

JL:SRB:gaw
DJ 166-012-3

Mr. J. Edward Smith
Smith and Allen
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111 S. Pearl Street
P. O. Box 387
Carthage, Mississippi 39051

State of Mississippi
Department of Justice
P. O. Box 71
Jackson, Mississippi
By

Dear Mr. Smith:

This is in reference to the Proposed Redistricting Plan which was submitted to the Attorney General by you on behalf of Leake County, Mississippi, as required by Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

I have reviewed the proposed changes and, while I understand the complexities involved in a reapportionment such as this, on behalf of the Attorney General I feel constrained to object to the implementation of this submission. The available demographic information shows that the Negro majority in the existing District 3 has been changed to a white majority in the proposed District 3. Our study also has persuaded me that there are alternative means of redistricting which would probably not have this effect. Therefore, we cannot conclude that this redistricting plan has no racial purpose or effect. However, should you wish to submit an alternative plan of redistricting, the Attorney General will give it prompt and careful consideration.

Of course, as provided by Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act, you have the alternative of instituting an action in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia seeking a judgment declaring that this present submission does not have the purpose and will not have the effect of denying or abridging the right to vote on account of race or color.

Sincerely,

JERRIS LEONARD
Assistant Attorney General
Civil Rights Division