

Written testimony for August 12 redistricting Town Hall  
@ Matt Ross and/or KCKCC

Please consider all of Johnson & Wyandotte counties as one “community of interest” in redistricting for the US Congress. We are obviously “contiguous” and also “compact,” given our population density. We are one in so many ways--a part of the greater KC--in transportation, shopping, some utilities & large and small business services, radio & TV stations and other entertainment. Our population density, unlike any area this size in Kansas, means we share views on quality of life and community, that are often alike and different than most of the state.

While I live in Johnson county now, I lived 5&1/2 years in Wyandotte and have worked there the majority of my careers. From my home in small Roeland Park I drive down County Line for over half of my trips out. I take walks and get my hair cut on the Wyandotte side of it. When I go west on I-35, I go through Wyandotte. Even in this past year, I volunteer in Overland Park & Merriam, as well a Roeland Park & KCK. My doctors & hospital are in KCK and have other sites in both counties including Overland Park, Prairie Village, Shawnee and Westwood. I know the Roeland Park core of stores (Price Choppers, Aldi, Walmart, Lowes) are major-portion of Wyandotte shoppers, while I shop at Strasser’s Hardware in KCKs. Friends in RP use both the Argentine and Jo Co libraries.

At least one town -Lake Quivira- even straddles the county line.

The intermodal center in south JoCo serves metro commerce, as do the railroad hubs in KCKs with the light industry surrounding part of them in KC.

If WyCo is split into districts, it most likely will result in discrimination against the urban poor and people of color, who need better, not less representation. Also, if Johnson is split, urban dwellers will be underrepresented in Washington,D.C. as they already are with the favoring of rural areas via 2 Senators per state.

We have a history of sharing a congressional district. Roeland Park will probably show an increase in minority population, which ties it closer to KCKs.

I may attend a hearing and stay, if the venue you have chosen appears to follow CDC masking and distancing guidelines. Otherwise, it seems to me you intended to discourage participation of voters, as you did with the short notice and list of sites for these hearings. How far ahead will you post the next round of Town Hall meetings? Will they require masking and distancing and/or be transparently available on-line, to err on the side of caution--not illness hospitalization and death?

Why were the town halls scheduled before we have census figures and guidelines.

I ask committee leaders especially and members to be more transparent, fair, and democracy promoting.

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