

**Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission**  
**March 30, 2021 Meeting Public Comment**

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**Date of Submission:** Friday, March 26, 2021 7:53PM  
**Method of Submission:** Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>  
**Name:** JA Hollister  
**Subject:** Townhall Meeting Request

Michigan Independent Citizen's Redistricting Commission

I am interested in redistricting. Please schedule some townhall meetings in rural Michigan. I live in Cass County-lower western county. We are a poorer county, but we love our country.

Also, one of the 16 or so meetings you plan is scheduled for Benton Harbor, Michigan. That is right on Lake Michigan. Can you please relocate that more to the center of the counties to attract a more diverse attention.

Thank you,  
Judy Hollister

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**Date of Submission:** Thursday, March 25, 2021 4:03PM  
**Method of Submission:** Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>  
**Name:** d p  
**Subject:** hearing time

Hello-

I just completed watching the meeting today (3/25), and this email is to voice my disappointment with your decision regarding the times, or shall I say time for hearings. It seemed the majority of the commissioners were more concerned with their own personal preferences, rather than the needs of the people they chose to serve in this state. It seems the single evening time slot was chosen because it is convenient for commissioners, NOT citizens. While it may be an acceptable time slot for middle class individuals who work 9-5 jobs, it is inaccessible for individuals who work evening shifts, seniors, or individuals who rely on public transportation.

One of your most important duties is to listen to us, and for those watching today, the majority of you made it sound like it is a huge undue burden. I hope that you can find it in your hearts to remember why you decided to serve on the Commission, and work towards making hearings accessible to everyone. Yes, the unknown of how long they will take may be scary, but please, roll with it, and consider adding a morning time slot. The more accessible you are, the easier this will be on everyone. That said, thank you for the hard work you are doing.

Debbie Pond  
Cheboygan

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**Date of Submission:** Thursday, March 25, 2021 3:23PM  
**Method of Submission:** Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>  
**Name:** Karen Pratt  
**Subject:** Redistricting Commission – competitive districts

Attached are additional comments of a Michigan voter, to be provided to each of the Commissioners and made a part of the public record. Please confirm that you have received my comments and provided them to the Commissioners.

Wayne F. Pratt  
[REDACTED]  
Grosse Pointe Park, MI 48230

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**Date of Submission:** Thursday, March 25, 2021 1:29PM  
**Method of Submission:** Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>  
**Name:** Marcia Koppa  
**Subject:** On Alternative to Gaylord Public Hearing Location

Dear Mr. Woods,

I have been observing the commissioners' meetings on line and wanted to give you a heads up on a possible alternative location for the Gaylord May 4th meeting. Just south of Grayling and north of the convergence of I-75 and M27 is Kirtland Community College. It has a state-of-the-art A/V system in its public meeting rooms. I can't give you any specifics but it might be worth it for you to check it out.

<https://www.kirtland.edu/grayling/>

Tim Chilcote is the communications person there, perhaps he could assist you.  
tim.chilcote@kirtland.edu

Marcia Koppa  
League of Women Voters - Crawford County Unit

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**Date of Submission:** Thursday, March 25, 2021 1:06PM  
**Method of Submission:** Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>  
**Name:** Mary Jo DuRivage  
**Subject:** Disappointed in decision on times

If you are going to go to one, then start at 4:00

Mary Jo Durivage

[REDACTED]

Dearborn MI 48124

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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**Date of Submission:** Thursday, March 25, 2021 12:54PM  
**Method of Submission:** Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>  
**Name:** Mary Jo DuRivage  
**Subject:** Public Hearing Times

Hello

You have a communications person who has made a recommendation.

I like his – allow for interviews etc. in between.

If you do only one time,

Begin at 4:00

Mary Jo Durivage

[REDACTED]

Dearborn MI 48124

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



**I implore this Commission to consider and disclose the competitiveness of districts in all proposed plans.**

This commission hired an expert firm with demonstrated competence in determining the competitiveness of districts. As I indicated in my earlier statement to this Commission, I believe you should adopt plans that create the most 50/50 districts possible. But before you adopt any set of plans, you must publish them for comment. The comment period will be useless if the plans do not include your expert's best estimate of the competitive nature (D vs. R) of each district.

Releasing proposed plans that simply show the shapes of the districts on a map of Michigan would not allow for intelligent public comment. This Commission should disclose the expected Democratic/Republican split in each proposed district. And that Democratic/Republican split should be a sophisticated analysis, not simply how the presidential votes were cast in the 2020 general election. Your expert knows how to do this. They should be directed to do this. That information should be shared with the Commission, and then with the general public, before comments are allowed.

If the Commission creates neat, compact districts that guarantee one party will have majority control over the house or senate, even if the other party obtains a majority of the overall votes for the house or senate, that would be a profoundly

unfair result. It would be an abject failure of this Commission to avoid the undemocratic evils of a gerrymander. The relevant facts about the competitiveness of each district should be disclosed to the public and allowed to be the subject of public comment before this Commission adopts a plan.

Thank you for your serious efforts to timely complete this difficult task.

## MAXIMIZE THE NUMBER OF COMPETITIVE DISTRICTS

In carrying out its constitutional obligation to “not provide a disproportionate advantage to any political party,” this Commission should intentionally draw as many **competitive** districts as possible. By competitive, I mean districts with an equal percentage of voters who would vote for a generic Republican candidate and a generic Democratic candidate. One could refer to these districts as 50/50 districts, except with third party supporters, these districts might actually be 49/49 districts or 48/48 districts.

Maximizing the number of competitive districts destroys two evils of gerrymandering. One result of gerrymandering is that a party with a minority of the voters may elect a majority of the representatives, or a party with a small majority of voters may elect a super- majority of the representatives. An even worse result of gerrymandering is that most districts are simply not competitive. Gerrymandering “packs” a few districts with 80% to 90% of the voters of one party, and most of the rest of the districts are drawn with about 55% to 45% of voters in favor of the controlling party. Since none of the districts are intended to be competitive, the election results in each district are well known before Election Day. If you district is not competitive, **your vote does not matter.**

I am fearful that this Commission will create many non-competitive districts by simply drawing boxes on the map with equal sized populations. If the

Commission does not explicitly consider the partisan split in each district, it will unintentionally draw the same type of districts that exist under a gerrymander. Some geographic areas are strongly Democratic and others are strongly Republican. If the Commission simply follows city and county lines, it will pack Democrats into non-competitive urban districts and Republicans into non-competitive rural districts. This would be a disaster for the voters of this State, and for the redistricting process.

I urge this Commission to obtain the party affiliation data necessary to create as many competitive or balanced districts as possible. **This will be a difficult task.** It will probably require looking at precinct-level voting patterns over a number of years. I urge the Commission to vote that creating competitively balanced districts is a priority, and a plan for obtaining the necessary data should be implemented as soon as possible.

The expert you hire must be able to do a sophisticated analysis so that districts are competitive in both high turnout and low turnout elections. In looking at the data, one cannot simply assume that how a precinct voted in 2020 is how it will vote in the future, especially in years that are not presidential election years. And input from the Democratic and Republican parties about how competitive the proposed districts are should be obtained. Careful attention should be taken to reject “competitive” districts that are actually 52/48 in favor of one party.



I believe the constitutional requirement to reflect “the state's diverse population and communities of interest” is entirely consistent with competitive districts. In many places, we have a political divide between urban and rural areas. Representatives from completely urban districts (Democrats) and representatives from completely rural districts (Republicans) do not reflect our diverse population. They see the world in such fundamentally different ways that they are unable to compromise with each other. But a district that was 50% urban and 50% rural would reflect a community that needs to come together and resolve the difficult issues that divide us. A representative who needs votes from both urban and rural areas is less likely to engage in divisive rhetoric. Such a representative is more likely to compromise. And voters in both Detroit (Democratic) and Macomb County (Republican) have a community of interest in how to deal with issues on both sides of the Eight Mile Road community.

I recognize that it is impossible to make all districts competitive. The U.S. Representative seat that includes the Upper Peninsula and the northern part of the Lower Peninsula cannot be drawn much differently. Some State representative districts within the City of Detroit cannot be made competitive. But with careful attention to the Republican/Democratic tilt of each district, many districts can be made competitive.

In order to maximize the number of competitive districts, they will not be drawn into neat squares. Some Congressional districts might be drawn to include two or more cities, even if they are somewhat apart, in order to create a competitive district. That is permissible. The Constitution says only that the districts must be “reasonably” compact. And that requirement is the last one- far below the requirement that districts not advantage either party.

Please evaluate each proposed plan by how many competitive districts it holds. You could even require that analysis- how many competitive seats does it have- be done before each plan is considered by the Commission. **Then adopt the plan that has the most truly competitive districts.**

Thank you for taking on this important and historic task.