LOUISIANA LEGISLATIVE BLACK CAUCUS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACT:
Katina Semien Smothers, Esq.
Executive Director – Louisiana Legislative Black Caucus
SmothersK@legis.la.gov/ 225-342-7342

August 14, 2025

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

** LOUISIANA LEGISLATIVE BLACK CAUCUS APPLAUDS FIFTH CIRCUIT'S DECISION UPHOLDING VOTING RIGHTS IN LOUISIANA**

Baton Rouge, LA – The Louisiana Legislative Black Caucus (LLBC) commends today's decision by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit affirming the district court's ruling in Nairne v. Landry that Louisiana's state legislative maps violate Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The court agreed that the maps dilute the voting power of Black Louisianians by unfairly dividing communities into state districts with the goal of reducing a group's voting power, otherwise known as packing and cracking, denying them an equal opportunity to elect candidates of their choice.

The ruling affirms the outcome of a multiple day trial in 2023, where expert witnesses, data analysis, and firsthand accounts from Black voters across Louisiana exposed the discriminatory effect of the current maps and their impact in places like Shreveport, Baton Rouge, and Natchitoches.

"The court's decision is a victory and confirms what communities across Louisiana have long known: the current maps unlawfully dilute the voting power of Black Louisianans and fail to provide fair and equitable representation", said **Representative Edmond Jordan (D-29), Chairman of the Louisiana Legislative Black Caucus**. "This ruling affirms the fundamental principle that every citizen's voice and vote must carry equal weight, regardless of race. Further the courts have made it clear: the voices of Black Louisianans cannot be

silenced or minimized through discriminatory maps. We urge the legislature and the Governor to act swiftly to adopt maps that meet both the letter and spirit of the law."

The LLBC has consistently called for district maps that comply with federal law and uphold the promise of equal representation enshrined in the Voting Rights Act. The Fifth Circuit's decision marks a significant step forward in ensuring that the legislature reflects the diversity and values of the people it serves.

"This is not just about lines on a map—it's about power, fairness, and the right to be heard," said **Katina Semien Smothers, Esq, the Executive Director of the LLBC**. "We will continue to fight until every resident has a fair opportunity to elect representatives who truly reflect their communities."

The LLBC remains committed to working alongside advocates, community leaders, and legal experts to ensure that the next set of legislative maps honors the rights of all Louisianans.

A link to the court's ruling can be found here:

https://assets.aclu.org/live/uploads/2025/08/Nairne-Appeal-Win-8.14.25.pdf

About the Louisiana Legislative Black Caucus

The Louisiana Legislative Black Caucus (LLBC) is committed to promoting, protecting and raising the quality of life for African Americans, the indigent and working people in Louisiana through legislation, education, action, advocacy, and economic development. The Caucus works to ensure equal access to political representation, economic opportunity, and social justice for all residents of the state.