

## THE DISENFRANCHISEMENT LIE

**Disenfranchise:** to deprive (a person) of the right to vote or other rights of citizenship.

In a last minute, hurry up before we lose our majority special meeting, the JCC Republicans on the Board of Supervisors are proposing to end staggered terms, suggesting that it will eliminate disenfranchisement. It does not and here's why:

You see, the disenfranchised voters are the ones redistricted to a district for which they had no say, no vote in who represents them. They have been moved from the district they voted in to one they did not.

The disenfranchisement only occurs after redistricting. No voter is disenfranchised for 6 years as Mr. Kennedy among others would lead you to believe. By the Republicans scheme, if any voter is disenfranchised for six years, then every voter is disenfranchised for four. In fact, voters that are disenfranchised are disenfranchised for 2 years regardless of if our 4 year terms are staggered or coincide. This can most easily be summarized as 4 plus 4 does not equal 10, but 4 times 5 does equal 20.

With the current 4 year staggered terms, two districts (Jamestown / Powhatan) face disenfranchised voters following the census in odd 10s (2010, 2030, 2050, 2070, 2090) where the remaining 3 districts (Stonehouse / Berkeley / Roberts) face disenfranchised voters following census in even 10s (2020, 2040, 2060, 2080, 2100). Every district will disenfranchise some voters at some point in a staggered manner.

With Mr. Kennedy's proposal of concurrent terms, all five districts will face disenfranchised voters in 2021. This is a far cry from what Mr. Kennedy and the Republican counterparts are trying to sell you. This has been pointed out to them repeatedly and they refuse to acknowledge these facts and to retract their false statements. The only way to eliminate disenfranchisement is to move to at large representative and/or two year terms.

If this issue is so urgent that it requires a special meeting five days before Christmas, then why are the Republicans putting off alignment of terms until 2015 instead of implementing it in 2013? Could it be because both Ms. Jones and Mr. Kennedy (as well as Mr. McGlennon) would have to cut short their recent 4 year appointments? By pushing the alignment back to 2015, Mr. Icenhour, the real target of this exercise, may be forced to run three times in the next four years. Considering the obvious bad blood between Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Icenhour, any reasonable person might ask whether spite, disguised as concern for the voters, is the real motive at work here.

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