

EXHIBIT 15

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF NORTH CAROLINA**

SHAUNA WILLIAMS, et al.,

Plaintiffs,

v.

REPRESENTATIVE DESTIN HALL, in his
official capacity as Chair of the House Standing
Committee on Redistricting, et al.,

Defendants.

Civil Action No. 23 CV 1057

NORTH CAROLINA STATE CONFERENCE OF
THE NAACP, et al.,

Plaintiffs,

v.

PHILIP BERGER, in his official capacity as the
President Pro Tempore of the North Carolina
Senate, et al.,

Defendants.

Civil Action No. 23 CV 1104

**LEGISLATIVE DEFENDANTS' OBJECTIONS AND RESPONSES TO WILLIAMS
PLAINTIFFS' FIRST SET OF INTERROGATORIES**

Defendants Representative Destin Hall, Senator Ralph Hise, Senator Paul Newton, Senator Warren Daniel, Speaker Timothy K. Moore, and President Pro Tempore Philip E. Berger, each in their official capacities (collectively, "Legislative Defendants"), by and through undersigned counsel and pursuant to Rules 26 and 33 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, serve their objections and responses to Plaintiff Shauna Williams' ("*Williams* Plaintiffs") First Set of Interrogatories as follows:

GENERAL OBJECTIONS AND RESERVATION OF RIGHTS

Legislative Defendants make the following answers, responses, and objections to *Williams* Plaintiffs' First Set of Interrogatories ("Interrogatories"). Each of the following responses is made subject to any and all objections as to competence, relevance, or other grounds that would require exclusion of such statements if made by a witness present and testifying in court. Any and all such objections and grounds are expressly reserved.

The responses are based on Legislative Defendants' present knowledge, information, and belief, as derived from: (a) the knowledge and information of present employees or agents of Legislative Defendants gained in their capacity as such, and (b) a review of the documents and materials maintained by Legislative Defendants that would be likely to contain the information called for by the Interrogatories. These responses are subject to amendment and supplementation as Legislative Defendants acquire additional information. Legislative Defendants state that their responses to the Interrogatories were prepared in consultation with their attorneys and may not exactly match the words or phrases that may be used by individuals in the courts of this litigation to describe events, policies, and practices discussed herein.

No incidental or implied admissions are intended by these responses. The fact that Legislative Defendants respond or object to any Interrogatories should not be taken as an admission that Legislative Defendants accept or admit to the existence of any facts assumed by such Interrogatories or that such response or objection constitutes admissible evidence as to any such assumed facts. The fact that Legislative Defendants respond to part or all of any Interrogatories is not intended to be and shall not be construed as a waiver by Legislative Defendants of any part of any objection to any Interrogatories. Legislative Defendants will respond to *Williams* Plaintiffs' Interrogatories in accordance with Rules 26 and 33 of the Federal Rules of

Civil Procedure and will not provide responses or documents to the extent such responses or production would exceed the requirements of those Rules.

Since the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure prohibit discovery of privileged materials, Legislative Defendants have interpreted each Interrogatory to call for discoverable matters only. To the extent any response or produced documents contain or refer to matters otherwise protected from discovery by the work product doctrine, the attorney-client privilege, legislative privilege, or any other applicable privilege, no waiver is intended, nor is any waiver intended as to any other matters that are or may be subject to such protection or otherwise privileged.

Interrogatory No. 1

Identify each iteration of each redistricting proposal, including any map, whether partial or complete, or in any other format, seeking the modification of any congressional district boundary from the boundaries used in the 2022 general election. Your answer should describe in detail all proposals that were publicly or privately considered or supported by any member of the General Assembly, including, but not limited to, present or past employees or staff or any other persons or entities acting at the direction of, or subject to the control of, any member of the General Assembly; and explain the reasons and/or justifications for any such support.

ANSWER: Legislative Defendants object on the grounds that this Interrogatory is vague and ambiguous. As written, it is unclear whether Plaintiffs seek Congressional plans drafted in 2022 in the remedial phase of *NCLCV v. Hall*, or subsequent modifications to the plans implemented by the court in that litigation. Legislative Defendants object to this Interrogatory on the grounds that it is overbroad, unduly burdensome, and not proportionate to the needs of the case because it may purport to seek discovery into a map that is not challenged in the present matter and was subject

to adjudication in a separate case. Legislative Defendants further object on the grounds that it is overbroad, and unduly burdensome in that it seeks all plans whether publicly or privately considered for all members of the General Assembly and staff, including those who are not parties to this litigation. As to the remedial plans drawn for the 2022 election, Legislative Defendants object on the grounds that members of the General Assembly did not draw the 2022 Congressional map, and as such, this request seeks information beyond Legislative Defendants' custody and control. Any maps considered or passed by the General Assembly during the remedial phase of *NCLCV v. Hall*, are publicly available online, and information regarding the same was made available to the public during that case. Likewise, drafts of the 2022 Congressional Plan are publicly available on the General Assembly's website, as is the 2023 Plan. As such, these materials are equally available to Plaintiffs. Legislative Defendants further object to this Interrogatory to the extent it calls for information covered by the attorney-client privilege, legislative privilege, or any other applicable privileges or protections.

Subject to and without waiving the foregoing objections Legislative Defendants refer Plaintiffs to the publicly available shapefiles of the 2022 and 2023 Congressional Plans found at: <https://www.ncleg.gov/redistricting/>. Legislative Defendants further refer Plaintiffs to the public case documents in *Harper v. Hall*, 384 N.C. 292, 886 S.E.2d 393 (2023), and all district court proceedings before that opinion found here: <https://www.nccourts.gov/locations/wake-county/cases-of-public-interest>. Legislative Defendants also direct Plaintiffs to drafts of both the 2022 and 2023 plans found here: <https://www.ncleg.gov/Committees/CommitteeInfo/SenateStanding/154>. To the extent, Plaintiffs are inquiring about drafts of the 2022 Plans, Legislative Defendants finally direct Plaintiffs to the

Special Masters in that matter, Bob Orr, Thomas Ross, and Bob Edmunds, who purportedly drew the 2022 Congressional plan with their “advisors.”

Interrogatory No. 2

Identify all individuals and/or entities—including but not limited to state legislators or their staffs, members of Congress or their staffs, consultants, attorneys, experts, political party entities or officials, and/or interest group agents or employees—that drew or provided input in the drawing of any iteration of the 2023 Congressional Plan, in whole or in part. Your answer should describe the nature and timing of each person’s involvement in the redistricting process, including the time, place, and attendees of each related meeting called and/or attended, whether virtual or in-person, and all related communications, including the subject matter discussed.

ANSWER: Legislative Defendants object to this Interrogatory on the grounds that it is vague and ambiguous as the phrase “provided input” is undefined and subject to multiple meanings and interpretations. Legislative Defendants further object on the grounds that the Interrogatory is overly broad, unduly burdensome, and not proportionate to the needs of the case. Legislative Defendants further object to this Interrogatory to the extent it calls for information covered by the attorney-client privilege, legislative privilege, or any other applicable privileges or protections.

Subject to and without waiving the foregoing objections, Legislative Defendants refer Plaintiffs to Legislative Defendants’ initial disclosures. Legislative Defendants further refer Plaintiffs to the publicly available legislative record, including the members of the Senate Committee on Redistricting and Elections. A list of members of the Senate Committee on Redistricting and Elections is publicly available here: <https://www.ncleg.gov/Committees/CommitteeInfo/SenateStanding/154>.

Interrogatory No. 3

Identify all factors (i.e. criteria, constraints, and considerations) that the General Assembly considered (including those factors that were considered and rejected) in creating or adopting any iteration of the 2023 Congressional Plan, in whole or in part, and describe how these factors were prioritized and for which iteration of the Plan.

ANSWER: Legislative Defendants object to this Interrogatory to the extent it calls for information covered by the attorney-client privilege, legislative privilege, or any other applicable privileges or protections. Legislative Defendants also object to this Interrogatory on the grounds that it is compound and contains at least two distinct subparts. Legislative Defendants further object to this Interrogatory to the extent that it seeks information that is publicly known and equally available to *Williams* Plaintiffs.

Subject to and without waiving the foregoing objections, Legislative Defendants respond that the joint redistricting criteria for the 2023 Congressional Plan is publicly available on the General Assembly's website, at: <https://webservices.ncleg.gov/ViewDocSiteFile/81643>. Additionally, these criteria were explained by Senators Hise and Daniel in a Senate Redistricting and Elections Committee meeting dated October 19, 2023, which is publicly available on the General Assembly's website at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IgR0A8u9KMI> and which has been transcribed and will be produced by Legislative Defendants in a forthcoming document production.

Interrogatory No. 4

For each factor identified in response to Interrogatory No. 3, describe in detail how the 2023 Congressional Plan serves that factor.

ANSWER: Legislative Defendants object to this Interrogatory to the extent it calls for information covered by the attorney-client privilege, legislative privilege, or any other applicable privileges or protections. Legislative Defendants also object to this Interrogatory to the extent that it seeks information that is publicly known and equally available to *Williams* Plaintiffs.

Subject to and without waiving the foregoing objections, Legislative Defendants direct *Williams* Plaintiffs to the answer to Interrogatory No. 3, above. These criteria and their related roles and considerations were explained by Senators Hise and Daniel in Senate Redistricting and Elections Committee meetings dated October 19, 2023 and October 23, 2023, both of which are publicly available on the General Assembly's website at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IgR0A8u9KMI> and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yQsX1OjHKxs>, respectively. Both of these documents have been transcribed and will be produced by Legislative Defendants in a forthcoming document production.

Interrogatory No. 5

Identify and describe any and all instructions provided to individuals or entities who drafted or were in any way involved in the drafting of any iteration of the 2023 Congressional Plan, including who drafted, provided, and/or conveyed those instructions.

ANSWER: Legislative Defendants object to this Interrogatory to the extent it calls for information covered by the attorney-client privilege, legislative privilege, or any other applicable privileges or protections. Legislative Defendants also object to this Interrogatory on the grounds that it is compound and contains distinct subparts. Legislative Defendants further object to this

Interrogatory to the extent that it seeks information that is publicly known and equally available to *Williams* Plaintiffs.

Subject to and without waiving the foregoing objections, Legislative Defendants respond that the joint redistricting criteria for the 2023 Congressional Plan, is publicly available on the General Assembly's website, at: <https://webservices.ncleg.gov/ViewDocSiteFile/81643>. All committee members, legislators, and the public were duly instructed to follow these criteria. Legislative Defendants further state that the 2023 Congressional Plan complies with these criteria as explained in Committee hearings and the legislative record.

This the 24th day of May, 2024.

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** Appeared via Special Notice*

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that the forgoing document was served by email on all counsel of record in this action.

This the 24th day of May, 2024.

**NELSON MULLINS RILEY &
SCARBOROUGH LLP**

/s/ Phillip J. Strach

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