

18TH DISTRICT

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January 27, 2017

Dear Friend:

I wanted to take a moment and provide you with some insight into why this issue is so important and why action is needed immediately.

To put it succinctly, Fair Districts = Fair Elections. Every ten years, after the release of the new census, the leaders of the State Legislature must re-draw the district boundaries for State Representatives, State Senators and our Congressional delegation. Under the current system, the stakeholders draw the map, or as I like to say, elected officials choose their voters. This turns the fundamentals of elections on its head and needs to be changed.

Last session, I introduced SB 484, which put forth a new process that was supported in a bi-partisan and bi-cameral way. In the new session, I will be introducing SB 22 which will call for the same solution, the creation of an independent citizen commission. Essentially, removing the stakeholders from the process and replacing them with citizens.

The 11-person Commission would be made up (based on statewide registration numbers) of 4 registered individuals with the largest political party, 4 registered individuals with the second-largest, and 3 unaffiliated with either of the two largest parties. Additionally, certain individuals such as: elected officials, staff members, lobbyists, family members of officeholders and others would not be eligible to even serve on the Commission, reinforcing the goal to keep stakeholders out of the process. Furthermore, there would be some post-service limitations on the back end to prevent those who do serve from benefitting from the service.

Beyond some basic qualifications, the selection process would be random. After ensuring that all applicants meet the basic qualifications and are not otherwise ineligible to serve, they will be placed in pools. After that process there will be another reduction of applicants, with the final individuals being selected at random. The process will be designed to ensure a diverse representation based on geography, race, sex and age. Obviously, the goal is to get a commission that is representative of the diverse state that is Pennsylvania.

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We need to do this now because amending Pennsylvania's Constitution takes time. In fact, it takes a bill successfully passing two consecutive sessions, 17-18 and 19-20, so that the amendment can be on the ballot for 2020, when the people have a chance to weigh in. To get the bill to move through the process will require individuals making elected State officials know that this is important to the people.

Fair districts ensure Fair elections which will result in better government. Too often because of how our districts are drawn elected officials move to the more extremes of the political spectrums to protect against a challenger in the primary, which makes compromise harder and a functioning government more difficult. This is not a partisan issue, but a people issue. We need elections where voters choose the representatives, not one where the representatives choose the voters.

I will do my best to keep you informed of any progress on the movement of the bill. In the end, this type of reform requires your time and effort to make your voices heard to state representatives that you want the current process fixed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa M. Boscola". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "L" and "B".

**Lisa M. Boscola**  
State Senator – 18<sup>th</sup> District