

Aug 11, 2021

Dear KLRD,

My name is E.J. Whitney Wilson. I am a registered voter in Johnson County, Kansas yet, my Great-great-grandfather and Great-great-grandmother on my Father's side immigrated to the United States and settled in Strawberry Hill a couple of blocks behind today's Slaps BBQ, and my Grandmother, Mother, Aunts, and Uncle grew up in the Argentine neighborhood in Wyandotte County. Wyandotte and Johnson counties are culturally intertwined partially because they are neighboring counties.

From a basic infrastructure perspective both counties share energy through BPU, we share our drinking water source, the Missouri River, and we also share comprehensive healthcare from KU Medical Center. Wyandotte families go to Johnson County parks, Johnson County families go to Wyandotte for events like the American Royal BBQ cook-off and Sporting KC soccer games.

As the committee might be aware, our state faces a climate crisis. I serve on the engagement committee of a compact of elected officials across the Kansas City area focused on creating a resilient Kansas City. A regional climate action plan to mitigate the effects of the climate crisis was established this year. The plan shows that regional climate issues across Johnson County and Wyandotte county are largely the same. As such, we are not working on sustainability of our counties via invisible lines.

That said, the needs of the third district are different than the needs of the first, and second districts. The Wyandotte & Johnson counties (third district) deserve to have representation that supports their respective needs. All Kansans deserve to have fair representation.

This redistricting committee does not have the latest census data in hand to be able to make decisions and yet these hearings are taking place. The end goal of these actions, gerrymandering, is obvious. Broadly, Americans are tired of attempts to gerrymander regardless of party affiliation. We all want fair representation. I ask that the committee do the right thing and follow the census districting protocols in a fair, unbiased fashion. Please wait to make decisions on district lines until you have had an opportunity to study the latest census data and can apply decisions fairly.

Sincerely,

E.J. Whitney Wilson
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