

Written TESTIMONY for Thursday, August 12, 2021 in Overland Park

From Doug Peel

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[Matt Ross Community Center 8101 Marty Street, Overland Park KS 66204]

Members of the House and Senate Redistricting Committees:

My name is Doug Peel, I have been a long-term resident of old Overland Park for decades. I am very proud of my community for all it offers including, but not limited to its safety, public services, schools, wide variety of retail stores and restaurants, parks and recreation, events, and inclusiveness.

I have witnessed my city after several decades grow, develop, and attract diverse groups of people. The amount and types of public services continue to develop and improve, most of which I use on a regular basis and have provided feedback / testimony in the past to local officials of Johnson County such as proposed bus route changes, feedback on the Overland Park Farmers Market, and what improvements I think are necessary for the countywide recycling program.

Redistricting has to be representative of the community. Every vote in my city matters and a map should be drawn in a fair, unbiased, and nonpartisan matter to stop disenfranchising local communities, particularly those of different ethnic, racial, or socioeconomic status, in favor of a select group of individuals who do not represent them or their values. For example, some elected

county officials have attempted to cut bus routes in the past without input from the people who used the bus service prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

I urge you to listen and consider input from all the people in our state, who want elected officials to represent them and be engaged in community level interests untainted by partisan politics. The planned "Listening Tour" has been rushed with few opportunities for the majority to provide testimony for an informed decision. To have a meeting on short notice that ends at 3:00 PM in one of the largest and one of the most affluent cities in Kansas does Johnson County residents a disservice by not providing enough time for input on proposed changes which is anti-democratic. I want to keep my city in the top ten best cities to live in, and I do not want to see statewide partisan politics or a select few tarnish that reputation for the rest of my city and county.

Thank you for your time.

Doug Peel

Overland Park resident