voices clear that redistricting was to be done in a non-partisan matter away from partisan politics. There is no doubt that Mr. Lancaster cannot provide unbiased recommendations regarding the Commission's legal matters. Looking through Mr. Lancaster's political contributions, it is clear that he strongly favors Democratic candidates and liberal activist organizations. Again, the Independent Redistricting Commission has a mission that is based around the fundamental belief that they are to act as a non-partisan entity. Having the Commission's General Counsel be a clear partisan individual will undermine the Commission's integrity. Mr. Lancaster also has a clear conflict of interest as he served as one of the main legal attorneys for the political organization that drafted and supported Proposal I's passage in 2018. This creates a situation where the individual who drafted the language would now have to give neutral legal advice on the language he helped write. I encourage the Commission to select a different individual who can serve in a more non-partisan and natural manner. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Rose R.Rook
Paw Paw, Michigan

Date of Submission: Thursday, December 10, 2020 11:43AM
Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>
Name: Nathan Maas
Subject: Candidacy of James Lancaster

Hello,

This e-mail is in support of James ("Jim") R. Lancaster for the General Counsel of the Redistricting Commission.

I believe the most important quality needed for this position is a personal belief in the value and necessity of the Commission, and the work it will do -- both to affirmatively represent the Commission in its work, and also to defend the Commission from attempts to undermine and / or eliminate it.

Jim is a "True Believer," who would view the role of General Counsel for the Commission as a calling, rather than a position.

The State of Michigan could do no better than James R. Lancaster for this role.

Respectfully,

Nathan C. Maas
East Lansing, MI

Date of Submission: Thursday, December 10, 2020 11:18AM
Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>
Name: joe bellino
Subject: Please Reject Mr. Lancaster From Further Consideration

Dear Redistricting Commissioners,

I am writing to you to request that the Michigan Redistricting Commissioner members deny any further consideration for the General Counsel position the current candidate under consideration, James Lancaster.

It is widely known that Mr. Lancaster is a partisan attorney. Under Proposal I passed in 2018, the residents of Michigan made their voices clear that redistricting was to be done in a non-partisan matter away from partisan politics. There is no doubt that Mr. Lancaster cannot provide unbiased recommendations regarding the Commission's legal matters.

Looking through Mr. Lancaster's political contributions, it is clear that he strongly favors Democratic candidates and liberal activist organizations. Again, the Independent Redistricting Commission has a mission that is based around the fundamental belief that they are to act as a non-partisan entity. Having the Commission's General Counsel be a clear partisan individual will undermine the Commission's integrity.

Mr. Lancaster also has a clear conflict of interest as he served as one of the main legal attorneys for the political organization that drafted and supported Proposal I's passage in 2018. This creates a situation where the individual who drafted the language would now have to give neutral legal advice on the language he helped write.

I encourage the Commission to select a different individual who can serve in a more non-partisan and natural manner.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Joe Bellino, State Rep., Michigan's 17th.
[REDACTED]
Monroe, Mi
48162

Sent from my iPhone

Date of Submission: Thursday, December 10, 2020 11:09AM
Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>
Name: Norm Johnson
Subject: Please Reject Mr. Lancaster From Further Consideration

Dear Redistricting Commissioners, I am writing to you to request that the Michigan Redistricting Commissioner members deny any further consideration for the General Counsel position the current candidate under consideration, James Lancaster. It is widely known that Mr. Lancaster is a partisan attorney. Under Proposal I passed in 2018, the residents of Michigan made their voices clear that redistricting was to be done in a non-partisan matter away from partisan politics. There is no doubt that Mr. Lancaster cannot provide unbiased recommendations regarding the Commission's legal matters. Looking through Mr. Lancaster's political contributions, it is clear that he strongly favors Democratic candidates and liberal activist organizations. Again, the Independent Redistricting Commission has a mission that is based around the fundamental belief that they are to act as a non-partisan entity. Having the Commission's General Counsel be a clear partisan individual will undermine the Commission's integrity. Mr. Lancaster also has a clear conflict of interest as he served as one of the main legal attorneys for the political organization that drafted and supported Proposal I's passage in 2018. This creates a situation where the individual who drafted the language would now have to give neutral legal advice on the language he helped write. I encourage the Commission to select a different individual who can serve in a more non-partisan and natural manner. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely, Cathy L Johnson,
[REDACTED] Monroe, Mi 48162

Date of Submission: Thursday, December 10, 2020 11:01AM
Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>
Name: Dana Woods
Subject: Please Reject Mr. Lancaster From Further Consideration

Dear Redistricting Commissioners,

I am writing to you to request that the Michigan Redistricting Commissioner members deny any further consideration for the General Counsel position the current candidate under consideration, James Lancaster.

It is widely known that Mr. Lancaster is a partisan attorney. Under Proposal I passed in 2018, the residents of Michigan made their voices clear that redistricting was to be done in a non-partisan matter away from partisan politics. There is no doubt that Mr. Lancaster cannot provide unbiased recommendations regarding the Commission's legal matters.

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I encourage the Commission to select a different individual who can serve in a more non-partisan and natural manner.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Dana Woods

Howell, Mi 48843

Date of Submission: Thursday, December 10, 2020 10:38AM
Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>
Name: Nijakowski, Gerals
Subject: Please Reject Mr. Lancaster From Further Consideration

Dear Redistricting Commissioners,

I am writing to you to request that the Michigan Redistricting Commissioner members deny any further consideration for the General Counsel position the current candidate under consideration, James Lancaster.

It is widely known that Mr. Lancaster is a partisan attorney. Under Proposal I passed in 2018, the residents of Michigan made their voices clear that redistricting was to be done in a non-partisan matter away from partisan politics. There is no doubt that Mr. Lancaster cannot provide unbiased recommendations regarding the Commission's legal matters.

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I encourage the Commission to select a different individual who can serve in a more non-partisan and natural manner.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

[Gerald Nijakowski

██████████ Brighton Mi

Sent from my iPhone

Date of Submission: Thursday, December 10, 2020 10:30AM

Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>

Name: Bill

Subject: Please Reject Mr. Lancaster From Further Consideration

Dear Redistricting Commissioners,

I am writing to you to request that the Michigan Redistricting Commissioner members deny any further consideration for the General Counsel position the current candidate under consideration, James Lancaster.

It is widely known that Mr. Lancaster is a partisan attorney. Under Proposal I passed in 2018, the residents of Michigan made their voices clear that redistricting was to be done in a non-partisan matter away from partisan politics. There is no doubt that Mr. Lancaster cannot provide unbiased recommendations regarding the Commission's legal matters.

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I encourage the Commission to select a different individual who can serve in a more non-partisan and natural manner.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

William Reardon
[REDACTED]
New Hudson, Mi. 48165

Sent from my iPhone

Date of Submission: Thursday, December 10, 2020 9:37AM
Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>
Name: JT
Subject: Please Reject Mr. Lancaster From Further Consideration

Dear Redistricting Commissioners,

I am writing to you to request that the Michigan Redistricting Commissioner members deny any further consideration for the General Counsel position the current candidate under consideration, James Lancaster.

It is widely known that Mr. Lancaster is a partisan attorney. Under Proposal I passed in 2018, the residents of Michigan made their voices clear that redistricting was to be done in a non-partisan matter away from partisan politics. There is no doubt that Mr. Lancaster cannot provide unbiased recommendations regarding the Commission's legal matters.

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I encourage the Commission to select a different individual who can serve in a mor

Sent from Mail for Windows 10

Jeffrey D. Padden

Okemos, Michigan 48864

Steven Terry Lett, Chair, and Members
Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission
Via email: Redistricting@Michigan.gov

Dear Commission Chair Lett and Members,

I write to encourage you to select James R. Lancaster as General Counsel for the Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission. His knowledge, experience, demeanor, and strategic legal sense make him an exceptionally well-qualified candidate, one with unparalleled ability to serve as advocate for your interests.

The question you face is simple:

Where should you turn to find the person you need to defend your work?

And, the answer is quite apparent:

Turn to the person who helped to write Proposal 2 and has successfully defended it at every turn.

Mr. Lancaster's relevant legal experience is prodigious. Having served as General Counsel for the Voters Not Politicians (VNP), he was deeply involved in drafting what became Proposal 2 of 2018 and eventually part of the Michigan Constitution. At every turn, he advised VNP on how to defend against relentless efforts to keep the proposal off the ballot, to prevent its implementation, and to undermine its effectiveness. He has been remarkably successful in fending off these assaults on the will of the Michigan voters. The attacks continue, and the Commission will need a General Counsel who is deeply familiar with both the substance of the prior and current legal challenges and the strategies of the organizations that launched them. Your General Counsel must be your staunch ally and advocate and, in being so, the advocate for Michigan's voters.

Legal strategy involves more than simply defending lawsuits. You cannot afford to wait for challenges to arise; instead, you and your counsel must anticipate and prepare in advance to thwart them. Mr. Lancaster has precisely this strategic legal sense. If you ask him why opponents took one approach versus another, he will know. If you ask him what legal challenges lie in the future and from whence they will arise, he will know that, too. He will not simply spend his days responding to challenges, he will be constantly imagining, anticipating, and preparing for those likely to occur. In the legal battles yet to be fought, you need to understand the terrain and see over the next hill. Mr. Lancaster can help you do that.

Some allege that, because Mr. Lancaster made financial contributions to Democratic candidates, he cannot be impartial in his work for the Commission. This criticism is specious. The commission is comprised of four Democrats, four Republicans, and five unaffiliated members; thus, any attempt to inject partisanship into the work of any General Counsel would quickly be detected and corrected by the Commissioners. Moreover, your counsel's job will not be to tell you which plan to adopt, instead, that person must defend *your* decisions, whatever they may be.

Fortunately, you have only to examine Mr. Lancaster's record as Chief Legal Counsel for VNP to see how he has conducted himself. That nonpartisan group would never have tolerated partisanship from its counsel; they expected that person to reflect their nonpartisan foundation and goals. That is precisely what he delivered. The leaders and members of VNP were extraordinarily pleased with his work in that respect and in terms of his effectiveness in advocating for them in the myriad legal proceedings in which the group became engaged. I am a Democrat and Mr. Lancaster knows that, yet in my many conversations with him about redistricting, I have never heard him advocate for gaining a partisan advantage for Democrats. Not once. Instead, he has consistently reflected on the need for a districting plan to fairly reflect the voters of the state.

I urge you to appoint James R. Lancaster as your General Counsel. Do this because of his deep knowledge of the issues that face you, his experience in defending our constitutional districting process, his nonpartisan perspective, and his strategic understanding of the legal landscape before you. He is the right person to defend the important work in which you are engaged.

Finally, I wish to note that Jim is a truly fine and honorable individual. He will act with integrity and honor, representing the Commission as an exceptional public servant.

Thank you for considering these thoughts.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey D. Padden