

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 416

Commending the students, faculty sponsors, and organizers of the Virginia College and University Legislative Redistricting Competition.

Agreed to by the Senate, February 3, 2011

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 11, 2011

WHEREAS, the decennial reapportionment of the Virginia House of Delegates, the Virginia Senate, and the United States Congress provides a unique opportunity for public engagement and education in a fundamental exercise in representative government; and

WHEREAS, the Judy Ford Wason Center for Public Policy at Christopher Newport University and the Public Mapping Project are sponsoring the Virginia College and University Legislative Redistricting Competition to help educate students and the public about the process of redistricting; and

WHEREAS, student teams from 13 Virginia colleges and universities, both public and private, are participating in the competition to draw new maps for Virginia's 11 congressional districts, 100 state House districts, and 40 state Senate districts; and

WHEREAS, student teams are participating from Christopher Newport University; The College of William and Mary (2); George Mason University; James Madison University (2); Longwood University; the University of Mary Washington; Norfolk State University; Old Dominion University; Radford University; the University of Richmond; Roanoke College; the University of Virginia (2); and Virginia Commonwealth University; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Quentin Kidd, associate professor of political science and director of the Judy Ford Wason Center for Public Policy at Christopher Newport University, and Dr. Michael McDonald, associate professor at George Mason University and nonresident senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, are the organizers of the competition; and

WHEREAS, the competition will be judged by Thomas Mann, senior fellow in governance studies at the Brookings Institution, and Norman Ornstein, resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute; and

WHEREAS, the teams will use online redistricting software developed by the Public Mapping Project, a collaborative effort led by Dr. Michael McDonald and Dr. Micah Altman, senior research scientist at Harvard University; and

WHEREAS, the plans will be judged according to whether the proposed districts are contiguous, equal in population, in compliance with the federal Voting Rights Act, encompassing communities of interest that are respectful of existing political subdivisions, compact, electorally competitive, and representationally fair; and

WHEREAS, the best maps in each category will be presented for consideration by the Independent Bipartisan Advisory Commission on Redistricting created by Executive Order No. 31 of Governor Robert F. McDonnell; and

WHEREAS, the competition is a timely contribution to the reapportionment process, as it coincides with the General Assembly's redrawing of political boundaries of the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, the competition represents practical engagement in governance for Virginia college students who will be the next generation of political leaders; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly commend the students, faculty sponsors, and organizers of the Virginia College and University Legislative Redistricting Competition; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to each student team's faculty sponsor and to Dr. Quentin Kidd and Dr. Michael McDonald as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for the efforts of the students and their sponsors and for the Virginia College and University Legislative Redistricting Competition's commitment to engaging and educating citizens and future leaders in this fundamental exercise of representative government.