

***Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission
January 12, 2021 Meeting Public Comment***

Date of Submission: Tuesday, January 12, 2021 9:23AM
Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>
Name: David Shapero
Subject: Redistricting Thoughts

Presumably these ideas are common knowledge to all involved in the process.

If not, please consider.

My thoughts are based on a review of 3 major goals, and a summary of the means of implementation for what I propose to be the most advantageous of the 3.

Potential Districting Goals

A) Maintain equal representation

Advantage: "Fairness"

Problem: Outcomes potentially determined by whims or weather.

B) Consolidate majorities

Advantage: Democracy depends on the will of the majority

Problem: Disenfranchised minorities

C) Seek geographical, cultural, and economic commonality/interdependence

Advantage: Avoiding the problems of A and B

Problem: Complex application

Means of Implementation

C) Districting

$331 \text{ million} \div 435 = 760,920$

Michigan population est. 2020

10,300,000

$\div 760,920$

= 13.5

13 or 14 districts

The aim is to create mostly contiguous districts, centered in population centers, which share cultural and economic bonds, despite possible political diversity, and cooperate locally on infrastructure, education, and welfare. Natural majorities may exist, and will be empowered.

As a counterweight to the urban majorities, large areas of minimal non-urban population will be assembled outside the urban districts, mirroring the same goals, empowering non-urban residents to advocate for shared interests, across party lines.

For example: a 7/6 or 7/7 split, 7 districts based on population centers, working from the center outward, and 6 or 7 working from the outside in.

Your feedback welcome.

David Shapero
Southfield, Michigan

Date of Submission: Monday, January 11, 2021

Method of Submission: SurveyMonkey ICRC Committee Meetings 1/12 – Public Comment Submission Form

Name: Mary Ann Alliston

Written Public Comment:

I am opposed to allowing guns and weapons of any kind inside the State Capitol – and on the grounds of the State Capitol. As you can clearly see from the violence in our Nation’s Capitol on January 6, 2021, the immediate dangers of weapons and guns in public settings are insurmountable.

No one should have to go to work fearing for their lives, or that they will become targets of deranged individuals following conspiracy theories and false rhetoric. No one should have to crouch behind their chairs or under their desks because those individuals are intent on destruction and murder. No one should have to call their loved ones from their workplace and tell them where there will be and say “goodbye” as if they may not ever see them again. No one should have to be fearful of doing their jobs for ALL their constituents – yes, even those insurgents who stormed the Nation’s Capitol last week are constituents somewhere.

Do the right thing and ban all guns, weapons, and illegal armor from our State’s Capitol, because, after all – you are also working there, you will also be targets (do you think the insurgents in those crowds would have taken the time to look up someone’s Facebook page to see if they were on the “right side” or “wrong side” in the heat of their insanity??), and you could – unwittingly – be a casualty of a similar action in the State of Michigan.

Sincerely,

Mary Ann Alliston
Grand Rapids, MI

Date of Submission: Sunday, January 10, 2021

Method of Submission: SurveyMonkey ICRC Committee Meetings 1/12 – Public Comment Submission Form

Name: Anthony Offak

Written Public Comment:

Dear commissioners,

First I would like to thank you all for the public service that you are partaking in.

Hopefully others will echo my comments in that I look forward to the results. Hopefully the plans will be fairly laid with NO GERRYMANDING. Hopefully you will take the time and care for you to use objective boundaries such as county lines, major highways, rivers and lakes, and city boundaries. I understand that

political groups will always try to do what it takes to stay in power, but you should aim to try to keep boundaries based for local representation instead.

Thank you again.

Sincerely

Anthony Offak

Date of Submission: Monday, January 11, 2021 9:59AM

Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>

Name: Mary Ann Alliston

Subject: Ban of Guns and Weapons of Any Kind at the State Capitol

I am opposed to allowing guns and weapons of any kind inside the State Capitol – and on the grounds of the State Capitol. As you can clearly see from the violence in our Nation’s Capitol on January 6, 2021, the immediate dangers of weapons and guns in public settings are insurmountable.

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Do the right thing and ban all guns, weapons, and illegal armor from our State’s Capitol, because, after all – you are also working there, you will also be targets (do you think the insurgents in those crowds would have taken the time to look up someone’s Facebook page to see if they were on the “right side” or “wrong side” in the heat of their insaneness??), and you could – unwittingly – be a casualty of a similar action in the State of Michigan.

Sincerely,

Mary Ann Alliston

Grand Rapids, MI

Date of Submission: Monday, January 11, 2021 9:00AM

Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>

Name: Ruth Ziel

Subject: Comment on January 7th meeting

Greetings. I attended by Zoom this meeting and paid close attention to the discussion on the candidates for the outreach position. My comments stem from my involvement with VNP to help pass Prop 2 and

then prop 3. For me this was nearly a full time job for over a year. My stomping grounds was the U.P. I canvassed areas that I normally would not frequent. What I discovered was neither do politicians nor those running for political office. These communities have been excluded from the process for decades.

While district maps do identify voting districts for representation in state house and senate races as well as congressional house races, the criteria for developing the district maps should be devoid of political party affiliation avoiding partisanship. An outreach person should be that person who can move into communities learning what holds communities together, common needs, encouraging representation not perpetuating differences and under representation. This person should help the commission be seen as inclusive and yet be able to gain an audience in our diverse communities. I would think being bilingual or having success working in Native communities might be HUGE. I believe the commission must be very careful who it hires or this process will be doomed from the start. May I suggest rank choice voting for this outreach person among the commissioners. Sometimes the first tier candidates are the most well known leading to the exclusion of second tier candidates who might actually be a better fit. Rank choice voting encourages consensus as it will allow the commission to identify and select the most favorable candidate over all.

Lastly but most importantly I wish to thank the commissioners for coming together to do this job. I was impressed at the level of commitment to actually hear each other and work together.

Ruth Ziel

Date of Submission: Sunday, January 10, 2021 9:48PM
Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>
Name: Michael Stanley
Subject: Recommendation: Walter Sorg

I encourage the ICRC to select Walter Sorg for Communications Director. I have no personal relationship with Mr. Sorg. Rather, I think there is inherent value in carrying forward to the ICRC the ethos of the organization that worked so hard to get the Constitutional amendment passed and the ICRC created.

Mike Stanley

[REDACTED]

Date of Submission: Sunday, January 10, 2021 9:26PM
Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>
Name: Susan K. Hoppough
Subject: Redistricting Question

Thank you for your work. I am concerned for the future and attempts from the GOP to gerrymander again. What restrictions and rules are in place to prevent gerrymandering in the future?

Dr. Susan Hoppough

Sent from my iPhone

Date of Submission: Saturday, January 9, 2021 1:19PM
Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>
Name: Ron Howell
Subject: Meeting Procedure Feedback

Dear Chair & Commission Members:

As a feedback note I think my email was acknowledged by the Chair at the beginning of the (1/7) meeting but I was not sure my communication was received. As more and more citizens communicate some formal acknowledgement or list of communications received (for the record) should be an action of the Commission or referring to a recorded list so the person could see their comments were received. I realize that once things get rolling there is no way you can acknowledge each individual communication. However if there is not a formal agenda item that covers this a member of the commission who wants to comment on a communication does not have an easy way to bring this up and a bit of transparency is lost.

I do have to note a small area of concern. If I heard the action correctly the Chair modified a contract document between the ICRC and the new legal counsel without a board vote. I realize the group is just getting organized and this a very small item by changing a date by just one day but there are people and groups who will look for anything to stop or delay the new districts.

I am going to continue to work on my HS project and I'm sure I will be using the work of the ICRC. Isn't this great to see Michigan history being made!!

Ron M. Howell
Cedar Springs

Date of Submission: Friday, January 8, 2021 3:48PM
Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>
Name: Jamie Lyons-Eddy
Subject: Comment about conflict of interest

To Michigan's Redistricting Commissioners:

As one of the founding members of Voters Not Politicians who (as a volunteer myself) organized volunteers to collect over 425,000 signatures to get Proposal 2 on the ballot, it was a thrill to watch your meeting yesterday. Thank you all so much, not just for your service to all of us in the state of Michigan, but also for your dedication to fairness and democracy. It's amazing to me that the work of thousands of volunteers led to this, and it's heartening that the random selection produced such a thoughtful group of commissioners.

I'd like to comment on the conflict of interest issues that were discussed during the meeting. I absolutely agree that any employee of the commission must have the ability to be impartial. VNP worked hard to develop a policy that would remove partisan bias from the redistricting process. In fact, it was the entire

point of the constitutional amendment. While it's challenging to find professionals who have no partisan affiliation, public confidence in the commission requires that the commission is balanced and that its employees are as unbiased as possible.

However, I don't understand why any prior association with Voters Not Politicians presents a conflict of interest. Should the founding fathers have been disqualified from serving in government because they wrote the constitution? Obviously I don't mean to compare any of us who worked with VNP to the founding fathers, but the point is that we do not have a conflict simply by virtue of working to establish independent redistricting in our state. In fact, it's just the opposite. No one could be more invested in the success of the commission, and in truly fair maps for Michigan, than the more than 6,000 volunteers across the state who spent two years working so hard to make it happen.

Thank you for considering my views. I look forward to witnessing the historic work you will do to bring fairness, impartiality, and transparency to our redistricting process!

Jamie Lyons-Eddy

Robert Burns

[REDACTED]
East Lansing, Michigan 48823
[REDACTED]

January 11, 2021

Suann Hammersmith
Executive Director
Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission
Richard H. Austin Building
430 W. Allegan
Lansing, MI 48918

Dear Ms. Hammersmith,

I am pleased to provide my strong recommendation for my colleague and friend, Edward Woods III, for the position of Communications and Outreach Director for Michigan's Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission.

As the former Director of Government Affairs at the Michigan Department of Management and Budget, I had the great opportunity to collaborate with Edward on many vital communications, policy, and legislative initiatives. I witnessed Edward's leadership and skill as he led the department's communications team on internal and external communications, legislative newsletters, department budget presentations, and special projects. Edward conveyed the department's priorities, ran the Governor's Buy Michigan First statewide campaign, and organized the department's Public Purchasing Conference. Legislators, from both sides of the aisle, appreciated Edward's ability to provide relevant content that they could share with their constituents. Edward was also able to demonstrate how the department's budget met each legislator's priorities.

Edward established outstanding relationships with the media, including reporters and assignment editors. He knew their morning meeting schedule and provided compelling press materials to obtain coverage for upcoming or current events. As a small department, this paid dividends in establishing our reputation as being effective and efficient with state resources. Edward was able to communicate challenging topics clearly, earning the trust of reporters.

Edward has impeccable character, honesty, and work ethic. He commands the respect of people of differing political opinions. It was clear at the Department Director meetings and Senior Staff Meetings that Edward also had the respect of his peers.

Edward's expertise and experience in communications, outreach, collaboration, and engagement make him an ideal fit for the Communications and Outreach Director position. After all these years, I still find myself consulting with Edward on communication issues and value his perspective.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at: [REDACTED]

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]
Robert Burns

January 11, 2021

Suann Hammersmith, MNM, CFRE, CSA
Executive Director
Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission

Dear Ms. Hammersmith,

It is my pleasure to recommend Edward Woods III for Communications and Outreach Director for Michigan's Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission. Based on my experience working with Edward over the past decade in several different professional capacities, I believe he is exceptionally well suited to excel in this unique and important position.

During his time with the Michigan Society of Association Executives (MSAE), Edward proved himself to be committed to meaningfully engaging all voices and skillful in project management. He worked diligently to ensure that the diverse perspectives of members were heard and reflected in the association's programs and communications. One example of this was the redesign of the Academy of Association Management, which resulted in higher member engagement and satisfaction levels. Edward led this initiative - assessing member needs, identifying and recruiting subject matter experts as faculty, and cultivating a faculty community of practice to encourage best practices and improve instruction.

In recent years, Edward was recruited to serve as faculty to instruct on several topics including Professional Development and Leadership, Diversity, and Inclusion. In this role, his public speaking and teaching skills were in the spotlight and garnered rave reviews from participants. Just last month, I personally sat in on his class on Leadership, Diversity, and Inclusion. Edward's thoughtful approach and careful planning allowed him to engage participants in a very sensitive topic and create shared meaning. I was impressed!

I hope this has given you at least some insight into the caliber of candidate you have in Edward Woods as he is an ideal fit for this important role. Please do not hesitate to contact me at [REDACTED] if may be of further assistance.

Thank you for the critical work you are doing for Michigan's citizens!

Sincerely,
Regards,

[REDACTED]

Donna Oser, CAE
President & CEO

January 12, 2021

Suann Hammersmith
Executive Director
Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission

Dear Ms. Hammersmith,

I am pleased to provide a reference for Edward Woods III, candidate for the Communications and Outreach Director position for the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission.

In working with Edward at the Michigan Society of Association Executives (MSAE), I witnessed firsthand his integrity to ensure both sides of the issues are covered at the annual Legislative and Public Policy Conference. From the Affordable Care Act to Opioid Crisis to Michigan's Quadrant Leaders and Media Pundits, Edward executed the wishes of the Legislative and Public Policy Conference Committee to ensure bi-partisan participation and thought-provoking engagement.

As the senior staff lead for the Legislative and Public Policy Conference, Edward's knack in writing the promotional materials for media (traditional, social, and targeted marketing), event planning, fundraising, technology, and spokesperson ensured a quality and must attend event for association professionals. In fact, MSAE's Legislative and Public Policy Conference was deemed a premiere event that other associations made it their own, i.e., Michigan Osteopathic Association.

Lastly, Edward was integral in bringing together diverse groups of individuals, businesses and associations to not only to discuss critical matters that were before our great state of Michigan but to communicate our thoughts well with one another. He took pride in listening to everyone's ideas, thoughts and concerns and made certain everyone's voice was heard. Edward's communication skills are top notch.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at [REDACTED]

Sincerely

Bonnie Bochniak

January 12, 2021

Suann Hammersmith
Executive Director
Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission

Dear Ms. Hammersmith,

I thank you for the opportunity to provide a reference for Edward Woods III, a candidate for the Communications and Outreach Director position for Michigan's Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission.

As a television reporter in Lansing and Grand Rapids, I have had the occasion to work with Edward in his role as the Communications Director for the Michigan Department of Management and Budget and the Michigan Department of Human Services. He always exhibited integrity and professionalism in representing the department and its leaders, even in times of crisis. I appreciated the informative local media kits that accompanied each statewide media campaign, i.e., the Poverty Summit and Myths About Welfare. These media kits included subject matter experts, testimonials, and data regarding the topics. There was no question that Edward and his team were well-prepared and ensured people stayed on message.

From time to time, I consulted with Edward to obtain background on upcoming stories or to generate new and relevant stories to cover. Edward and his team readily provided timely assistance to meet press deadlines. For the Upper Peninsula and Northern Michigan, Edward established a file transfer protocol site to ensure they could get raw footage and broadcast quality press events to make a statewide story local in nature.

Over the past two decades in the business, I have worked with many communications professionals. Edward is, by far, one that stands out. He works diligently to cultivate and maintain productive relationships with media professionals. He maintains a strong command of knowledge about the agencies he represents and potential topics of inquiry. He is a tenacious advocate for those agencies and their respective missions.

I first noticed Edward's skill when he was with Michigan's Department of Management and Budget. It was during the early stages of the "Great Recession." Media demand on his office was intense, to say the least. Edward was always responsive to media requests and routinely equipped journalists, including myself, with necessary information, and when possible, access to the director or other department personnel. He made sure all parties were prepared and clear on what would be discussed during those interviews, thereby maximizing time and effectiveness.

Edward Woods III is unique in his ability to be both facilitator and leader, simultaneously. I cannot recommend him strongly enough. You would be lucky to have him.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any additional questions or would like to further discuss Edward's capabilities. I can be reached at [REDACTED]

Respectfully,

Angela Cunningham