

STATE OF NEW YORK
SUPREME COURT COUNTY OF ONONDAGA

CHRISTOPHER RYAN; DUSTIN CZARNY;
CHARLES GARLAND; WILLIAM KINNE; MARY
KUHN; LINDA ERVIN; PEGGY CHASE; HELEN
HUDSON; MICHAEL GREENE; MARK F. MATT;
MAX RUCKDESCHEL; MARCIA FERGUSON; and
CHRISTOPHER J. SHEPHERD

Plaintiffs,

vs.

RYAN MCMAHON; COUNTY OF ONONDAGA;
ONONDAGA COUNTY LEGISLATURE; and
ONONDAGA COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS,

Defendants.

**AFFIDAVIT OF
MICHAEL GREENE**

Michael Greene, being duly sworn, says under penalty of perjury as follows:

1. I am a Plaintiff in the above-captioned action and a citizen of the State of New York, residing in the City of Syracuse, County of Onondaga.
2. I make this affidavit based on my personal knowledge, and if called upon to testify, I could and would testify to the following facts.
3. I am registered to vote in the State of New York.
4. Additionally, I serve as an elected official in the City of Syracuse.
5. I currently serve as a Councilor-At-Large and President Pro-Tempore of the Syracuse Common Council.
6. I submit this affidavit in support of this pending challenge against the Redistricting Maps that have been offered by the Onondaga County Legislature.
7. My objection to the proposed Redistricting Maps is that the Maps are the byproduct of a defective, partisan, and incumbent-favoring gerrymandering of the Redistricting process.

8. The County Legislature's partisan and incumbent-favoring gerrymandering of the 2021 Onondaga County Redistricting maps have harmed me and the citizens of the City of Syracuse.
9. I have reviewed the new district maps and based upon that review, and based upon my experience both as a political representative in the State of New York and my familiarity with the political realities that exist in the proposed district, I have formed the opinion that the proposed maps dilute the power of my vote and the votes of my constituents.
10. The process and product of the County's Republican led Legislature has adversely affected my voting power and the voting power of my constituents in City of Syracuse.
11. The proposed maps undermine my efforts throughout the City Syracuse, County of Onondaga, and State of New York to elect candidates of my choice
12. Additionally, the maps inhibit the ability of the majority of County Citizens to elect representatives to the County Legislature who accurately reflect the will of the citizens.
13. I have experiences in relation to the process by which redistricting maps are drawn.
14. When I came into public service in the City of Syracuse, the city the council had the unfettered power to redraw the districts in which they run.
15. That process carried with it an inherent conflict of interest and it is natural that the politicians on the council might seek to redraw the districting maps in favor of their own interests.
16. It was for that reason, I and others on the council proposed that Syracuse adopt a new reform process for drawing its district lines, which is to appoint a truly independent committee made up of citizens.

17. That effort mirrored efforts of some in the county of Onondaga Legislature to create an independent process to redrawing Legislative districts in an apolitical fashion by employing an independent committee.
18. Unfortunately, the high-minded rhetoric employed when creating the County's independent committee process did not come to fruition.
19. Unlike the process, we successfully employed in the City of Syracuse, the County's process was marked from the beginning with partisan political activity that crated maps as flawed as the process that produced them.
20. As proud as I am of the maps produced by the truly independent process used by the City's redistricting committee, I am distressed by the County Legislature's politically motivated maps that carve up the City of Syracuse as though they were the spoils of political warfare.
21. The analysis I offer below is meant to inform the Court of the obvious defects in the Maps.
22. I think it fitting to begin that analysis with an examination of two maps that are attached as an Exhibit to this Complaint. The first map, which I will refer to it as Map A, is the Legislative map created by the Republican majority of the County Legislature that is currently proposed; and the second map, referred to as Map B, is an alternative Map proposed by the Democratic members of the Redistricting Commission.
23. Map A is non-compact and divides communities of interest and Map B is both compact and respects the existing communities of interests within the city.
24. It truly benefits the public in making sure that the districts are ultimately served by public servants rather than politicians.
25. The partisan impact of the gerrymandered of districts favors republican candidates and unfairly dilutes the votes of those who support candidates of the democratic party.

26. More specifically, I take exception to the impacts listed below.

OCL 9

27. OCL 9 is a newly created district.

28. The lack of compactness of the district is self-evident and it is readily apparent the proposed district spans nearly the entire length of the City of Syracuse in a non-compact fashion.
(See Map A)

29. As the County of Onondaga was engaged in the process of drawing redistricting maps for the County Legislature, the City of Syracuse was performing the same task regarding the city offices.

30. Unlike the partisan process employed by the County, the city has set an example of non-partisan redistricting of which I am proud.

31. The Republican proposed district joins together parts of three neighborhoods, thus dividing three separate communities of interest.

32. The Republican County Legislative leaders produced a map in which parts of Washington Square, Lincoln Hill and Eastwood neighborhoods are carved out from their neighborhoods, and then wed into a single district.

33. The decision to wed these three areas into a single district disregards the existing communities of interest.

34. All three neighborhoods have distinct and diverse interests which are inconsistent with each other.

35. The goal of any rational redistricting plan is to leave communities of interest undivided.

36. The residents of Washington Square are predominantly tenants.

37. Residents who live in rented apartments have specific interests, needs, and political desires which differ from the interests of the owner-occupied properties.
38. Those who reside in Lincoln Hill and Eastwood neighborhoods, are more likely to own a home, and they do not share the same community of interests as those who live in Washington Heights.
39. Additionally, the residents of Eastwood or Lincoln Hill differs from the residents of Washington Square in relation to schools.
40. The Washington Square neighborhood is densely populated and the schools in proximity with that neighborhood are oversubscribed.
41. As a result of oversubscription, the students who reside in Washington Square are regularly bussed throughout the city.
42. The students in Eastwood and Lincoln Hill customarily attend local city schools, thus they prioritize school investment whereas those in Washington Square, where crime is more prevalent, prioritize safety and policing.
43. The residents of Washington Square have historically been less likely to vote in off year elections than the working-class residents of the owner-occupied neighborhoods of Eastwood and Lincoln Hill, thus the political goals of the Washington Square residents will be overshadowed by the differing goals of the Eastwood and Lincoln Hill citizens.
44. In short, the marriage of these unrelated neighborhoods into a single legislative district will divide communities of interests and diminish their voting power.

OCL 7

45. Proposed OCL 7 pairs portions of the Washington Square (low-income inner city urban populations of color), with Sedgwick, (white urban professionals) and Eastwood

neighborhoods (white, blue-collar residents) and extends into East Syracuse and the Kirkville portions of Dewitt (suburban/rural).

46. It is respectfully submitted that the Eastwood and Sedgwick communities in the City of Syracuse share little in common with the Washington Square residents; and that statement is magnified Washington Square to Kirkville and East Syracuse are wedded who have nothing in common with Washington Square residents.
47. None of these communities share common interests such as school districts or elected officials. In fact, these communities are not only different economically, politically, culturally and racially; but also, are randomly divided in an arbitrary fashion.
48. The patchwork quilt of City of Syracuse created by wedding those neighborhoods with non-Syracuse suburban communities could have only been conceived as a means to maximize the likelihood of maintaining a Republican majority in the county Legislature, despite a growing democrat majority in the county.

OCL 17

49. The proposed OCL 17 takes the Lewiston Manor portions of Dewitt (white suburban) and pairs it with Syracuse neighborhoods of Genesee Hills, (white, blue-collar working neighborhood bordering Lemoyne College) then takes in the Salt Springs neighborhood (a working class African American neighborhood) and tosses in portions of Westcott and university neighborhoods largely composed of student tenants.
50. The student tenants regretfully seldom vote in local elections, yet the neighborhood in which they live have needs diverse from the neighbors with which they are paired.
51. These are disparate communities that share little in common.

OCL 16

52. The proposed OCL 16 takes the only African American Majority district existing in Syracuse from the previous map and arbitrarily reduces the African American population in that district.
53. That reduction in the African American majority was accomplished by pairing that community with a portion of the University area. (highly educated white community)
54. More specifically, the previous district had an overwhelming African American majority, but will now have a mere plurality.
55. The University area of the City of Syracuse is also needlessly split up into three different legislative districts.
56. Not only was this community of interest needlessly divided, but it was also done in a way to confuse voters and limit their voices within the county legislature.
57. The intertwining of districts in the University area has made it so that a person walking two blocks in a straight line along Euclid Avenue can cross into three different districts.
58. The University citizens might not know who their representative is and being divided are unlikely to elect a representative from the University area.
59. The faulty maps will keep the student population and the home owning population of the University Neighborhoods from choosing the candidate of their choice.
60. It is also less likely that the local concerns of the University area residents will be prioritized by their various County Legislative Representatives due to the fact that such political power of the residents has been divided and thus diminished.
61. It is an unfortunate political reality that politicians respond to politically powerful voting blocs while sometimes ignoring the needs of communities that have diminished voting

power, therefore the dividing of the University area into three separate legislative districts makes the residents of that community a small minority of the voters in all three districts thus diminishing their political influence.


62. The highly educated population of the University area is motivated politically and are politically liberal leaning.

63. The maps as drawn by the conservative republican county legislature has effectively diminished the political power of this constituency.

Conclusion

64. In conclusion, I believe the defective and partisan results of the Onondaga County Legislative Redistricting process is the direct result of the process employed to create the Redistricting Maps and that the only correction that is possible is to appoint a truly independent expert to redraft the maps consistent with both the spirit and letter of the laws of the State of New York.

65. It is my opinion within a reasonable degree of certainty, as a legislator that the proposed maps violate compactness requirements set out Subdivision 4 of section 34 of the municipal home rule law of New York. The section in question states: "DISTRICTS SHALL BE AS COMPACT IN FORM AS PRACTICABLE"


Michael Greene

Sworn before me on
this 16 day of August, 2022


NOTARY PUBLIC

JOSEPH S. COTE III

Notary Public, State of New York

Qualified in Onon. Co. No. 4942588

Commission Expires March 28, 2023