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THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS *of New York State*

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League of Women Voters of New York State Hails New York Court of Appeals Decision Invalidating Congressional and State Senate Redistricting Maps for Failing to Follow the Constitutionally Mandated Process Adopted by the People of New York in 2014

(Albany, New York – April 27, 2022) The League of Women Voters of New York State hailed the historic decision issued by the New York Court of Appeals today invalidating the Congressional and State Senate redistricting maps approved by the Legislature as “procedurally unconstitutional”. The sweeping majority opinion by Chief Judge DiFiore confirms the critical role of the Independent Redistricting Commission as part of the “historic reforms of the redistricting process” included in the 2014 Constitutional amendment. The Court ordered the New York Supreme Court, with the assistance of a neutral special master and input from relevant parties, to draw new constitutional maps “with all due haste.” The Court acknowledged this will likely result in a delay in the primaries from June to August.

In its decision, the Court concluded, “We decline to render the constitutional IRC process inconsequential in the manner requested by the State respondents, a result that would “violat[e] ... the plain intent of the Constitution and ... disregard [the] spirit and the purpose” of the 2014 constitutional amendments.”

Laura Ladd Bierman, Executive Director of the League, stated: “This decision represents a great victory for the People of New York, who approved a Constitutional amendment that significantly altered both substantive standards governing redistricting and, most importantly, the redistricting process to achieve those standards by sharply curtailing the Legislature’s power over redistricting. The Court agreed with our amicus curiae brief that the Legislature’s adoption of redistricting maps after the failure of the IRC to submit a second set of maps violated the constitution, and that the necessary remedy for such a violation required the Judiciary, not the Legislature, to draw constitutional maps. The League is grateful for the assistance of Holwell Shuster and Goldberg for their pro bono assistance in this matter.”

The League of Women Voters of New York State, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. See amicus brief filed with the Court of Appeals at <https://lwvny.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/LWV-CoA-Amicus-Letter-Brief-Final-042422.pdf>.