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## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 585

Offered January 23, 1995

*Proposing an amendment to Section 6 of Article II of the Constitution of Virginia, relating to apportionment and establishing the Virginia Redistricting Commission.*

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Patrons—Almand and Plum

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Referred to Committee on Rules

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RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, a majority of the members elected to each house agreeing, That the following amendment to the Constitution of Virginia be, and the same hereby is, proposed and referred to the General Assembly at its first regular session held after the next general election of members of the House of Delegates for its concurrence in conformity with the provisions of Section 1 of Article XII of the Constitution of Virginia, namely:

Amend Section 6 of Article II of the Constitution of Virginia as follows:

## ARTICLE II

## FRANCHISE AND OFFICERS Section 6. Apportionment.

Members of the House of Representatives of the United States and members of the Senate and of the House of Delegates of the General Assembly shall be elected from electoral districts established by the General Assembly. Every electoral district shall be composed of contiguous and compact territory and shall be so constituted as to give, as nearly as is practicable, representation in proportion to the population of the district. The General Assembly shall reapportion the Commonwealth into electoral districts in accordance with this section in the year 1971 and every ten years thereafter.

Any such reapportionment law shall take effect immediately and not be subject to the limitations contained in Article IV, Section 13, of this Constitution having only one elected representative each. Such districts shall be established in the year 2001 and every ten years thereafter by the Virginia Redistricting Commission which is hereby created.

Each electoral district shall be composed of contiguous territory and shall have a population approximately equal to that of every other district within its class.

The Virginia Redistricting Commission shall seek to create an effective system of representation based upon compact districts having, insofar as practicable, natural communities of interest and demarcated the one from the other by boundaries such as mountain ranges, rivers, primary highways, or the boundaries of counties and cities. Insofar as practicable, political subdivisions shall be kept intact within electoral districts.

By March 31, 2000, and every ten years thereafter, the duly elected leaders of the political parties in the Senate and in the House of Delegates having the highest and next highest membership shall each submit a list of three names to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, who shall, within thirty days, name one person to the Virginia Redistricting Commission from each list. The four persons thus designated shall elect a fifth member, who shall serve as chairman of the Virginia Redistricting Commission. If they cannot agree on a fifth member, the Chief Justice shall name such member.

No person may be nominated or chosen who has held public office or been an official of a political party during a period of five years prior thereto.

The Virginia Redistricting Commission shall consult the people and complete its work by May 1, 2001, and every ten years thereafter, by delivering the redistricting plans to the Governor and to the Secretary of the State Board of Elections. Each plan shall be effective from the date of its delivery to the Governor for elections held thereafter. The Supreme Court shall have original jurisdiction in any case arising from the redistricting plan.

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