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Fair Maps Statement on Redistricting Committee Announcement of Public Hearing With Only Five Days Notice and No Remote Access for Public Comment

CONCORD- After almost a half a year of inaction, yesterday it was quietly announced with only five days' notice that the House and Senate Committees on Redistricting will hold their first county public hearing this Tuesday in Concord. Additionally, it appears that there will be no remote access for public comments or a way to submit written comments on the committee website; despite a high number of COVID-19 cases in New Hampshire.

Following the news, members of the Fair Maps coalition released the following statements:

"The League of Women Voters New Hampshire has been calling for a transparent process since 2004", said **Liz Tentarelli, President of The League of Women Voters New Hampshire**. "We attended public meetings in 2011 where no maps were shown and no information about the new districts was offered, to the great frustration of the public and the embarrassment of the legislators in attendance. With bi-partisan support over the past several years for an independent redistricting commission, we thought that the current committee would have gotten the message: the public expects maps drawn without partisan bias and with public input. In 2021 that includes virtual access to the process to protect public health."

"We are headed down the same exact flawed process that redistricting took last time in New Hampshire, and which led to politically gerrymandered districts," said **Zandra Rice Hawkins, Executive Director of Granite State Progress**. "These hastily announced meetings appear to be more for public relations purposes than an intentional effort to involve the public. We demand that the legislature provide a full and adequate public input process after the maps have been drafted, and that those maps reflect community opinions. Granite Staters are tired of the lack of transparency and accountability."

"The people deserve better," said **Louise Spencer, co-founder of the Kent Street Coalition**. "The task of this special committee could not be more important or vital to our democracy, and they continue to fall short. Committee leadership has had over six months to plan and prepare for this

process and calling a meeting on such short notice shows that public input is not valued and will not be taken seriously. We continue to call on these Committees to prove they are committed to allow full public access to these meetings; only then can Granite Staters feel confident in the process that determines their representation in both Concord and Washington.”

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Fair Maps is a coalition of organizations fighting to give power back to the people of New Hampshire through the establishment of an independent, fair, and transparent redistricting process.