

Written-only Testimony for Wednesday, August 11, 2021 in Chanute

From: Alana Cloutier

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.

Thank you for holding these meetings, and for the opportunity to submit testimony. This is a busy week for many of us, so being able to submit this online is a big help.

My name is Alana Cloutier, and I live in Humboldt, which is a town of about 2,000 people in Allen County. I am submitting this testimony for the meeting in Chanute, which is the next town south of where I live. My husband Paul and I have lived here for 4 years, and though he is a Kansan, I am a transplant from California, so this is my first redistricting process here in Kansas. Having read up on it, normally this is where I would have opinions on the potential maps for my district. Since the maps don't yet exist, and as these meetings are happening before we have all seen the results of the 2020 census, I can only speculate.

Since I haven't seen any maps of my own district, I'll briefly address the rumors of a map that carves off urban Wyandotte County from Johnson County and the rest of CD3, and puts it instead in the mostly rural CD1. Besides how different the needs are for Wyandotte County vs the rest of CD1, I checked the driving distance on Google Maps for a candidate or elected official who wanted to do an event or a town hall in both Kansas City, KS, and Goodland, and it's 405 miles. A district with pieces that far flung serves neither, and certainly fails the goal of a compact, contiguous district. The only possible reason for a district that inconvenient a shape is partisan gerrymandering. I reject any attempts to alter district lines to favor one party over the other, and my general worry about this process is that we're in for another round of what we had after the 2010 census. Engaged citizens like myself do not know what the guidelines are for drawing these new district lines, once the census numbers are in, and that is worrying.

My other issue is that the last time redistricting happened these town halls were scheduled over 4 months. The current schedule seems almost designed to limit participation from the public in this process, and I've seen a lot of frustration from friends who are working parents about the scheduling, as they were announced at the last minute, the majority are during working hours, none are on a weekend, and all have been scheduled in a short 5 day period.

Current Congressional and Legislative maps were created by the courts and should, as possible, be altered as little as necessary to fulfill reapportionment shifts.

I hope the committee keeps their promise to schedule at least a second round of meetings this fall, preferably over a longer period of time, with more notice, and scheduled so that more people can attend.

Thank you for your time, and thank you for scheduling this meeting in the evening.

Respectfully,

Alana Cloutier

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