



Virginia State Conference

NAACP

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For Immediate Release

Virginia State Conference of the NAACP Announces Opposition to Amendment 1

Richmond, Virginia - The Virginia State Conference (VSC) of the NAACP today announced their opposition to Amendment 1, a proposed constitutional amendment on Virginians' ballots to change the way the commonwealth draws political district lines. The VSC's decision is based on their analysis that Amendment 1 would undermine opportunities for Black voters to elect representatives of their choosing while consolidating the power of a handful of powerful politicians to control the redistricting process.

"Voters should choose their elected officials, not the other way around," says Robert N. Barnette, president. But for too many years, politicians have drawn rigged districts that strip Black voters of our voice. We need to reform the system, not make it worse. Any redistricting amendment must include explicit and strong protections for Black voters and voters of color. Amendment 1 far misses the mark. We urge Virginians to vote NO on 1."

Amendment 1 would delegate responsibility to draw political districts to a commission composed of 8 legislators and 8 "citizens" handpicked by party leaders, consolidating politicians' ability to draw the lines. The amendment fails to provide protections for communities of color. It remains silent on any requirement for diversity on the commission. Its references to the 14th amendment and Voting Rights Act fail to advance new protections for Black Virginians and communities of color while qualifying the ability of communities to choose their own representatives as only necessary "where practicable."

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