Remap plan places 3 incumbents in one district

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Black elected officials have drawn up a reapportionment plan that deals with just the seven city districts and would lump three incumbents into one district.

The Metro Council, which was supposed to look at the plan devised by the Black Elected Officials Association and other plans, canceled its Wednesday afternoon meeting because of flooding problems prevalent in the parish.

The plan also sets up one district — the proposed sixth district — which would be in three separate, non-contiguous chunks.

That might be questioned by the U.S. Justice Department, which generally favors plans which have all precincts in a district contiguous.

Under the plan, Councilmen Gary Bergeron, V.M. "Lank" Corsentino and Bert Peabody would all fall into the proposed district two and leave two districts without incumbents.

The plan was drawn up last week but not submitted until Wednesday. It becomes the fourth plan submitted and joins plans by Councilmen Don Ayres and Corsentino.

State Rep. Joe Delpt, chairman of the group's reapportionment committee, said earlier this week that the black plan would address only the seven City Council seats.

The group has already told the Justice Department that it objects to the consolidated Metro Council form of government as a dilution of black voting strength.

Delpt told the council last month that blacks favor three city council seats on a split city and parish council government to four predominantly black districts in a 12-member consolidated government.

The rationale is that by wielding one white vote, the blacks can block any city-only matter and that amounts to about 75 percent of the budget.

Having four blacks on a 12-member body would give them only one-third of the votes and would requiring swaying more

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