

Name: Debbie Cooper

Contact: dltcooper@gmail.com

Date and location of the meeting: August 12, 2021 -- Overland Park

Mr. Chair, members of the Committee;

My Name is Debbie Cooper and my husband, and I have just recently retired back to the Shawnee Mission area. I grew up in this area and left at the age of 20 for 13 years. I returned in 1990, met my husband and gave birth to my three children. We love this area, what it has to offer, and the opportunities provided, so we decided to retire in Shawnee Mission.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to share my thoughts and views on what I feel is of value to everyone in Kansas. I recognize that I need to be direct due to time constraints, so I am keeping this brief.

We enjoy the different cuisines/restaurants, and the variety of private and diverse enterprises! We value the upkeep of streets and neighborhoods! The response to the needs of community when trees have fallen and block roads, when 10 inches of snow need to be cleared, the creek/rain overflow improvements and the pathways for walking throughout neighborhoods and districts was important to our relocation decision. The upkeep and number of city and neighborhood parks is extraordinary. Until you live outside Kansas City area it is impossible to value what our parks and walking trails offer to this area's quality of life. We enjoy everything from the variety of Farmer Markets, shopping options, sports venues, and easy, direct ways to get from one end of the city to the other.

Celebrating diversity was another reason for our relocation to this area. We were so proud and impressed when Johnson and Wyandotte County elected Sharice Davids to Congress. This is one of the most diverse districts in the state. Recently, relatives have relocated to the area and when researching grade schools they saw pockets of diverse communities. What impressed them was the academic success of every school, regardless of their diverse make up. It is important that we accept diversity and continue to provide the opportunity for everyone to succeed.

I respectfully want to express concern that by scheduling 10 of 14 hearings during the day, you risk excluding everyone who works a fulltime job with daytime hours. This is a majority of people. You are certainly not giving them the opportunity to express themselves. You are also compressing these hearings into one week, furthering the reduction of people who can participate. Why is this? Do you not want to hear from constituents? Another note of concern is that these hearings are occurring before you have the census data. Everyone, including yourselves and your constituents, should be able to study the results of the census and then evaluate any redistricting needed. Because Kansas will maintain its 4 congressional seats, there are minimal changes needed to the current congressional map.

A decade ago, hearings were spread over 4 months and only 2 hearings occurred before the complete data census was made available. For the public to trust this process, any redistricting

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should be done in an open, fair, and transparent manner with the entire public having the opportunity for input.

We appreciate your consideration of the above.