

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

From: Brenna Hipsher

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 am asking for a fair redistricting of Kansas.

Even before I was old enough to vote, I remember seeing news stories about how far partisan state legislatures across the country would go to redistrict their states to give themselves the most votes, such as in Maryland and Texas. However, Kansas does not have to be among those cases. The state has an opportunity to redraw the district map based on population, not by party affiliation. This will give residents of every corner of Kansas, no matter their party affiliation or lack thereof, has an equal opportunity to make their voice heard in elections for both the Federal and State legislatures. This will lead to greater trust in the state government, and assure voters that their voice does matter and will not be drowned out simply because of where they live.

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.

I am once again asking for fair redistricting for the state of Kansas in order to make elections more fair for every voter in the state. Thank you to the committee for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Brenna Hipsher

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