



NEWS FROM THE CAPITOL

Sydney Carlin

State Representative 66th District

Room 451-S, State Capitol
Topeka, Kansas 66612
785-296-7657

1650 Sunny Slope Lane
Manhattan, Kansas 66502
785-539-6612

March 7, 2012

Honorable members of the House Redistricting Committee,

I am pleased to stand before you today to offer testimony in support of the Riley County/Manhattan position in the Second Congressional District.

Riley County is very diverse with the majority of the population in the city of Manhattan. The northern part of the county is based in agriculture, while Manhattan has a more urban population of over 50,000. This population growth has come quickly and has stretched our urban footprint and stressed our infrastructure with a need for rapid development of educational opportunities, housing, highways, air transportation and retail. Now we are large enough to qualify for funding under various federal guidelines, and no longer qualify for the many USDA Rural Initiatives that are available to cities and counties in the First District. Members of Congress can't focus on every kind of interest. Lumping Manhattan into a district with vastly different needs and concerns would cause competition between vastly different communities for the time and energy of one representative.

Keeping Riley County in the Second District

Many businesses have developed in and around our Industrial Park which is inside the city limits of Manhattan and in Pottawatomie County. As a result, we share several major employers, a tax base, and retail shopping. Because we have citizens of Manhattan living and working in Pottawatomie County we have shared services of our health department, children's issues, school districts and regional medical services. We have done extensive regional planning with Pottawatomie county leaders and businesses and are linked by the city, the development of four lane highways and major air transportation services.

NBAF

As the National Bio-Agridefense Facility (NBAF) is under construction at this time, an animal health science corridor has been developing over the past ten years, with new business growth from Riley County east to Wamego, Topeka, Lawrence, Kansas City and Columbia, Mo. Our Congressional Delegations, many business and other entities have been working together for the economic development of this important region. There is a compelling reason to keep all these counties in the same congressional

district, served by one Congressional Representative who can focus on the needs of these counties and businesses with a strong understanding of the area.

Military Bases:

Being next door to Ft Riley the community embraces the needs of the soldiers and their families and provides opportunities for housing, education, and employment. Having Ft Riley and Ft Leavenworth represented in the Second District is important. Kansas State University has a close educational and masters program with the Command College at Ft. Leavenworth and provides graduate and post graduate education to members of the military stationed at Ft. Riley. Having one Congressional Representative serving interests of Ft Riley, Forbes and Ft. Leavenworth provides a stronger voice at the federal level, and they have been well represented by the Second District Congresswomen and men in the past.

Higher Education:

We currently have KSU, KU, and Washburn in the Second District. We believe that there is great strength in keeping these institutions in the same district especially when dealing with federal and state funding for education and research. Members of our communities are interested in issues surrounding education, Pell Grants, science based research grants, construction of new facilities, bridges, highways, airport runways and control towers.

One Congressional representative can't focus on everything! We need to keep people with like interests and needs together to focus and plan together to better serve the state of Kansas. It is our hope that this committee will look very carefully before splitting counties that have strong alliances and economic interests.

Manhattan Riley County has a lot of issues that require time and energy from our congressional representative our plans focus on keeping up with the growth and development that is underway. Wherever we are we will require attention from our delegate. With only 10% of the district's population, we're too heavy for the huge land area of the First District. We would throw things out of balance like a heavy weight put at the end of a teeter totter. The District's Congressional office would be in the largest city – Manhattan - too far from the western part of Kansas to be accessible to its citizens.

The first District could become more isolated as the population shift is weighted to the east. The region of Manhattan and the I-70 corridor would have a disproportionate influence on the needs of the existing First District. Putting this huge growing population influx in the second district would make more sense to the representation of rural Kansans in the First District as well.

I will stand for questions.

Rep. Sydney Carlin, 66th District Kansas House