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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

August 30, 2011

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**U.S. HELSINKI COMMISSION**

The Honorable Chris Herren  
Chief, Voting Section  
U.S. Department of Justice  
Civil Rights Division  
Room 7253 – NWB  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Voting Section, NWB  
Washington, DC 20530

Re: City of Goldsboro Submission Dated August 12, 2011 Under Section 5 of the  
Voting Rights Act Concerning Deannexation Refrendum – File # 2011-3117

Dear Mr. Herren:

I write to express my concern about the deannexation referendum mandated by North Carolina Session Law 2011-177. The City of Goldsboro has communicated with you and provided background information about this local bill in its letter dated August 12, 2011.

I have several concerns about this mandated referendum. First, the annexation of Phase XI as part of the City of Goldsboro was completed three years ago. The potential deannexation of Phase XI now will may harm the whole City of Goldsboro as well as have discriminatory effects on voters. I am informed that Goldsboro has spent millions of dollars in planning and implementing the Phase XI annexation. Thus, the deannexation of Phase XI would leave the remaining residents of Goldsboro with a substantial financial loss.

Second, Goldsboro is a majority-minority community in terms of its racial composition. According to the 2010 census, 60 percent of the Goldsboro residents are minorities. Under the local bill enacted, most of Goldsboro's residents will not be allowed to submit petitions as part of the deannexation referendum. Rather, only owners of real property within Phase XI will be allowed to submit petitions. Since the residents of Phase XI are 84 percent white, it is likely that the large majority of the landowners are white as well. Hence, most of the voters throughout Goldsboro, including the majority of minority voters, will be adversely impacted because they are not allowed to participate in the referendum.

DISTRICT OFFICES

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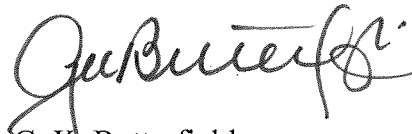
Third, minority voters in Phase XI are currently part of the majority in the whole City of Goldsboro. If the deannexation occurs, they will lose their right to participate in voting in the City of Goldsboro.

Finally, the deannexation referendum allows only landowners in Phase XI to submit petitions. A number of these landowners are either corporations or nonresidents of the City of Goldsboro. Allowing corporations and nonresidents to participate in the deannexation referendum, while at the same time denying the right to vote in the deannexation referendum to most residents in the City of Goldsboro, adversely effects racial minorities and denies equal protection to the Goldsboro residents.

Due to the above concerns, I request that you review the submission by the City of Goldsboro under Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act carefully so that the purposes of the Act are achieved. If there is additional information that my office can provide to be of assistance, please contact me at your earliest convenience.

Thank you very much.

Very truly yours,



G. K. Butterfield  
Member of Congress

Cc: Mr. Lawrence Mack (*via email* [vote1973c@usdoj.gov](mailto:vote1973c@usdoj.gov))