

**Written-only Testimony for Thursday, August 12, 2021 in Overland Park**

**From: Melvin Marsh**

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.

The legislature needs to be fair and transparent in any redistricting map. Gerrymandering is unethical and should not be a tool used by either party in redrawing districts.

I have lived in the KC metro area for 50 years, all of these years a resident of Johnson and/or Wyandotte Counties. Wyandotte County and Johnson County are part of the metro area and in no way should they be split up in redistricting. Residents of both counties may work or attend school in one county and live in another. County lines are non-existent when residents shop, go to movies, attend concerts and go out to eat. I live in Mission and the Price Chopper in Roeland Park has more customers from Wyandotte County than Johnson.

And I frequently shop at the Legends or Menards in KCK. I worked for years as a probation and parole officer in both counties and saw firsthand that the lives and livelihood of residents in both counties are intertwined more than any other district in KS. Both counties have substantial immigrant populations and work hand in hand to provide adequate services for this population and the residents in general.

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 closing it be would be against the fairness that should be inherent in redistricting to move or split either county to a different district. They are joined together economically, socially and politically and should remain in the same district. Thank you for your time.

Mel Marsh

Respectfully,

Melvin Marsh

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