



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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STATEMENT ON REDISTRICTING

The Democratic Black Caucus of Virginia joins the Virginia Legislative Black Caucus in supporting the creation of a second majority-minority congressional district during the current redistricting process.

Virginia currently has only one majority-minority district which is the 3rd District currently represented by Congressman Robert C. Scott. The 2010 U.S. Census numbers indicate that a 2nd majority- minority congressional district is achievable. Furthermore, Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 requires that if the opportunity exists for which a majority-minority district can be drawn, then it must be drawn.

The Democratic Black Caucus of Virginia (DBCVA) believes that it is incumbent upon the Virginia General Assembly to create a new majority-minority district as the state's redistricting submission must be cleared by the Department of Justice (DOJ) in compliance with Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act. We find the lack of interest to address our concern demonstrates a continued need for such oversight of Virginia's redistricting plans and feels strongly that the DOJ examines it closely.

"Virginia's current eleven congressional districts include only one minority representative," said Evelyn Morris-Harris, DBCVA Chair. "To maintain the current lines when a more diverse representation can be achieved is unacceptable to the DBCVA and," she continues, "we believe, will also be unacceptable to the DOJ."

We are also concerned with the number of cities and counties requesting exemption from the provisions of the Voting Rights Act. The DBCVA finds that these localities have not sufficiently proven their practices to be unbiased and inclusive of all Virginians. We will continue to monitor the Commonwealth's redistricting efforts and hope to see increased participation of minorities in these communities.