

HILLSBOROUGH, SS
SOUTHERN DISTRICT

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

SUPERIOR COURT

No. 226-2022-CV-00181

MILES BROWN,
ELIZABETH CROOKER,
CHRISTINE FAJARDO,
KENT HACKMANN,
BILL HAY,
PRESCOTT HERZOG,
PALANA HUNT-HAWKINS,
MATT MOOSHIAN,
THERESA NORELLI,
NATALIE QUEVEDO, and
JAMES WARD

v.

DAVID M. SCANLAN,
in his official capacity as the New Hampshire Secretary of State

&

THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

JOINT OPPOSITION TO INTERLOCUTORY TRANSFER

The parties, by and through their respective counsel, jointly oppose an interlocutory transfer of this matter without ruling to the New Hampshire Supreme Court at this time, as proposed at the June 3, 2022 status conference. In support of their opposition to an interlocutory transfer, the parties state as follows:

1. The Plaintiffs bring partisan-gerrymandering challenges to the State Senate and Executive Council maps. The Plaintiffs have moved for a preliminary injunction, seeking relief in advance of the 2022 elections. The Defendants have objected to that motion on both legal and factual grounds. A hearing on the Plaintiffs' motion was scheduled for June 13, 2022.

2. The Court held a status conference on June 3. At the conference, the Court indicated its intent to approve an interlocutory transfer of the Plaintiffs' preliminary injunction motion, without ruling on it, to the New Hampshire Supreme Court under Superior Court Civil Rule 46 and Supreme Court Rule 9. Following the conference, the Court issued an order in which it directed the parties to file a joint proposed interlocutory transfer statement, or, failing that, separate proposed statements, by June 10. *See* June 3, 2022 Order at 1. The Court canceled the June 13 hearing, but indicated that “[s]hould the case not be accepted and/or remanded by the New Hampshire Supreme Court, by agreement of the parties, this Court will thereafter schedule a one (1) hour hearing on the plaintiff[s]’ request for preliminary injunction as expeditiously as the Court’s docket permits,” at which “[t]he parties will proceed by offers of proof.” *Id.*

3. The relevant court rules authorize interlocutory transfers of “question[s] of law.” Sup. Ct. R. 9(1); Sup. Ct. R. 46(a). Supreme Court Rule 9 requires that an interlocutory transfer statement include, among other things, “a statement of the facts necessary to an understanding of the controlling question of law as determined by the transferring trial court.” Sup. Ct. R. 9(1)(b). In resolving a transferred question of law, the New Hampshire Supreme Court “accept[s] the facts as presented in the interlocutory transfer statement” and considers any additional facts “for background only.” *Rankin v. S. St. Downtown Holdings, Inc.*, 172 N.H. 500, 502 (2019). The New Hampshire Supreme Court’s decisions contemplate that interlocutory transfers proceed on “undisputed” facts. *See, e.g., In re Teresa E. Craig Living Trust*, 171 N.H. 281, 282 (2018); *City of Manchester v. Secretary of State*, 163 N.H. 689, 707 (2012); *see also State v. Hess Corp.*, 161 N.H. 426, 440 (2011) (resolving transferred questions of law but leaving “a factual dispute . . . to the trial court to determine”).

4. The parties have conferred and now jointly agree that an interlocutory transfer without ruling is not appropriate at this juncture. The Plaintiffs' motion for a preliminary injunction presents mostly contested issues of fact not readily susceptible to interlocutory transfer without ruling. While the Defendants' argument that the claims presented in this case are not justiciable is a question of law, the New Hampshire Supreme Court is unlikely to render an expedited decision on that issue over the summer months. Thus, in the parties' view, any attempt at an interlocutory transfer without ruling at this stage would not resolve the Plaintiffs' motion for preliminary injunction prior to the 2022 elections and would likely not be accepted by the New Hampshire Supreme Court.

5. Even if the New Hampshire Supreme Court did rule on the legal question, a ruling that this case is justiciable would simply result in a remand back to this Court, further delaying and jeopardizing the chance for a resolution of the Plaintiffs' motion for preliminary injunction prior to the 2022 elections. The interests of efficiency further weigh against this type of piecemeal review by the New Hampshire Supreme Court.

6. The parties have significant, albeit different, interests in having the Plaintiffs' motion for preliminary injunction resolved in a timely manner, and they agree that the best procedural path for reaching resolution is through this Court in the first instance.

7. Accordingly, the parties jointly request that this Court decline to order an interlocutory transfer statement and instead resolve the Plaintiffs' motion for a preliminary injunction.

WHEREFORE, the parties jointly respectfully request that this Honorable Court:

- A. Decline to order an interlocutory transfer at present;
- B. Schedule a hearing on the Plaintiffs' motion for a preliminary injunction as soon as the Court's calendar permits; and
- C. Grant such further relief as the Court deems just and equitable.

Respectfully submitted,

DAVID SCANLAN, SECRETARY OF STATE

By his attorneys,

JOHN M. FORMELLA
ATTORNEY GENERAL

Date: June 10, 2022

/s/ Myles B. Matteson

Myles B. Matteson, Bar #268059
Assistant Attorney General
Matthew G. Conley, Bar #268032
Attorney
New Hampshire Department of Justice
33 Capitol Street
Concord, NH 03301-6397
(603) 271-3658
myles.b.matteson@doj.nh.gov
matthew.g.conley@doj.nh.gov

and

THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

By its attorneys,

JOHN M. FORMELLA
ATTORNEY GENERAL

Date: June 10, 2022

/s/ Samuel Garland
Samuel R.V. Garland, Bar #266273
Senior Assistant Attorney General
Brendan Avery O'Donnell, Bar #268037
Attorney
New Hampshire Department of Justice
33 Capitol Street
Concord, NH 03301-6397
(603) 271-3658
samuel.rv.garland@doj.nh.gov
brendan.a.odonnell@doj.nh.gov

and

MILES BROWN, ELIZABETH CROOKER,
CHRISTINE FAJARDO, KENT HACKMANN,
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JAMES WARD

By their attorneys,

Date: June 10, 2022

/s/ Steven Dutton
Steven J. Dutton, NH Bar No. 17101
steven.dutton@mclane.com
McLANE MIDDLETON, P.A.
900 Elm Street
Manchester, New Hampshire 03101
Telephone: (603) 628-1377

Paul Twomey, NH Bar No. 2589
paultwomey@comcast.net
P.O. Box 623
Epsom, New Hampshire 03234
Telephone: (603) 568-3254

Abha Khanna*
akhanna@elias.law
Jonathan P. Hawley*
jhawley@elias.law
ELIAS LAW GROUP LLP
1700 Seventh Avenue, Suite 2100
Seattle, Washington 98101
Telephone: (206) 656-0177

Daniel C. Osher*
dosher@elias.law
Aaron M. Mukerjee*
amukerjee@elias.law
ELIAS LAW GROUP LLP
10 G Street NE, Suite 600
Washington, D.C. 20002
Telephone: (202) 968-4654

John M. Devaney*
jdevaney@perkinscoie.com
PERKINS COIE LLP
700 Thirteenth Street NW, Suite 800
Washington, D.C. 20005
Telephone: (202) 654-6200

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that a copy of the foregoing was served on all counsel of record through the Court's electronic-filing system.

/s/ Samuel Garland

Samuel Garland