

BABETTE JOSEPHS, DEMOCRATIC MEMBER
DEMOCRATIC CHAIR,
STATE GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE



House of Representatives
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HARRISBURG

REPRESENTATIVE OF THE 182ND DISTRICT

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November 15, 2011

The Honorable Daryl Metcalfe, Majority Chair
House State Government Committee
43 East Wing
PO Box 202012
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Chairman Metcalfe:

House Bill 134 was referred to the State Government Committee on February 4, 2011. This letter requests to have the committee consider the bill in the near future. This legislation would require openness and fairness in the redistricting process. In particular, it would:

- Permit any resident of the Commonwealth to submit reapportionment plans for legislative districts. The Reapportionment Commission would be required to consider these plans. The Commission would be required to make software and demographic data available to the public for use in developing such plans.
- Require the Reapportionment Commission to hold public hearings to solicit public testimony from as many Commonwealth residents as possible, as follows:
 - Prior to development of the preliminary plan, five hearings would be required to be held in different geographic regions of the state; and
 - Prior to development of the final plan, five hearings would be required to be held in different geographic regions of the state.
- Require the Reapportionment Commission to establish an Internet website for the purpose of dissemination of data used to formulate reapportionment plans, written communications between the Commission and other persons, preliminary and final plans, citizen plans, notices of hearings and meetings of the Commission, transcripts of hearings and minutes of meetings.
- Require the Reapportionment Commission to comply with the Sunshine Act and the Right-to-Know Law.

Because the Reapportionment Commission approved a preposterous preliminary reapportionment plan that has been criticized across the state, it is more important than ever to advance this bill. A similar proposal was unanimously reported out of the State Government Committee last session.

I would like to note that as of November 15, 2011, you as Majority Chair have not advanced a single bill whose primary sponsor is a Democrat. Last session when I served as Majority Chair of the committee, the committee advanced twenty-eight bills whose primary sponsor was a Republican.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Babette Josephs". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Babette Josephs
Democratic Chair
House State Government Committee

CC: Interested Parties