

Written Testimony for Garden City, Kansas, August 10, 2021

From: Jimmy Beard

To: The Joint House and Senate Committees on Redistricting

Chairmen Croft and Wilborn, Vice Chairs Ralph and Masterson, Ranking Minority Members Burroughs and Sykes, and committee members,

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to offer testimony in support of a fair and open process that represents the interests of all Kansans.

I am grateful that the House and Senate committees on redistricting are hosting town hall meetings across the state to listen about what matters to each community. To hear what makes the Big First the Big First. However, I must provide written testimony because as a teacher I am uncomfortable missing the first full day of school for this session. The committees' schedule allows for 14 town halls over 5 days, whereas ten years ago those meetings were spread over four months. Furthermore, without accurate 2020 Census data, that is not yet available, it is not possible for you or me or anyone to make any recommendations about changes to district borders.

Secondly, I hope this is not a controversial statement, it is fundamental that a congressional district represent a community of interest. The people of Southwest Kansas deserve elected officials who are dedicated to the interests of Southwest Kansas and the people of Wyandotte and Johnson Counties deserve elected officials who represent the interests of Wyandotte and Johnson Counties. We presently have borders that largely represent this ideal, and in fact if changes are needed to be made to adjust for population it should be possible to handle that by joining counties split across two congressional districts.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony, to call for a fair and open redistricting process that does not take into account partisan considerations.

Respectfully,
Jimmy Beard

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