

The Southern Maryland Chronicle

Governor Hogan Announces Maryland Citizens Redistricting Commission

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Governor Larry Hogan today issued an executive order establishing—for the first time in state history—an independent **Maryland Citizens Redistricting Commission**, which will be charged with drawing fair legislative and congressional maps for the 2022 elections. Throughout his time in office, the governor has led the charge for gerrymandering reform in Maryland and nationwide.

“This commission is the first of its kind in the long history of our state,” said Governor Hogan. “Unlike the partisan, backdoor manner in which our state’s political power brokers have conducted the state’s redistricting process, we want to make sure that this time the people of Maryland are actually the ones drawing these lines—not the politicians or the party bosses.”

Joining the governor at today’s State House press conference were the three co-chairs of the new commission:

- **Judge Alexander Williams, Jr.**, retired judge for the U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland
- **Dr. Kathleen Hetherington**, president of Howard Community College
- **Walter Olson**, senior fellow at the Cato Institute’s Robert A. Levy Center for Constitutional Studies

The commission will have a total of nine people—three Republicans, three Democrats, and three independents—and the remaining six members will be selected from applications directly submitted by citizens. The selection of members intends to produce a commission that is independent of legislative influence, impartial, and reasonably representative of the state’s diversity and geographical, racial, and gender makeup. Apply for the commission at governor.maryland.gov/redistricting.

The governor’s **executive order** charges the commission with producing fair maps for both state legislative and congressional districts that comply with a set of criteria, including:

- Complies with U.S. Constitution and Voting Rights Act of 1965
- Respects natural boundaries and geographic integrity

- Does not take into account citizens' party affiliation

The commission will conduct regional summits to allow citizens to offer comment on the boundaries of the congressional and legislative districts, along with a listening tour prior to the drawing of the maps.

Statements from Commission Co-Chairs:

“I am honored to have been asked to co-chair the Maryland Citizens Redistricting Commission and to participate in the important task of drawing boundaries for legislative and congressional districts in Maryland,” said Judge Williams. “I look forward to working with other members of the commission in developing an independent and fair plan.”

“I am honored to have been asked by the governor to serve as one of the chairs of the Maryland Citizens Redistricting Commission, said Dr. Hetherington. “I look forward to working with Judge Alexander Williams and Walter Olson on the commission as we begin our charge.”

“Fair and impartial redistricting builds confidence in our democratic system,” said Mr. Olson. “Direct citizen involvement, sunlight, and fair districting standards have proven their worth in other states. I hope everyone who cares about democracy in our state will consider volunteering to serve on the commission, making your voice heard by way of public comments and hearings, or even filing proposed maps. I’m honored to be part of a process that can make history in Maryland.”