

Fwd: Written Testimony for the August 12: Matt Ross Community Center hearings

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To:Redistricting <Redistricting@KLRD.ks.gov>;

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To whom it may concern,

The following testimony is being submitted as Written Only for the Matt Ross Community Center meeting Location.on August 12th.

To the Kansas House and Senate Redistricting Committee members, on behalf of myself, my family, and my friends I would like to present the following statement:

If these redistricting activities can be shown to be based on ensuring the fair representation of All Kansas Citizens, and are made in response to population shifts reflected in Kansas Census Data, then I will have minimal complaints on the results of the redistricting. However, indications are that this simple expectation will not be met.

Well preceding these meetings - Susan Wagel has made comments (reflected here: <https://kansasreflector.com/2020/10/09/senate-president-susan-wagle-embraces-gerrymandering-to-benefit-gop-in-kansas/>) that redistricting should be done to *favor the election of Republicans* and I am unconvinced that such an intent does not still exist.

The accelerated pace of 'these' hearings, and the limited hearings held outside of normal working hours, appear to bear out the intent to limit citizen input and ramrod a decision on boundaries in order to favor the GOP. Such actions may be politically expedient, and perhaps even "legal", but it is contrary to the principles on which our country was founded. Yes, the GOP has a super majority in Kansas - but that does not mean that the GOP should be shameless to the extent of drafting boundaries that *guarantee* the continuation of that majority. This would be equivalent to allowing a leading football team to draft rules that they can always start on the 50 yard line whereas their competition must continue to start on the 20 yard line (if not the 15 or 10). If such rules were permitted in Football it would be patently obvious to all fans that fairness no longer matters in the game, nor does winning reflect the superior skills of the players - and such would be the same here if boundaries are not decided based on fair representation but rather on what best serves a single political party.

I implore the committee members to take your responsibilities seriously and pursue a non-partisan approach to redistricting. The GOP may still 'win' subsequent elections based on fair boundaries - but winning based on attracting voters via good ideas and good governance is far more meritorious than winning by skewing the rules. If winning at all costs is what drives your decisions - then I know my words here will have been wasted. But I hope that is not the case.

Sincerely,

Daniel R. Barbour,
Overland Park, KS