

Written-only Testimony for Thursday, August 12, 2021 in Overland Park

From: LOUISE LLOYD

To: The Joint House and Senate Committees on Redistricting
Re: Fair & Equitable Representation in Kansas

Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to supply testimony in support of transparent and fair redistricting.

Since Kansas will maintain its four Congressional Districts based on the census, I feel that the Congressional Districts should ideally remain close to their current boundaries. The courts helped ensure that the boundaries were created fairly after the last census, so it would seem that there should not be major legal issues from the courts questioning the methodology if boundaries are generally left alone overall.

It is so critical that the creation of fair district maps be completely open and fair process. Since statements by KS Senate President Susan Wagle and other top GOP Kansas legislators advocating for political gerrymandering became widely publicized, it is extremely important that the process be open and fair to gain trust in the process and to reflect well on the process in Kansas.

Congressional districts should be both as compact and contiguous as possible. This allows citizens to more easily meet with their Representative, attend town halls etc., and also saves the Representative valuable time in traveling to meetings within their districts when not in Washington D.C. Also, saves money in expense such as gasoline expenses, hotels, etc. when does not have to traverse many miles across a state within a district.

And any plans under consideration for redistricting should help ensure that minority communities are not unfairly impacted.

Without detailed 2020 Census data, I cannot make suggestions about the composition of fair districts at this time. No one, including yourselves, has had an opportunity to see detailed Census results and identify what changes are required to maintain equality of population in our districts. I urge the committee to hold additional town halls after census data is available and Kansans can review that data and offer input. I would encourage that those meetings be accessible, available online, and announced with enough time to foster engagement.

Current Congressional and Legislative maps were created by the courts and should, as possible, be altered as little as necessary to fulfill reapportionment shifts. The Kansas City Metro is currently whole within Kansas' Third congressional district and should remain in a single district as residents have shared interests in representation.

I appreciate the opportunity to submit comments at this time, and sincerely hope that the Kansas Legislature will ensure that the creation of fair district maps in Kansas will be done through a completely open and fair process.

Respectfully,

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