

Office of the Governor  
State of Louisiana

JOHN BEL EDWARDS  
GOVERNOR



P.O. Box 94004  
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70804-9004  
(225) 342-7015  
GOV.LA.GOV

June 10, 2022

**VIA HAND DELIVERY**

Honorable Clay J. Schexnayder  
Speaker of the House  
Louisiana House of Representatives  
Post Office Box 94062  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804-9062

Honorable Patrick Page Cortez  
President  
Louisiana State Senate  
Post Office Box 94183  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804

RE: Call for Second Extraordinary Session of 2022

Dear Speaker Schexnayder and President Cortez:

As you are aware, I called an Extraordinary Session of the legislature to begin on June 15, 2022 to draw new congressional districts. This call was issued pursuant to the order from United States District Court Judge Shelly Dick, which found that the congressional districts in Act 5 of the 2022 First Extraordinary Session violated Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act.

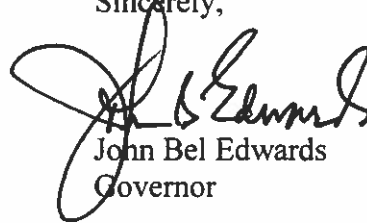
Yesterday, the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals entered an administrative stay of the district court's injunction and ordered the plaintiffs in the case to file a response by 4 p.m. today. Given that this deadline is less than 24 hours from the Fifth Circuit's order, it is clear that there will be further action from the Fifth Circuit to address the request for stay shortly. I fully anticipate that this further action will be announced before the session is set to begin next Wednesday.

I have become aware from press reports of the request you have made for the session call to be rescinded. I believe that is premature. The administrative stay issued by the Fifth Circuit was procedural, and it is clear, from the deadline imposed by the Court, that there will be further action shortly. That decision will then determine whether the legislature should meet on June 15<sup>th</sup> to comply with Judge Dick's order. I realize that the 143 members of the legislature and staff members do need some certainty as to whether the session will convene as planned on the 15<sup>th</sup>. Thus, if there is no further action by the Fifth Circuit by 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, June, 14<sup>th</sup>, and if the administrative stay is still in place, I will rescind the call for the special session.

Honorable Clay J. Schexnayder  
Honorable Patrick Page Cortez  
June 10, 2022  
Page 2

I remain hopeful that the Fifth Circuit will vacate the administrative stay and allow Judge Dick's well-reasoned decision and injunction to remain in place. I believe that the legislature can and should meet next week to enact maps that create a second majority minority district. Further, while I am mindful of the costs to the taxpayers as pointed out in your press release, it is clear that the state would have saved the unknown thousands of dollars being spent on out-of-state lawyers if the legislature had originally enacted maps that comply with the Voting Rights Act and the standard of fundamental fairness. It is not too late for the legislature to do the right thing. However, while I am Governor, I also remain an officer of the court, and I respect the Fifth Circuit's authority over this matter. Should the Court retain a stay over Judge Dick's decision, I agree that further action of the legislature should be delayed until the Fifth Circuit can review the merits of her decision.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Bel Edwards". The signature is stylized with a large, looping initial "J" and "B".

John Bel Edwards  
Governor