



MEMBER OF CONGRESS

BOBBY SCOTT  
THIRD DISTRICT  
VIRGINIA

December 19, 2021

Ms. Muriel-Theresa Pitney  
Clerk of Court  
Supreme Court of Virginia  
100 N 9<sup>th</sup> Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Richmond, VA 23219

**Sent via electronic mail to [redistricting@vacourts.gov](mailto:redistricting@vacourts.gov)**

Dear Ms. Pitney,

After recent written and public testimony before the Court regarding the pending redistricting map submitted by the two Special Masters, I felt compelled to make a comment about the 3<sup>rd</sup> congressional district.

Several comments have suggested that the 3<sup>rd</sup> congressional district should, at a minimum, maintain its current Black Voting Age Population (BVAP) of 47 percent in order to comply with the federal Voting Rights Act. Some have even argued that further unpacking the 3<sup>rd</sup> district would dilute minority voting strength. I am troubled that some of my fellow Virginians misunderstand the Voting Rights Act, the importance of maximizing minority voter influence, and the appropriate methods and remedies to achieve this goal. If the Special Masters' map is in violation of the Voting Rights Act, it is only because the draft continues to overpack minority voters in the 3<sup>rd</sup> congressional district.

While I am concerned that the Special Masters unnecessarily drew incumbents into the same district, I commend them for their efforts to continue to unpack Virginia's 3<sup>rd</sup> congressional district by lowering the district's BVAP from 47.2 percent to 44.5 percent. However, even a BVAP of 44.5 percent still makes the 3<sup>rd</sup> congressional district unnecessarily overpacked thus diluting minority voting strength in the adjacent congressional districts in violation of the Voting Rights Act.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> congressional district can still be an effective minority district with a lower BVAP. In establishing this number, the Court should consider the voting coalitions that minority communities can form in order to elect the candidate of their choice. For some communities, this may require a higher BVAP but for others a lower BVAP can be sufficient and strengthen minority voting influence in additional districts.

I strongly encourage the Court to adjust the Special Masters' map to further unpack the 3<sup>rd</sup> congressional district. The Commonwealth is an incredibly diverse state, and it is critical that legislative and congressional district lines reflect this diversity to ensure that minority communities have the strongest voice possible in who they send to Richmond and Washington.

Very truly yours,

ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT  
Member of Congress