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For Immediate Release

Sen. Joyce Waddell [joyce.waddell@ncleg.net]

Sent: Monday, September 09, 2019 10:44 AM

To: [Steve Johnston](#)

From the Office of Sen. Joyce Waddell, NC Senate
Mecklenburg County

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, September 9, 2019

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**Judges Strike Down Gerrymandered NC House and Legislative Districts**

Charlotte, NC- North Carolina's political maps for the state legislature are unconstitutional and must be redrawn before the 2020 elections. The panel of three judges struck down the maps in [a 357-page ruling](#) that focused on the level of political partisanship used to draw them. The maps were drawn in 2017 to replace previous maps, drawn in 2011, that had also been ruled unconstitutional. Both sets of maps were drawn by North Carolina's Republican-led legislature. This violated the rights of voters under the state Constitution's Equal Protection and Freedom of Assembly Clauses

State lawmakers now have until September 18 to draw new legislative districts. Additionally, the entire process must be conducted in full public view, including that all map-drawing be done at public hearings with any relevant computer screen visible to legislatures and observers. Each of North Carolina's 13 United States representatives and 170 state legislators are elected from political divisions called districts. District lines are redrawn every 10 years following completion of the United States census. The federal government stipulates that districts must have nearly equal populations and must not discriminate on the basis of race or ethnicity.

In June, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled, in two challenges to partisan redistricting in two different states, that the federal courts do not have the authority to block the district lines drawn up by state lawmakers, no matter how partisan the motivation behind the maps might be. The U.S. Supreme Court left the door open for state courts to rule on the issued involving partisan redistricting that come up under state law. Because Tuesday's ruling is under North Carolina law, it is a virtual certainty that it will not be reviewed on appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court. "It is important that we have fairness in drawing maps, the voters want to elect those who are representing their best interest" said Senator Joyce Waddell.

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