

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

From: Oliver Becker

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.

The redistricting is legislated by constitutional law and all efforts should be tailored to ensure all aspects of the process should represent fair and unbiased results that represents the area regardless of race, gender, financial considerations or political affiliation.

As a life long resident of Kansas living in both rural and metropolitan communities I understand the needs vary. Populations density while a driving force behind finding a level playing field has to be portioned to ensure all voices are heard with out bias.

Senator Susan Waggles recent comments about making sure certain districts are realigned to favor the Republican Party are a gross misrepresentation of the process. Its called gerrymandering and has no place in politics yet it still exists.

I have served in Senate District 9 as a precinct leader and have a reasonable understanding of what the process should be and these short notice announcements by legislators who are seeking input is disrespectful of all of the constituents they represent and in no way can be linked to open and honest input.

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.

All census data input needs to be open and fair to all of the voters or citizens of who are being represented by this process with no hidden agendas. If these cannot be completed by your committee the it needs to turned over to a non legislative body.

I would like to thank the committee for considering and reviewing these comments.

Respectfully,

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