

Office of the Governor
State of Louisiana



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June 29, 2023

VIA HAND DELIVERY

Honorable Clay J. Schexnayder
Speaker of the House
Louisiana House of Representatives
Post Office Box 94062
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804-9062

RECEIVED
JUN 30 2023
Rw
4:14pm
House of Representatives
Clerk's Office

RE: Veto of House Bill 661 of the 2023 Regular Session

Dear Speaker Schexnayder:

Please be advised that I have vetoed House Bill 661 of the Regular Session of 2023.

This bill would have implemented several changes to the statute that outlines the role and responsibilities of the Judicial Council, specifically adding language regarding the elimination of judgeships. In last year's redistricting session, the legislature failed to approve new maps for judicial districts, while passing a fundamentally unfair and unrepresentative congressional map. I cannot in good conscience sign legislation into law whose language, without the Legislature intending it, could be twisted to promote further disenfranchisement and reduce the representation of one third of the citizenry of Louisiana in the future.

Further, this bill also contains a costly provision that would mandate that clerks of court throughout the state submit detailed reports to the Judicial Council and adopt uniform standards for filing and reporting when the Supreme Court adopts those standards. Though there has been money dedicated for the Council's administration of a new Court Modernization and Technology Fund, these funds are insufficient to finance the potentially burdensome investments in technology that compliance with this bill would require from the clerks of court, resulting in an unfunded mandate.

For these reasons, I have vetoed House Bill 661 and returned it to the House.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Bel Edwards".

John Bel Edwards
Governor

enclosure

cc: Honorable Patrick Page Cortez
Louisiana Senate President