

Testimony on Redistricting

**Amii N. Castle**  
**amiicastle@yahoo.com**

**Douglas County Town Hall**  
**April 13, 2021**  
**University of Kansas School of Business**

This is the written and oral testimony of Amii N. Castle ([amiicastle@yahoo.com](mailto:amiicastle@yahoo.com)), proponent for transparent and fair redistricting to the Joint House and Senate Committees on Redistricting. Douglas County Town Hall, April 13, 2021, University of Kansas School of Business.

I would first like to thank the Committee for holding public town halls on the issue of redistricting in Kansas. With that said, I would like to point out the problematic issues associated with these town halls.

Foremost, we shouldn't even be here today. The Redistricting Committee should utilize and consider the 2020 Census, the initial results of which were released only two days ago. The data showed that the white population declined for the first time in history last decade, with significant increases among people who identify as multi-racial, Hispanic and Asian. In other words, we have become more diverse, and redistricting should fairly reflect that diversity.

I am utterly perplexed how the Committee intends to equitably redraw our district lines without appropriate time to review and analyze pertinent and important information about our state's changing population. Moreover, by September 30, the Census Bureau will release data to state officials that includes a toolkit of DVDs and flash drives to assist states in analyzing the data.

I urge the Committee to postpone consideration of and public hearings on redistricting until the Census Bureau has released all the data related to the 2020 census. In fairly redrawing new districts, the Committee should strive to avoid redistricting that has the purpose or effect of diluting minority voting strength. The Committee should also recognize communities of interest and ensure that the new districts are easily identifiable and understandable to voters. The Committee can't accomplish these goals without carefully and meticulously reviewing and analyzing the underlying data from the Census Bureau.

In addition to lacking relevant census data, the Committee announced these town halls with very little notice and scheduled the hearings during the workday, when many people cannot attend. And one hour and fifteen minutes hardly seems enough time to fully hear and consider testimony from your constituents on redistricting.

My hope is that the Committee realizes the unnecessary haste with which it has acted. Redistricting is not a race, and no one gets a prize for crossing the finish line first. Rather, redistricting profoundly affects the political power of every Kansan, and the process should be fair, transparent and methodical. The Committee should alter course by waiting for the Census

Bureau to release all its data and commit to holding additional town halls after the Census has provided that data—data the Committee should be considering in redrawing our new districts.

s/ Amii n. Castle