

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SECOND JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
IN AND FOR LEON COUNTY

FLORIDA BLACK VOTERS MATTER
CAPACITY BUILDING INSTITUTE, INC., *et al.*,

Case No. 2022-ca-000666

Plaintiffs,

v.

CORD BYRD, in his official capacity as Florida
Secretary of State, *et al.*,

Defendants.

_____ /

DECLARATION OF GOVERNOR RON DESANTIS

I, Ron DeSantis, hereby declare as follows:

1. I am over the age of eighteen and am otherwise competent to make the statements in this declaration.
2. I have personal knowledge of the matters contained herein.
3. I am the Governor of Florida and was sworn in on January 8, 2019. Under article IV, section 1(a) of the Florida Constitution, the Governor is vested with the “supreme executive power” of the State of Florida, is the “commander-in-chief of all military forces of the state not in active service of the United States,” and is the “chief administrative officer of the state.” As such, I am the highest executive official in the State.
4. I am aware that this lawsuit challenges the constitutionality of the State’s enacted congressional district map under the Florida Constitution. I am further aware that the lawsuit claims that the map was enacted with an unconstitutional purpose and effect.
5. During this redistricting cycle, the Executive Office of the Governor proposed congressional district maps to the Florida Legislature for its consideration.

6. On March 29, 2022, I vetoed CS/SB 102, which was passed by the Florida Legislature and contained a primary and an alternate congressional district map. I set forth the reasons for my veto in the veto message to the Legislature and accompanying legal memorandum from my General Counsel.

7. On the same day, I also called a special session of the Florida Legislature for the “purpose of considering legislation relating to the establishment of congressional districts for the State of Florida and any legal challenges thereto, including the appropriation of additional funding for pending and prospective redistricting litigation.” March 29, 2022 Special Session Proclamation.

8. The Executive Office of the Governor proposed a new map for the special session. This map, which became SB 2C, included 10 districts that were taken directly from CS/SB 102 and 18 districts that improved upon CS/SB 102.

9. On April 19, 2022, my staff provided hours of exhaustive explanation about SB 2C to the Senate Committee on Reapportionment and the House Congressional Redistricting Subcommittee.

10. The Florida Legislature passed SB 2C on April 21, 2022, and on April 22, I signed it into law.

11. Throughout the redistricting process, I acted through or with the assistance of my staff. As such, any actions taken by me or the Executive Office of the Governor, including the reasons for such actions—whether proposing congressional district maps, exercising the veto power, calling a special session, or signing a new map into law—are not uniquely known to me. Members of the Executive Office of the Governor have the requisite personal knowledge of these actions and could answer any relevant deposition questions if such information cannot be obtained elsewhere.

12. Given the intensity of my duties and schedule, any deposition of me would be unduly burdensome and would unreasonably interfere with my responsibilities as the State’s chief executive.

This declaration is made pursuant to Florida Rule of Civil Procedure 1.280(h). I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct to the best of my current knowledge and belief.

Executed this 6th day of September, 2022.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R. DeSantis', is written above a horizontal line.

Ron DeSantis
Governor of Florida