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

From: Sheilah Philip

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.

I am asking that fairness to ALL citizens be your guide as you consider re-drawing district voting maps.

I am a moderate. It is very important to me that my fellow citizens on both sides of the political spectrum have equal representation in terms of their elected officials and their voting rights. Gerrymandering to secure votes for one side or another is, in my opinion, one of the most divisive actions and extremely dangerous to our precious democracy. If you are a patriots, if you believe in democracy, then you must understand that fairness to all is should be the foundation of what you do. Democracy is about the will of the people, not about how one party or the other should maintain power. I urge you to look deep into yourself and recognize that people don't like gerrymandering.

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.

Please quit making decisions based on your desire for power. Power belongs to the people, and you must respect that.

Respectfully,

Sheilah Philip

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