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LEGISLATIVE ACTION ALERT

PA Governor Wolf's Executive Order: 2018-07 – Pennsylvania Redistricting Reform Commission

November 29, 2018

Subject: Pennsylvania Redistricting Reform Commission

Number: 2018-07

By Direction of: Tom Wolf, Governor

Date: November 29, 2018

WHEREAS, the success of our democracy demands fair, equitable elections; and

WHEREAS, our citizens are entitled to accuracy and transparency in the election process and government that works on behalf of all Pennsylvanians; and

WHEREAS, the redistricting process should be clear and reasonable, and should involve public input, evaluation, and feedback; and

WHEREAS, Pennsylvania residents have overwhelmingly expressed their desire for an independent, non-partisan redistricting commission to oversee the legislative redistricting process; and

WHEREAS, Pennsylvania's past processes may have led to underrepresentation of minority groups and did not allow citizens an opportunity to provide input regarding the districts drawn by the Legislature; and

WHEREAS, election districts should be drawn making every effort to keep towns, communities, municipalities and counties intact to ensure our elected officials reflect and represent the community they serve; and

WHEREAS, in other parts of the country, independent commissions have been effective at reducing harmful partisan politics in redistricting; and

WHEREAS, independent commissions have also been successful in creating districts that are compact, contiguous, and keep communities together; and

WHEREAS, the creation of a Pennsylvania Redistricting Reform Commission would engage citizens, subject matter experts, and other interest groups in examining Pennsylvania’s redistricting process and making recommendations on ways to drive positive change in our system.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Tom Wolf, Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, by the virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and other laws of the Commonwealth do hereby establish the **Pennsylvania Redistricting Reform Commission** (hereafter referred to as the “Commission”) and order and direct as follows:

1. **Purpose.** The purpose of the Commission is to study best practices related to non-partisan redistricting process, engage the public in a dialogue around principles for a non-partisan redistricting process, and make recommendations to the Governor, President Pro Tempore of the Senate, Speaker of the House of Representatives, Majority Leader of the Senate, Majority Leader of the House of Representatives, Minority Leader of the Senate, and Minority Leader of the House of Representatives to inform the redistricting process.
2. **Powers and Duties.** The Commission shall:
 - a. Evaluate and analyze recommendations to improve the integrity and fairness of Pennsylvania’s congressional and legislative redistricting process.
 - b.
 - c. Review policies and practices implemented in other states that have reduced gerrymandering in the redistricting process.
 - d. Create opportunities for citizens to engage in the Commission’s work through public meetings and an online web submission form.
 - e. Develop recommendations and criteria to minimize the partisan political influence on congressional and legislative redistricting processes.
 - f. Provide non-partisan redistricting recommendations and best practices for the Governor to utilize during the redistricting process.
 - g. Provide non-partisan redistricting recommendations and best practices for the Legislature to utilize during the redistricting process.
 - h. Undertake any additional work related to redistricting as requested by the Governor.
3. **Composition.**
 - a. The Commission consists of the following voting members:
 1. Two members of the Pennsylvania Senate, one appointed by the Majority Leader of the Senate and one appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate;
 2. Two members of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, one appointed by the Majority Leader of the House of Representatives and one appointed by the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives;
 3. The Secretary of the Commonwealth or a designee;

Two individuals from institutions of higher education;
 4. One individual from a non-partisan voter advocacy organization;
 5. One individual from a non-partisan government reform organization;
 6. One former elected official who does not currently hold elected office; and
 7. Up to five citizen appointees.
 - b. The voting members identified in Sections 3(a)(3) through 3(a)(8) shall be appointed by the Governor and shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor. Should a vacancy occur among the Governor’s appointees on the Commission, the Governor will appoint a successor.

- c. The Governor will designate a chairperson or chairpersons who shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor.
 - d. The Commission's membership shall reflect the diversity of the Commonwealth.
- 4. **Procedures.**
 - a. The Commission may establish committees, rules, and procedures needed to effectively implement its powers and duties included in this Executive Order. Subcommittees may include advisory non-members, if approved by the Commission's chairperson. All committees shall be chaired by a member of the Commission.
 - b. A majority of members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum.
 - c. The Commission shall hold at least six publicly announced meetings throughout the state before its report is due.
- 5. **Report.** The Commission shall provide a written report to the Governor, President Pro Tempore of the Senate, Speaker of the House of Representatives, Majority Leader of the Senate, Majority Leader of the House of Representatives, Minority Leader of the Senate, and Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, that includes its findings from the activities undertaken in Section 2 within nine months of the effective date of this Executive Order.
- 6. **Compensation.** Members of the Commission shall not receive compensation for their service on the Commission, except that members shall receive reimbursement for reasonable travel costs and expenditures incurred while performing Commission business in accordance with the Commonwealth's travel and subsistence policies.
- 7. **Staff.**
 - a. The Department of State shall provide staffing to assist the Commission in carrying out the Commission's responsibilities and duties.
 - b. All Commonwealth agencies under the Governor's jurisdiction shall provide assistance and support as needed by the Commission to effectively carry out its purpose, powers, and duties set forth in this Executive Order, so far as is compatible with the authority and ability of each Commonwealth agency.
- 8. **Effective date.** This Executive Order shall take effect immediately.
- 9. **Termination Date.** This Executive Order shall remain in effect unless amended or rescinded by the Governor.