

First Extraordinary Session, 2011

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 18

BY REPRESENTATIVES EDWARDS, BOBBY BADON, BALDONE, GALLOT, GISCLAIR, HONORE, ROSALIND JONES, LEBAS, LEGER, GARY SMITH, PATRICIA SMITH, AND THIBAUT AND SENATORS CHABERT, CHAISSON, HEITMEIER, JACKSON, LAFLEUR, LONG, MCPHERSON, MURRAY, NEVERS, PETERSON, QUINN, AND WILLARD-LEWIS

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To proclaim the importance of the Louisiana Legislature enacting a congressional redistricting plan during the 2011 First Extraordinary Session of the Louisiana Legislature.

WHEREAS, by virtue of the authority vested in the Louisiana Legislature by Article III, Section 2(B) of the Constitution of Louisiana and by R.S. 24:11, and upon receipt of a written petition of a majority of the elected members of each house, the presiding officers called and convened the legislature into a historic extraordinary session; and

WHEREAS, the power to legislate at such session was limited, under penalty of nullity, to eight very specific and enumerated objects; and

WHEREAS, Item No. 3 states "To legislate relative to the redistricting of the Congressional districts of Louisiana; and to provide relative to the effectiveness of such districts"; and

WHEREAS, the duration of the First Extraordinary Session of 2011 was slated for a period of twenty-five calendar days, sufficient time within which to enact laws on the enumerated objects; and

WHEREAS, even prior to the start of this extraordinary session, the appropriate standing committees of the House and Senate held numerous hearings throughout the state seeking input of Louisiana citizens on, inter alia, the drawing of new congressional districts; and

WHEREAS, the issues have been well vetted through hundreds of hours of direct testimony, deliberation, and debate around the state and during this special session; and

WHEREAS, no fewer than fifteen bills have been introduced to redistrict congress along various district lines and even more amendments have been offered providing the legislature with many variations for consideration; and

WHEREAS, undoubtedly, congressional redistricting is a difficult task and the loss of one congressional district has substantially compounded the level of difficulty; and

WHEREAS, the reduction of the number of congressional districts from seven to six has created regional tensions as geographical areas desire to maintain communities of interest within single districts; and

WHEREAS, whether congressional redistricting is done during this special session or at subsequent sessions, none of the regional tensions will have abated and any delay will result in additional cost; and

WHEREAS, the people of Louisiana deserve to know, well in advance of the November 2012 elections, in which district they reside; and

WHEREAS, timely drawn districts will provide the greatest opportunity for the largest number of qualified people to announce their candidacy within a respective district; and

WHEREAS, despite a majority of the congressional incumbents sending a letter to the governor urging a delay in congressional redistricting, it is the duty of the legislature to draw new district lines and, furthermore, the legislature is not concerned with incumbent protection but rather the best interest of the people of the state.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby proclaim the importance of the Louisiana Legislature enacting a congressional redistricting plan during the 2011 First Extraordinary Session of the Louisiana Legislature.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE