

TESTIMONY FOR THE JOINT MEETINGS OF HOUSE AND SENATE REDISTRICTING COMMITTEES

THURSDAY, AUGUST 12, AFTERNOON SESSION, MATT ROSS COMMUNITY CENTER, OVERLAND PARK

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Please consider this submission for both written and oral presentation.

To be brief: Please do not gerrymander.

Conservative leadership is on record proclaiming that this is their intent. Draw political boundaries which promote the creation of a one party state.

This violates any concept of fairness and further abuses the goal of one-person-one-vote. These issues are to be exhaustively debated during the litigation which will inevitably follow overly partisan redistricting. Therefore, today please focus upon the economic consequences of destroying the current Third Congressional District.

Johnson County, the heart of that district, is a main spring of the Kansas economy. Though it only holds 20% of the state's population, it consistently provides 30% of economic activity and tax revenue – revenue which in part subsidizes the rest of the state. This performance is based upon moderate leadership that makes wise public investments while exercising sound fiscal policy. Consequently, the county, its cities and its schools are consistently recognized as among the best in the nation. And, it retains a gold-plated bond rating.

Contrast the Johnson County approach with state-level policies of the recent past. They looted trust funds, neglected infrastructure investment and crippled other public functions. Taxes were cut in an inequitable manner in tandem with this disinvestment. The result of this 'conservative approach': the state's bond rating cratered. The numbers are there for all to see. This is fact - not opinion.

By maintaining a Third Congressional District that reflects its citizens' moderate approach to government, this economic engine of Kansas can continue to responsibly invest and thrive. At the federal level, the district offers the only voice in favor of badly needed public investments. No other member of the Kansas Congressional delegation voted in favor of the bipartisan infrastructure bill. The entire state benefits from having at least one voice on the side of the national majority.

In conclusion, please don't gerrymander. Please do not kill this Golden Goose.

Thanks for your consideration.