

Written-only Testimony for Friday, August 13, 2021 in Lawrence

From: Daphne Johnston

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.

I appreciate the opportunity to offer voter input & that you have made an online format available for this inclusion. I am concerned that this is requested via poorly publicized town halls within such a short time frame, during a vulnerable time when the Delta COVID virus is ramping up statewide via open town hall meetings, especially since the state government restricts mask mandates or vaccination passports. I encourage you to do whatever you can to make this an equitable and informed decision, that includes voter input.

I am a member of a unique community in Kansas, established in values of fairness, equity & inclusiveness. The Lawrence US Congressional district should not be divided as it currently is, separating our district into factions and reducing the strength of our united vote for representation.

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.

Please don't end up in the courts again for this decision. I don't believe our feedback can be completely informed as the 2020 Census data is not yet available & hope the committee will offer additional opportunities in the future, so that this critical information can be included in our input & your decision making.

Respectfully,

Daphne Johnston

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