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IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

PRESS ROBINSON, ET AL.

Applicants,

v.

PHILLIP CALLAIS, ET AL.

Respondents.

NANCY LANDRY, SECRETARY OF STATE OF LOUISIANA, ET AL.

Applicants,

v.

PHILLIP CALLAIS, ET AL.

Respondents.

On Emergency Application for Stay Pending Appeal from the United
States District Court, Western District of Louisiana

**Brief for Quentin Anthony Anderson, Candidate for U.S.
Representative for Louisiana's 6th Congressional District,
("Amicus") as Amici Curiae in Support of Applicants**

Quentin Anthony Anderson
Ashley White
Kenneth Barnes
Anderson for Louisiana
P.O. Box 1464
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70821
(225) 317-9503

Attempted to submit pro se

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INTEREST OF AMICUS CURIAE

Quentin Anthony Anderson, a declared candidate for Congress in Louisiana's 6th District, submits this brief as *amicus curiae*. Mr. Anderson has a vested interest in the stability and clarity of electoral district boundaries due to the direct impact on his ongoing campaign efforts and the broader effects on voter engagement and fairness in representation.

BACKGROUND

The recent appellate court decision to overturn Louisiana's Senate Bill 8 (SB 8), which established a second majority-Black congressional district, has cast impending elections into disarray. This brief contends that the sudden reversal of SB 8 threatens the core of democratic engagement and disadvantages new, grassroots candidates by advantaging incumbents and well-funded competitors who can navigate sudden electoral changes more adeptly.

SUMMARY OF ARGUMENT

The recent appellate court decision that overturns the establishment of a second majority-Black district in Louisiana has injected significant uncertainty into the electoral process. This uncertainty is particularly disenfranchising to voters and detrimental to grassroots campaigns, like that of *Amicus*, which rely on clear and stable district mapping to effectively communicate with and mobilize voters. The timing of this legal challenge—mere months before a critical congressional election—

threatens to undermine the democratic process by causing confusion and reducing voter turnout.

Amicus supports a stay of the appellate court's decision until after the upcoming election to prevent further voter confusion and ensure that the 2024 election can proceed under the established January map. The change so close to election timelines disproportionately harms new entrants like Mr. Anderson and risks severe voter disenfranchisement due to the uncertainty and confusion it generates.

ARGUMENT

I. Voter Disenfranchisement Through Electoral Uncertainty

The sudden change in district boundaries close to an election undermines the ability of voters to make informed decisions and engage meaningfully in the democratic process.

Electoral clarity is a cornerstone of democratic engagement. The abrupt reversal of established district boundaries so close to an election undermines the informed voter's ability to participate meaningfully in the democratic process. Citing *Purcell v. Gonzalez*, this Court has recognized the principle that court orders affecting elections can themselves result in voter suppression by creating confusion (549 U.S. 1, 2006).

Furthermore, *Allen v. Milligan* (previously *Merrill v. Milligan*) reinforces the necessity of avoiding changes that could impair the electorate's ability to engage fully

with the electoral process (599 U.S. 1, 2023). The defendants appealed to the Supreme Court, which stayed the district court's order until the case could be heard by the Court on the merits.

The timing of the redistricting decision, combined with its potential to reshape electoral landscapes, can lead to decreased voter participation due to confusion about the candidates and the issues at stake.

The same considerations of avoiding unfairness and confusion for candidates and voters that justified a stay in *Merrill* apply here. However, in this case, time is even more of essence. When this Court granted stay in *Merrill*, Alabama was nearly nine months away from its general election. Presently, Louisiana is less than six months out from the 2024 Elections (November 5, 2024) and concerns are mounting that the State will be unable to properly administer elections, effectively stunting candidates' campaigns and disenfranchising voters.

Ultimately, the Court here has the same substantive basis as in *Merrill* for granting stay in the Louisiana elections in *Callais*. In *Merrill*, this Court found the lower courts improperly enjoined state election laws in a time period too close to the election after a three-judge panel presided over Section 2, Voting Rights Act claims against Alabama's new districts. *Singleton v. Merrill*, 582 F. Supp. 3d 924 (N.D. Ala. 2022).

Here, without a stay, the Louisiana congressional election process is at similar risk of significant disruption. In their Emergency Application for Stay, the State has

explained that the significant pre-election tasks hinge upon the Secretary of State having adequate time to receive redistricting information, update precinct numbers, conduct the annual canvass, and begin coding in the State's Elections and Registration Information Network (ERIN). Delaying the selection of a map to complete another overhaul of the congressional map, which may not happen well into June, puts completion of these processes at risk. This level of "judicial tinkering" this far into the Louisiana congressional election cycle is akin to that warned of in Justice's Kavanaugh's concurrence in *Merrill*. 142 S. Ct. 879 (2022).

II. Disproportionate Impact on Grassroots Campaigns

Grassroots campaigns, which often lack the resources of more established political operations, are particularly vulnerable to disruptions caused by redistricting. These campaigns depend heavily on long-term relationships, extensive voter contact & engagement strategies and localized messaging, both of which are disrupted by changes in district boundaries.

The Court in *Anderson v. Celebrezze* recognized that arbitrary or oppressive election laws can effectively exclude serious candidates from the ballot and limit the voters' rights to associate and cast their votes effectively (460 U.S. 780, 1983). Similarly, *Dunn v. Blumstein* argued for the reduction of barriers to voter participation, emphasizing the importance of access and stability in voting systems (405 U.S. 330, 1972).

The State has cautioned that if a congressional map is not certain by May 15, 2024, there will be ripple effects, disrupting the candidate qualification (those qualifying by petition or by fee) and local voter assignment processes. These concerns regarding impending “chaos, costs, and confusions” stemming from an unstable election process are magnified for candidates running grassroots campaigns.

Candidates are not able to properly fundraise until district boundaries are set and they have filed their candidacy paperwork. Grassroots candidates, who are more resource-constrained, are especially sensitive to variations in this window of opportunity. If the State’s candidate qualification timeline is negatively affected due to the uncertainty with congressional maps, then grassroots candidates lose valuable time to maximize their fundraising efforts.

Well-established or incumbent candidates have the benefit of engaging in protracted campaign seasons, which may span the year prior to the election. Non-incumbent Congressional candidates in Louisiana have often needed at least eight months between the beginning of their candidacy and the election to effectively reach voters.¹ With the 2024 Election Day in less than six months and no clear congressional boundaries, non-incumbents face a steeper hurdle in targeting, mobilizing, and engaging voters.

III. Request for Relief

¹ Jeff Landry-R (January 18, 2010 - August 28, 2012), Garret Graves-R (March 3, 2014 - November 4, 2014), John Kennedy-R (January 26, 2016 - November 8, 2016), Luke Mixon-D (January 13, 2020 - November 3, 2020), Katie Darling-D (January 5, 2023 - October 14, 2023)

Amicus urges the Court to grant a stay on the implementation of new district boundaries until after the 2024 congressional elections, allowing for a stable and fair electoral environment.

CONCLUSION

For the reasons stated above, and in the interest of promoting a fair, understandable, and stable electoral process, *Amicus* respectfully requests that the Court consider the arguments herein and grant the relief sought to ensure that the 2024 elections proceed under the existing congressional map as established in January 2024 under Senate Bill 8.

Respectfully submitted,

Quentin Anthony Anderson
Candidate for Congress, LA-6

DATED: May 15, 2024