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# *Commission Meeting*

of

## NEW JERSEY LEGISLATIVE APPORTIONMENT COMMISSION

*“The purpose of the meeting will be to vote on a plan to establish  
New State legislative districts in New Jersey.*

*As required by the New Jersey Constitution, the Apportionment Commission is charged with  
redrawing the lines of the State’s 40 legislative districts, from which  
the 40 Senators and 80 members of the General Assembly are elected”*

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**LOCATION:** Committee Room 4  
State House Annex  
Trenton, New Jersey

**DATE:** February 18, 2022  
2:00 p.m.

### **MEMBERS OF COMMISSION PRESENT:**

Al Barlas, Republican Delegation Chair  
LeRoy J. Jones, Jr., Democratic Delegation Chair  
Senator Jon M. Bramnick  
Senator Thomas H. Kean, Jr.  
Honorable Philip S. Carchman  
Cosmo A. Cirillo, Ph.D.  
Linda DuBois  
Michael B. Lavery, Esq.  
Laura Matos  
Gary Taffet  
Diane T. Testa, Esq.



### **ALSO PRESENT:**

Raysa Martinez Kruger  
*Office of Legislative Services*  
*Commission Secretary*

Jessica Oestreicher  
Roshard Williams  
*Office of Legislative Services*  
*Commission Aides*

Saily Avelenda  
*Democratic Delegation*  
Brian Alpert  
*Republican Delegation*  
*Executive Directors*

***Meeting Recorded and Transcribed by***  
The Office of Legislative Services, Public Information Office,  
Hearing Unit, State House Annex, PO 068, Trenton, New Jersey

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**JUSTICE PHILIP S. CARCHMAN (Eleventh Member):**

Good afternoon, and welcome everyone to the record 12th public hearing of the New Jersey Apportionment Commission.

I would ask the Secretary to call the roll.

**MS. MARTINEZ KRUGER (Commission Secretary):**  
Commissioner Testa.

**MS. TESTA:** Present.

**MS. MARTINEZ KRUGER:** Commissioner Taffet.

**MR. TAFFET:** Present.

**MS. MARTINEZ KRUGER:** Commissioner Matos.

**MS. MATOS:** Present.

**MS. MARTINEZ KRUGER:** Commissioner Lavery.

**MR. LAVERY:** Present.

**MS. MARTINEZ KRUGER:** Commissioner Kean.

**SENATOR KEAN:** Here.

**MS. MARTINEZ KRUGER:** Commissioner DuBois.

**MS. DuBOIS:** Here.

**MS. MARTINEZ KRUGER:** Commissioner Cirillo.

**DR. CIRILLO:** Present.

**MS. MARTINEZ KRUGER:** Commissioner Bramnick.

**SENATOR BRAMNICK:** Present.

**MS. MARTINEZ KRUGER:** Co-Chair Jones.

**LEROY R. JONES, Jr. (Democratic Delegation Chair):**  
Present.

**MS. MARTINEZ KRUGER:** Co-Chair Barlas.

**AL BARLAS (Republican Delegation Chair):** Present.

**MS. MARTINEZ KRUGER:** Eleventh Member Carchman.

**JUSTICE CARCHMAN:** Present.

Before we move to a vote, the Chairs have requested an opportunity to speak. And as has been the case throughout this process, they have agreed on who goes first. (laughter)

So, Chairman Barlas.

**MR. BARLAS:** That's how it started, and I guess that's how we're going to finish it.

So, first of all, I'd like to say, on behalf of myself and my fellow colleagues on the Republican side, thank you to everyone on the -- to our colleagues on the Democratic side. This process has been tough, it's been hard, it's been long. We all gave a little, we all went through a lot to get to this final product. And when we started our first public hearing, Chair Jones and Judge Carchman -- we all said that we were looking to make, end of the day where everyone will be proud; and we would do something potentially historic and give the residents of the State a map that they could all be proud of. And I think we certainly did that today.

Before I go into anything else, I also want to thank -- I know on behalf of everybody -- Raysa, and everybody at OLS, for everything that they have done since this process has started. I mean, you guys absolutely-- (applause). You guys truly are all of our unsung heroes for making every -- all the stuff that we don't even realize is happening, just happened. So we truly, truly appreciate everything that you guys did for us.

To our side and our team -- Brian Alpert, Mark Duffy, Matt Gould, Kevin Logan; our attorney, Jason Torchinsky; everybody else who

was a part of this -- our mapmakers, our data guys -- thank you, everyone, for all your help and support in this process.

Just a couple things on the map itself, as we're going to vote on it soon, hopefully. Obviously, as the Judge said, this is a historic day. I don't think anyone ever thought we would get here. We all kind of hoped it; I don't think we ever actually thought we'd get here, but here we are. And before us is a map that will have one majority-minority African American district, two majority-minority Hispanic districts, and an African American-influenced district, three Hispanic-influenced districts, and 10 minority-majority districts as well. I mean, these are record numbers; these are historic things that we're accomplishing here today, based solely on the fact that our state is diverse, and we all acknowledged it, we all -- nobody shied away from what we had to do -- the obligation that was before us was to ensure that we produced a product that is representative of who we all are. And I think we all did that. And we can all walk out of here with our heads held high on that process.

And I have to say -- I don't usually talk about this stuff -- but, listen, you know, my family came here in 1985, with me on their hip, and four suitcases and 500 bucks. And they left martial law in Pakistan for a reason. And they wanted to be able to control their own destiny, and they wanted to be able to be in a country where their government actually responded to them. And, you know, if my dad could be here today, I think he'd be pretty proud. I know my mom was, as I was trying to explain everything that was going on last night; and she still had no idea what I was talking about, and that's okay. (laughter)

But, you know, today I'm proud to be a part of this Commission. I'm proud to work with all of you. I'm proud to be friends with all of you. And I think we should all -- and I think we all are proud of this final and finished product that we have here today.

And to you, Co-Chair Jones, I just have to say, you've been my friend before, you were my friend during, you're going to be my friend after. And I don't believe we would be here today if it wasn't for your help, your leadership, your guidance.

And to Judge Carchman -- you were the right person for this job. It wouldn't have happened without you. And I have to say, I don't know how many Republicans have ever said this, but Chief Justice Rabner got this one right. (laughter) He got it right.

And there are 10 of us here, but this is a testament to you. This is a -- we have the Stokes model, we have this model, we have this standard, and now we have the Carchman standard. And that is a map that everybody can be proud of; that forges compromise and consensus from all sides.

So thank you, Judge.

JUSTICE CARCHMAN: Chairman Jones.

MR. JONES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ladies and gentlemen, today we're here to finalize a historic map. You know, I am proud of the exceptional work of our team -- including our Commissioners Cosmo Cirillo, Laura Matos, Gary Taffet, Diane Testa; as well as our Executive Director Saily Avelenda and Counsel Raj Parikh; and all the consultants and volunteers who dedicated their time, their efforts, their talents, simply to achieve this historic outcome.

This historic bipartisan map directly reflects the principles outlined by our independent member, Judge Philip Carchman. And it was able to come to fruition through hard work -- very hard work -- and the efforts of our Republican Co-chair and my friend, Al Barlas, and his team of Commissioners and professionals who worked tirelessly along with our team here to accomplish this goal.

You know, this map will provide so many opportunities for increased minority representation in Camden, in Hudson, in Essex counties, while maintaining or improving on the goals -- with competitive districts around the state that we will defend aggressively and with all alacrity, but in the spirit of good judgment and fairness along the way.

However, true consensus cannot be achieved without compromise from all parties. And that's what happened here in this historic process. Many of our Commissioners and party leaders were left with very, very difficult choices, which includes some very long-term and very well-respected Democratic State Senators, who now find themselves in the same district with others who are of our Democratic party; legislators who find themselves in very tough races. But despite those sacrifices, we were able to build upon the Democratic map that has been in place since 2001.

I have to commend all of our Commissioners and the staff for the very hard work in getting to this outcome. But let me just pay special attention to the keen and expert representatives from the Office of Legislative Services.

Raysa Martinez Kruger -- you and your staff have been just magnificent; simply amazing. So our hats go off to all that you guys leant to

this process. It was very well appreciated, extremely respected, and you were simply the consummate professionals in this process. We thank you.

But while there were so many gives and takes in his process, we leave here knowing that we achieved the best possible outcome for Democrats under these circumstances; and that we can continue to strive and prosper to better represent the people of our great State over these next 10 years if -- *if* we simply put the work in.

So we leave here knowing what can be accomplished when we simply work together on behalf of the people of this great State that we simply call *New Jersey*. That is simply historic.

So let me just say to all of you, and specifically to my friend Al Barlas, this couldn't have been accomplished without the camaraderie, the respect, and the mutual admiration that two men have for each other. I don't have the stories that Al just told about his family lineage and how he got here. But we engage in the same fight -- different parties, but the same fight -- to make sure that, in the state, individuals of color who find themselves labeled with the term *minority*, are in a better place; and have expert representation from the individuals who take their role in the maps that we will approve today.

To our independent member, who has been a rock, who, to Al and myself-- You know, I said to Al the other day -- I think the Judge has adopted us. (laughter)

But he's done that -- he did that in such a paternal way; but in a strict, and enforceable, and a respected way. He is, truly, a gem of an individual; a consummate professional, and a person who cares about this process and the people of New Jersey.

It's been an honor, sir, to serve in this capacity with you; and I look forward to continuing to work -- whether side-by-side, or in our respective positions in the State and this world -- to make a better New Jersey.

Thank you so much, Judge.

And Madam Secretary, that concludes my comments.

JUSTICE CARCHMAN: Thank you.

I'd probably do better if I say nothing at this point (laughter), after hearing from the two Chairs. But I do have a couple of thoughts that I'd like to share with you all.

When I was talking to Andy Gimigliano, my attorney -- who you'll hear about in a moment -- earlier this morning, we were almost reminiscing, since it's now been 24 hours -- almost 24 hours -- about the process. And he said to me, "We have to remember democracy is a work in process." And I wrote it down, and I said, "I'm going to use that because it applies, with such force, to what has happened over the past week." Except I wrote down, "Democracy is a work in *progress*," instead of *process*.

And our hope coming into this process, if you will, was that we would leave things better at the end than as we found them in the beginning. And today, I think I can speak for all of the Commissioners, who can hold their heads high and say, "We achieved that goal."

Any journey like this starts with leadership. And I will tell you now that the Commission was blessed with two extraordinary Co-Chairs, Chairman Barlas and Chairman Jones. Just so there is no misunderstanding, since we have been talking about this mutual admiration society, but I want to let the public know, without any question, that these two gentlemen are strong and fierce advocates for their respective positions. They didn't let any

stone go unturned, and they advocated directly, and strongly, and certainly competently on behalf of those who they represent and those citizens of New Jersey. But they did it in a way that marked the workings of the Commission this past week. They did it with respect for each other, and respect for all of the Commissioners and the public, they did it with civility. They were tough, they were tough on me sometimes. But they were fair, and that is so critical to an effective outcome that we have today.

All the Commissioners were exactly the same; every Commissioner -- none of whom I knew before I showed up a few months ago for our first meeting. In fact, I knew no one in this process until I showed up a few months ago. But every Commissioner has treated each other with respect, has treated each other civilly, has treated each other in a manner that can make a Commission like this work effectively. And everyone exhibited the same respect and toughness -- which is okay -- for each other; but they did it with civility.

Now, we've been talking earlier today, all of us, and hearing that there are people who are complaining about this piece of the map, that piece of the map. And the question always comes up, "Is the map perfect?" And the answer is very simple, "No, it is not perfect." It will never be perfect, because there is no perfect map to be found anywhere, and no one should feel anything otherwise.

We will have critics who will be focusing on this map and how it affects the next election, 2023, or how it affects something that may happen before that. But we didn't design a map for the next few weeks, and the next few months, or even for the next election. We're adopting a map for the next decade. And things will happen in New Jersey. Populations will shift, as they

did for the past 10 years; politics will change. And we want to leave a map that will endure for 10 years, and that's exactly what we've done.

But we've done more than that. I said at the beginning we wanted to leave this process better. Let's see; let's take a short catalog of what we've done. We've had a record number of public hearings; we've gotten the public involved. And when I say *we*, I'm really talking about the two Chairs.

We've had the first release of maps to the public. And there was debate about that, and it was good debate and legitimate debate because there are arguments, believe it or not, on both sides. And yet the maps were released to the public, and what happened? We had a record number of public participants at these hearings. And I will tell you, as of this morning, we're still getting letters responding to maps that feel like they're a decade ago. But we're getting public participation; the public was stimulated by the process.

We have, as the Chairs noted, a record number of new districts that provide opportunities that have not been seen before. And that's critically important. We have, as we all know, the first consensus bipartisan map in apportionment history in the State of New Jersey. Bipartisan -- a bipartisan map. Think about that. In this day and age of politics, what it takes to achieve a bipartisan map. And that belongs to all of the Commissioners, and to the leadership as well.

We've had a record number of map submissions by college students; and I have a feeling there may be a few teenagers involved in this process as well -- the public submitting maps to us. We had an extraordinary map presented to us from the Fair Districts Coalition, which was able to bring

together a record number of different diverse groups who agreed on what a map should look like. And what was critically important for the operation of this Commission was that the Commission sat, and listened, and heard what the public had to say. Now, not all requests were honored, because it's impossible to do so. The standards that were enunciated conflict with each other. They conflict in certain parts, and if you adopt -- if you adhere to one, you're sacrificing another. And what we ultimately end up with is a map that is balanced.

We have urged and we have received from the public something that they crave: participation in record numbers in this state.

A process such as this cannot, in any way, be accomplished without, as I've mentioned, the two Chairs here; and the members of the Commission are remarkably gifted leaders. But I also have to shout out a few other names: To staff -- to Brian Alpert and Saily Avelenda; to partisan counsel on both sides. We've mentioned the Office of Legislative Services; Raysa Martinez Kruger, Roshard Williams, and Jessica Oestreicher, from the Office of Legislative Services made the process seamless for us, so we didn't have to worry about the arrangements. They were all taken care of.

And I have to give a shout-out to the partisan teams who cooperated with us without question. But I have to give a special shout-out to my team as well. And I'm going to ask your indulgence for another moment or two. I will tell you, I never met one of them before this process started, and yet we bonded as a team. First, we have Professor Sam Wang and his team from Princeton University, the Electoral Innovation Lab. Sam is a true nonpartisan, who helped us immeasurably in his work and his analysis. And his team included Jesse Clark, Rick Ober, Nate Moore; and the

folks back at the mothership at Princeton University who were punching in the numbers and giving us information.

We had some law students -- Ryan Brinkerhoff, Christian Culligan (phonetic), Zohar Hassan (phonetic), Kimberly Jackson -- of the Rutgers Law School, Constitutional Law Clinic. And they volunteered their time for us, and assisted us on some of the legal issues.

There were two other names that I have to mention. The first is a young man by the name of Kevin Cheung. I'm not sure if Kevin is 17 or 18 years old. He is a freshman at Rutgers University, at the Eagleton Institute, whose mapmaking skills are beyond his years. He is a remarkable young man. He came to us, he volunteered his time; he knows New Jersey politics, guys. Pay attention to him, because he told us what Senators were thinking -- not on the Commission -- were thinking about in terms of where they wanted to be.

And last, but not least -- he's going to be embarrassed, but I don't really care -- my learned attorney, Andrew Gimigliano, whose knowledge of the law, whose knowledge of the process, and his knowledge of how to deal with a client like me were priceless and invaluable almost beyond words. And what many of you know -- Andy was here 10 years ago. He knew how it worked; I didn't. And that knowledge was invaluable to me, and I owe a huge thank you to him.

Ladies and gentlemen, it was an honor to be associated with all of you. To the leaders, it was truly an honor to be associated with you, and to be part of this remarkable process; which I'll tell you, I knew little about before I got a call from the Chief Justice.

I thank you all for your efforts. I thank you for the hard work that has been put in to achieve what is really something that we can all be proud of. And I thank you.

And now we get to the business at hand, which is, in fact, taking a vote.

Can I have a motion for the map?

MR. JONES: So moved.

MR. BARLAS: Second.

MS. MARTINEZ KRUGER: On the motion to adopt the map; Commissioner Testa.

MS. TESTA: Yes.

MS. MARTINEZ KRUGER: Commissioner Taffet.

MR. TAFFET: Yes.

MS. MARTINEZ KRUGER: Commissioner Matos.

MS. MATOS: Yes.

MS. MARTINEZ KRUGER: Commissioner Lavery.

MR. LAVERY: Yes.

MS. MARTINEZ KRUGER: Commissioner Kean.

SENATOR KEAN: No.

MS. MARTINEZ KRUGER: Commissioner DuBois.

MS. DuBOIS: Yes.

MS. MARTINEZ KRUGER: Commissioner Cirillo.

DR. CIRILLO: No.

MS. MARTINEZ KRUGER: Commissioner Carchman.

JUSTICE CARCHMAN: Yes.

MS. MARTINEZ KRUGER: Commissioner Bramnick.

SENATOR BRAMNICK: Yes.

MS. MARTINEZ KRUGER: Co-Chair Jones.

MR. JONES: Yes.

MS. MARTINEZ KRUGER: Co-Chair Barlas.

MR. BARLAS: Yes.

MS. MARTINEZ KRUGER: The map is adopted. (applause)

JUSTICE CARCHMAN: If we have no other business, may we have a motion to adjourn?

MR. BARLAS: Motion.

MR. JONES: Second.

JUSTICE CARCHMAN: The motion is granted; we're adjourned.

Thank you all.

**(MEETING CONCLUDED)**