

Remarks made by Peter Bolac, Legislative Liaison, NC State Bar before the NC House Judicial Redistricting Committee on Sept. 19, 2017

(starts at 43:45)

My name is Peter Bolac and I am the Legislative Liaison for the North Carolina State Bar. On behalf of State Bar President, Mark Merritt, and the rest of the North Carolina State Bar Council, I'd like to thank Chairman Burr and this committee for allowing us to speak today.

The State Bar, the agency created by the legislature in 1933, exists to regulate the legal profession for the protection of the public. We do not generally advocate on political issues, funding issues, or judicial issues that fall outside of our regulatory responsibilities listed in Chapter 84 of the general statutes. Advocacy on these issues on behalf of the legal profession is best left to individual lawyers, trade associations, and voluntary bars. Consequently, we take no position on any particular proposal in front of you today.

However, the State Bar does have an interest in this process. Most directly, the State Bar Council, our governing body, is comprised of volunteer lawyers elected by their peers from each prosecutorial district across the state. Revisions to the prosecutorial districts will, therefore, impact our Council and our local judicial district bars, and we stand prepared to quickly and efficiently adapt to any changes.

One of the purposes for the State Bar, as stated in the State Bar's administrative rules, is the facilitation of the administration of justice. With this purpose in mind, the State Bar urges this committee to keep the effective administration of justice for the citizens of this state as your primary goal when considering proposed revisions to the district maps. We would urge that you be respectful of historical geographical boundaries in making your decisions and not split up counties in the creation of districts. We would also urge that voting on this matter be held over to the next session to allow all stakeholders time to review and provide input on these important decisions.

This committee faces a difficult task, made even more difficult by the uneven geographic distribution of citizens and lawyers across the state. The State Bar has provided information regarding the geographic distribution of active lawyers in North Carolina and stands ready to provide any additional help or material this committee may need. Thank you for your time and I'm always happy to answer any questions.

SOURCE: NC State Bar website, retrieved Sept. 22, 2017

<https://www.ncbar.gov/news-and-publications/news-notices/2017/09/remarks-to-house-select-committee-on-judicial-redistricting/#.WcVUVLpBg6c.mailto>