

AUG 9 1973

Mr. William O. Semmes  
Attorney for the  
Board of Supervisors  
Grenada County  
Post Office Box 567  
116 Green Street  
Grenada, Mississippi 38901

Dear Mr. Semmes:

This is in reference to the redistricting plan for Grenada County, submitted by you to the Attorney General pursuant to Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 on May 7, 1973, and the additional information submitted on June 14, 1973.

After a careful examination of the information you have furnished and a review of all the facts available, I find that portions of the boundary lines for districts 2, 3, 4 and 5 of the reapportionment plan are drawn in a manner which unnecessarily fragments two cognizable black neighborhoods in the City of Grenada, thus diluting or minimizing the voting strength of blacks. Our analysis also shows that this effect could be substantially corrected by modifying only a few sections of the boundary lines.

In view of these circumstances and a study of related judicial decisions in this area, White v. Register, 41 U.S.L.W. 4885 (1973); Whitcomb v. Chavis, 403 U.S. 124, 143 (1972); Forteen v. Dorsey, 379 U.S. 433 (1965); Burns v. Richardson, 384 U.S. 73 (1966); Sims v. Amos, 330 F. Supp. 924 (M.D. Ala. 1972), I cannot conclude as I must under the Voting Rights Act of 1965, that the redistricting plan does not have the purpose or effect of abridging the right to vote on account of race. Therefore, I must, on behalf of the Attorney General, interpose an objection to the Grenada County reapportionment plan.

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 declaratory judgment that the 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,

J. STANLEY POTTINGER  
Assistant Attorney General  
Civil Rights Division