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MICRC

06/15/21 1700 pm Meeting

Captioned by Q&A Reporting, Inc., www.qacaptions.com

>> CHAIR KELLOM: If you are attending the hearing, and we are so happy to have you, so just find a seat.

Good evening. As Chair of the Commission, I call this meeting of the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission to order at 5:06 p.m.

This Zoom webinar is being live streamed on YouTube.

For anyone in the public watching who would prefer to watch via a different platform than they are currently using, please visit our social media at Redistricting MI to find the link for viewing on YouTube.

Our live stream today includes closed captioning. Closed captioning, ASL interpretation, and Spanish and Arabic translation services will be provided for effective participation in this meeting. e-mail us at Redistricting@Michigan.Gov for additional viewing options or details on accessing language translation services for this meeting.

People with disabilities or needing other specific accommodations should also contact Redistricting at Michigan.gov.

This meeting is being recorded and will be available at www.Michigan.gov/MICRC for viewing.

This meeting is also being transcribed, and those transcriptions will be made available and posted at Michigan.gov/MICRC along with the written public comment submissions.

There is also a public comment portal that may be accessed by visiting Michigan.gov/MICRC. This portal can be utilized to post maps and comments which can be viewed by Both the Commission and the public.

Members of the media who may have questions before, during or after the meeting should direct those questions to Edward Woods III, who is our Communications and Outreach Director for the Commission and can be reached at WoodsE3@Michigan.gov.

For the purpose of the public watching and the public record, I will turn to department state Staff To take note of the Commissioners present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Good evening, Commissioners. Please say present when I call your name. If you are attending the meeting remotely, please announce during roll call that you are attending the meeting remotely. And unless your absence is due to military duty, announce your physical location by stating the county,

city, Township or village and the state from which you are attending the meeting remotely.

I'll start with Doug Clark.

- >> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Juanita Curry.
- >> COMMISSIONER CURRY: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Anthony Eid?
- >> COMMISSIONER EID: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Brittini Kellom?
- >> CHAIR KELLOM: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Rhonda Lange?
- >> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Present; attending remotely from

Reed City, Michigan.

- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Steve Lett?
- >> COMMISSIONER LETT: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Cynthia Orton?
- >> COMMISSIONER ORTON:
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: MC Rothhorn?
- >> COMMISSIONER ROTHORN: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Rebecca Szetela?
- >> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Janice Vallette.
- >> COMMISSIONER VALLETTE: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Erin Wagner?
- >> COMMISSIONER WAGNER: Present; attending remotely from

Charlotte, Michigan.

- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Richard Weiss?
- >> COMMISSIONER WEISS: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Dustin Witjes?
- >> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: All 12 Commissioners are present.

And there is a quorum.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you, Michigan Department of State staff.

Now we will have welcome and introductions if there are no objections.

And, hearing no objections, I Commissioner Curry to come to us with welcome and introductions.

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>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: Hello my name is Juanita Curry and I would like welcome each of you to the MICRC public hearing located in Detroit, Michigan as you know.

We are very happy you took the time to learn about the Michigan's new redistricting process and how you can engage throughout this process to ensure that your vote be heard.

In looking at the agenda please note that the vast majority of our time this evening is spent listening to you.

We are eager to hear your ideas either in person or remotely about drawing Michigan's Congressional, house and Senate districts.

In addition to hearing about District lines, we also want to hear about your ideas and communities of interest.

At this time I would like my fellow colleagues to introduce themselves and share where they live in Michigan, the Great Lakes state.

And I think we are going to start from the back row with Mr. Lett.

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Good evening welcome, I'm glad to see all of you here. My name is Steve Lett.

And I guess I'm from Interlochen Michigan up by Traverse City.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Apologies for the interruption Mr. Lett can you please speak into the microphone.

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: We will try it again good evening, welcome. I'm glad to see you all here.

My name is Steve Lett and as I said I'm the northern Commission from Interlochen Michigan up by Traverse City.

>> Good evening my name is Dustin Witjes, I currently reside in Ypsilanti, Michigan. And I'm glad you are all here and I hope to hear all of your comments.

>> Hello.

I got really close to it.

>> Okay, so what I was saying my name is Dustin Witjes.

I currently live in Ypsilanti.

I'm so glad to see all of you here tonight and look forward to hearing all of your individual comments.

>> Good evening glad to see so many people here my name is Richard H Weiss. Closer? There.

Good evening my name is Richard H Weiss I live in Saginaw Township in Saginaw Michigan glad to see so many of you could make it to tonight's meeting.

>> Welcome everyone.

My name is Janice Vallette I live in Highland Township.

We are so glad to see all of you here.

We are anxious to hear what you have to say.

>> Hello everyone, thank you so much for being here with us tonight.

My name is Anthony Eid and I'm from Orchard Lake, Michigan.

>> Hello y'all my name is MC, I'm from Lansing, Michigan.

>> And as you know I stated my name is Juanita Curry and I'm from Detroit Michigan.

>> Hi, everyone, my name is Brittini Kellom and I am born and raised from Detroit Michigan.

>> We have two Commissioners who are not here, Rebecca reads her's, she will come for Rhonda.

>> Good evening Rebecca Szetela from Wayne County Michigan thank you everybody for being here tonight.

>> Good evening, my name is Douglas Clark I'm from Rochester Hills, Michigan, it's a pleasure to have you here this evening.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: Rhonda?

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Thank you for coming my name is Rhonda Lange as I said earlier, I'm from Reed City Michigan which is kind of central Michigan.

>> COMMISSIONER WAGNER: Hi everyone my name is Erin Wagner I'm from Charlotte Michigan thanks for having us.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: You heard from all of the Commissioners just about but one and we would just like to give you a little information about what is going on today.

In 2018 more than 61% of Michigan voters intentionally and deliberately passed proposal two a ballot initiative for voters and not legislatures to take responsibility for map fairness and public feedback in the redistricting process and create the Michigan independent citizens redistricting Commissioners that are known as MICRC.

And for the first time in Michigan's history, the MICRC will lead the redistricting process to draw fair and independent lines.

They will be comprised of 13 random -- they are comprised of 13 randomly selected Michigan residents that includes four who affiliate as democrats, five who affiliate as independents, and four who affiliate as republicans through a lottery run by the Michigan Department of State.

The MICRC has the exclusive authority in this new redistricting process for Michigan's Congressional, house, and Senate districts.

As fellow residents, the MICRC understands your expectations to draw maps in an open and transparent manner that meets constitutional mandates.

Our mission and vision exemplifies our resolve not just for today but for future generations as well, so in your interaction with the MICRC, and its staff, you should witness the core values of integrity, respect, transparency, and being purposeful.

Once again, we are glad that you are here.

And we look forward to hearing from you tonight.

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So make yourself at home and whatever your questions or your comments are, we are here to listen to you tonight.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you so much Commissioner Curry for that well, warm welcome and introduction.

If there are no objections, we will have Commissioner Szetela who is also our Vice Chair come to us and share about the public hearings.

Hearing no objections Commissioner Szetela you have the floor.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you Commissioner Curry or Kellom, sorry. Thank you for coming here tonight I'm the Vice Chair of Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission.

To ensure fair and impartial maps the MICRC is required to solicit public input before drawing any redistricting plan to the Michigan Congressional, house and Senate districts through holding a minimum of ten public hearings across the State of Michigan. We are actually a bit of over achievers here so we are holding 16 meetings instead of the ten.

This meeting tonight in Detroit represents number 11 out of our 16 public hearings. The purpose for the public hearings under the Michigan Constitution are to inform the public about the redistricting process, to share the purpose and responsibilities of the Commissioner and to solicit information from you about potential redistricting plans for Michigan's Congressional, house and Senate districts.

So what is redistricting? Every ten years following the U.S. census district lines for U.S. Congressional, Senate, State House and State Senate Districts must be redrawn across the state and county to reflect their populations.

The process of drawing these District lines is known as redistricting.

In Michigan here are the District lines that need to be drawn for the 2022 election cycle.

There is going to be 13 Michigan Congressional districts.

38 Michigan Senate.

And 110 Michigan House Districts.

The MICRC is the sole entity responsible for drawing the District lines.

The MICRC operates in an impartial and transparent manner that instills integrity in the redistricting process. Our public outreach represents fairness, awareness, transparency and engagement that seeks to obtain at least 10,000 distinct comments in the redistricting process.

At the end of the day, the MICRC must adopt maps for Michigan's 13 Congressional, 38 Senate and 110 House Districts.

The districts should be drawn to meet applicable Federal and State laws including the Voters' Rights Act.

Let's talk a little bit about what the redistricting criteria that we have to comply with are.

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As mandated by the U.S. Constitution equal population refers to the amount of people in the District so we have to have equal population and compliance with the Voting Rights Act.

Our districts need to be geographically contiguous. And how I explain that to people we cannot have islands separated off with other districts in between. It has to be one continuous District.

We have to comply with communities of interest or take into account communities of interest. And I will talk about that more on the next slide.

We have to three redistricting criteria that pertain to political parties and relationships. One is we can't get a disproportionate advantage to any political party. The other is that we cannot favor or disfavor a candidate or incumbent elected official.

We also have to give consideration to City, County and Township boundaries. And lastly, we need to try to keep the districts reasonably compact.

So what is a community of interest? It's defined as including but not limited to populations that share cultural or historical characteristics or economic interests. It does not include relationships with political parties, incumbents or political candidates.

So some of the various communities we have been hearing about are neighborhoods, particular businesses, agricultural interests, waterfront communities, and so much more. Although race is important, it is certainly not the only characteristic to identify a community of interest.

So what does the MICRC want to know about your community of interest? We want to know how would you name your community of interest?

What is that common bond that creates your community to share identity?

Is there a geographic area that covers your community?

What Government policies are important to your community?

How would keeping your community intact enhance the quality of your representation in Congress or the Michigan legislature?

And, lastly, are there nearby areas that either strengthen or potentially weaken your community of interest?

So why are we here tonight? The MICRC is here because we want to hear from you about where to draw the lines for Michigan's Congressional, State, Senate and State House districts in Detroit and throughout the State of Michigan.

Why should you care about this process? Well, this is a historic new process. This has never been done before. For the first time ever Michigan residents actually have a say in the redistricting process.

Openness, transparency and public engagement represent the principles of the new redistricting process.

And as the third ranked criteria in the redistricting process, communities of interest for the first time have a voice to prevent gerrymander.

Thank you very much. I'll pass it back to you Commissioner Kellom.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you, Vice Chair Szetela.

At this time if there are no objections our General Counsel, Julianne Pastula, will come to us and share our guidelines for public comment.

Hearing no objection, General Counsel, you have the floor.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

And thank you to Detroit for the warm welcome this evening.

Thank you.

The public comment guidelines tonight that I'd like to cover is that the in-person public comments will be taking place first followed by the remote public comments.

The time limit for each public comment speaker is two minutes.

Please conclude your remarks when you hear the timer.

If any person disrupts the orderly progress of this meeting or refuses to comply with applicable MICRC guidelines and rules, the Chairperson may rule that person out of order and/or order their removal from this meeting.

As a reminder, please provide your public comment and/or submit proposed maps in the public comment portal available at www.Michigan.gov/MICRC.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you, General Counsel.

At this time, if there are no objections, we will now begin the public comment portion of the meeting.

Hearing no objection, we will now proceed with public comment.

A few reminders, individuals who have signed up and indicated they would like to provide in-person public commentary to the Commission will now be allowed to do so.

Please step to the nearest microphone when I call your number.

But I do like to know people's names, so also introduce yourself to the Commission.

You will have two minutes to address the Commission.

Please conclude your remarks when your two minutes has ended and you hear the timer.

We are a warm group.

We do not like to interrupt.

However, if you continue on to the next paragraph of your public comment, you will hear my voice.

The timer will go off as it's supposed to with two minutes, but I will remind you that your allotted two minutes has ended.

To that end we encourage everyone whether you're here listening, whether you just want to find out more, or whether you are here to comment today, please do visit our public comment portal www.Michigan.gov/MICRC.

That way means you might not be thinking about things that are bubbling up in your spirit, you can share later, particularly areas of the map that you're specifically speaking about.

That is also an area of our online tool where you can play around with your own versions of redistricting.

I'll call a couple of folks at one time, but it is up to you if you don't want to stand, if you don't feel comfortable, if you can't, whatever the case is, just know I'm calling up a group and you can go to the nearest mic that is closest to you.

First in line for public comment, one, two, three and four. You can kind of standby. And, one, when you reach the microphone, you can begin speaking.

>> Good evening or afternoon, whichever one it is.

First of all, I want to thank the Commission for being here and for taking on these positions because you have a very weighty matter that is before you, which is to draw the maps, fair maps that are going to represent Michigan for the next ten years.

And I also want to thank you all for expanding the map when it comes to the number of hearings that you are holding because we know that you only had to hold ten, but 16 allows it so that you could be here in Detroit for the 15th and the 17th.

With that I'm here to speak on behalf of the community that basically really has no voice.

That community is the prison population.

And from what I understand, the Commission does have some authority when it comes to reapportionment and counting citizens where they actually should be counted.

And so when it comes to the prison population, on behalf of the organization known as VAC, Voting Access For All Coalition. I am speaking on behalf of that organization and its coalition on the issue of prison gerrymandering.

There are 11 states I believe at this point that have put into law and place where now those that are incarcerated will be counted where they actually live as opposed to where they are incarcerated at that time.

And so, again, because this is a ten-year process, the only way that the citizens that are currently incarcerated in prison will be counted and represented where they actually live will be if the Commission decides to go through the process of reapportionment and the infrastructure is already there with other states having done this by law. But if you all have that authority and that power, what I am looking for on behalf of those that have no voice and cannot even vote is that you all make the decision to count them where they actually live and that data is available.

I don't have a map currently.

Is that my time is over? Good day.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you so much for taking the time to address the Commission.

Please go to the public comment tool and finish the rest of your sentence there.

We genuinely want to know what you have to say.

Thank you, two.

>> Yes, thank you, Madam Commissioner Brittini, Rebecca, for having all of us here today to voice our views and opinions.

This new redistricting process is awesome and all 13 of you really rock.

Whoever came up with the inclusivity for regular everyday citizens such as myself and many others to have a voice in how you all will join together as a whole to chalk out the maps of our direction clearly speaks volumes how far over the State of Michigan laws have come in providing a fair shot for all citizens no matter race, gender, religion or familiar status, to finally have a voice and be equally heard in historic event of redistricting planning.

With that being said, my name is Artecia Bomber. I am a lifelong resident of the City of Detroit, the County of Wayne, and the 13th Congressional District of Michigan. I am a mother of ten children. It is said that it takes a village to raise children. Well, it takes a village to prepare for this redistricting as well.

I feel that Detroit is a very large city in its own; in fact, the biggest in Michigan. Our 13th district should never have been compromised to provide only some parts of Detroit. I ask that when you chalk out the 13th Congressional District, please chalk it out as if it were a crime scene. I say that because in a crime scene, that chalked out area is viewed in a more personal space. The investigation is thorough in that area alone. We, the people of Detroit, should have a chalked out map to include all of Detroit and outer communities that thrive, just like Detroiters versus richer, suburban communities. With the right chalk lines, we can provide special attention that can help Detroit become a richer community as well as outer suburban communities. Thank you for your time.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Ms. Bomber, we appreciate you coming to share your thoughts with the Commission.

Three and four.

Three and four.

>> Good afternoon. My name is Kimberly Hoover.

I am the president of the Rosedale Park Improvement Association. And I appear on behalf of the residents of Rosedale Park to urge you to consider the five neighborhoods of the Grandmont, Rosedale community as a community of interest.

The Grandmont Rosedale is comprised of five neighborhoods in Northwest Detroit, being Rosedale Park, North Rosedale Park, Grandmont, Grandmont 1 and Minock Park. These neighborhoods are geographically contiguous and historically connected.

By way of example, I have lived in Rosedale Park for ten years. But before that I lived in Grandmont for eight years. And when I go visit my old neighbors in Grandmont, I walk or ride my bike because we are in such close proximity.

The neighborhoods are also culturally similar. We share a distinct culture of civic engagement and pride in home ownership. We also share a youth's sports league and we cohost a number of community events each year.

Just a couple of weeks ago when North Rosedale hosted a group of Detroit Symphony Orchestra musicians on the lawn of the community house, I saw neighbors from across the community at that event. Neighbors from Rosedale, North Rosedale, Grandmont and Minock. And that is pretty common at our community events. We truly are friends and neighbors who share common interests.

This commonality of purpose was formalized over 30 years ago with the creation of the Grandmont Rosedale Development Corporation, which is our...the development corporation in our community.

Over the past several decades, GRDC has reflected our common economic cultural and historical interests through its planning and programs.

Grandmont Rosedale is a unified neighborhood and should be considered a single community for purposes of redistricting. And I'll close with that.

Thank you for your time and attention.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you for taking the time to address the Commission. Four.

>> Yes. My name is Percy Johnson. I was here once before. I spoke at the Novi event. And I'm next door neighbor to Mr. Clark from Troy.

But I come back again because I really want to speak on the fact that this is truly a we the people, by the people moment.

You know, from the very beginning of this process of getting in the petitions that it took to get signed for this to be on the ballot, this is truly...that was truly a big moment.

You know, and to have the concern of this is maybe...this is my fourth Commission that I've came. And everybody that I'm listening to, that are coming to the mic, I'm distinctly speaking on how they want the lines to be close and represent their cities by city.

You know, but I just want to give you the charge of reminding you that what we are doing here in Michigan, that we got other states that will be paying attention to what we are doing.

And this is truly a moment at last that I feel that as a people and as a state that we have rallied together and came together to do something that's going to be fair for our citizens and our loved ones to where we give them fair representation from our elected officials once we draw the line.

I heard something today from one of your other Commissioners, and I'm very excited about that, thank you, he even mentioned that you're going to draw the lines up and then you are also going to show at least three different maps and you're going to give us a chance to come back and comment on how you drew the lines.

That's big, you know. And I really just want you to understand that what you're doing and the way that you are setting it up is so needed.

It's a beacon in hope I really feel for our nation. And that a lot of us are tired of all the nonpartisan fight and confusion. This will bring us together. Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Percy, thank you so much for sharing your comments. And he is right.

We are not even making that effort, but this truly is a momentous occasion to draw transparent and fair maps. And you all, and not just you all in this room but the community in general, we urge and seek your input, that's why we by the end of this hearing you will have memorized www.Michigan.gov/MICRC.

Because, you know, Michigan, you all did vote to have us.

And we are mandated to do the work and we are serious about doing the work and we are like you know.

>> Sorry to interrupt.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: We are your neighbors and educators and made up of 13 folks that are tasked with doing the work in a way that involves the community.

We can't do it without you.

We will. We will definitely because that is our job, but we need we do need your input. And we need you all to understand like you said so eloquently, that this is a chance to feel empowered you might not have felt before about the process.

I'm off my soap box. Number five and number six.

Five and six. For purposes of the public record, five is choosing not to speak.

Six and seven.

>> Six you can begin.

>> Thank you. Good evening,
Commissioner members.

Thank you for the opportunity to address you this evening.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Step closer to the mic and your time will start over, I promise.

>> My name is Kimberly Cratton. I'm a native born Detroiter. A professional in the field of early childhood education for over 40 years and a homeowner in Redford Township since 1989.

Quite simply I'd like the Commission to use a commonsense approach to legislative redistricting.

You may recognize that Redford Township is within Congressional, State Senate and State House districts that are rather bizarrely configured.

I am suggesting that redistricting effort should, one, as much as possible, keep counties, cities and townships intact.

Avoid carving out sections of a distinct community and in signing those sections to adjacent districts for Congressional or state legislative purposes.

Draw District boundaries that are clearly delineated by boundaries of intact communities.

Prevent small areas of a county from being incorporated into the District of another county.

And, lastly, focus on 2020 census data to establish the districts equally apportioned by their number of residents.

Moreover, redistricting effort should reflect an expectation that Michigan's legislative representatives are just that, representing the people of Michigan.

To this end, do not rule out establishing a District that may encompass a blend of urban, suburban or rural areas. Our district designations should encourage our representatives to be mindful of Michigan's residents as a whole and foster sound, affirmative, objective Government policies that will contribute to a greater quality of life for all Michigan residents. And I thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you so much.

If you would like, you can give us the map that you just referred to.

You don't have to, but you can give us that if you would like, uh-huh.

Seven and eight.

Seven and eight.

>> Are you seven?

>> Yeah, I'm seven. I'm not actually seven, I'm 71 but...

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Just making sure.

>> Thank you, Chairwoman Kellom.

Let me say good afternoon to all of you and all of the folk who are here.

Welcome to Fellowship Chapel. And welcome to the dome. I happen to be the pastor here and we very glad to have you here.

Where you are sitting used to be drug houses and weeds and all of that.

And now it's a hope house.

And all of this.

So we are glad to have you here.

That's not the point of my time I don't think.

On a hot August day in 1890 delegates gathered at the Mississippi State Capitol building in Jackson to work on a new state Constitution. The convention's president, Solomon Saladine Calhoun of White County, Judge, put the voting issue like this: Let's tell the truth. If it bursts the bottom of the universe, we came to exclude the Negro. Nothing short of the will this will answer. They adopted a literacy test and a poll tax geared to suppress the Black vote in a state with a Black majority.

The Mississippi plan became the model throughout the south, part of an explosion of Jim Crow laws that ended reconstruction.

We are still in the throes of reconstruction.

In 2018 in North Carolina, Representative David Lewis, architect of redistricting, in the house acknowledged freely that he sought to produce a poll and political gerrymander. I think electing republicans, he said, is better than electing democrats.

So I drew this map to help foster what I think is better for the country.

We use redistricting criteria to gain political advantage.

The Court said he proposed to give partisan advantage to ten republicans and three democrats because he didn't believe it possible to draw a map with 11 republicans and two democrats.

The Court understated that in conclusion the general assembly was motivated by invidious partisan intent. The North Carolina map was planned and executed to entrench republican control. A Federal Tribunal ruled in North Carolina that the state legislature redistricting plan represented the most extensive, unconstitutional racial gerrymander ever encountered by a Federal Court.

In Michigan in 2018, Michigan voters overwhelmingly approved by 61% of the vote, winning 66 of 84 counties, red and blue, of having an Independent Commission to draw the State's Congressional and legislative maps.

Still some folks filed lawsuits to stop this, you, from going forward, claiming it was unconstitutional.

Yet here we are drunk with the wine of political power.

There are those who want to select, those who vote for them rather than the voters to select who will represent them.

We must not allow for that.

We in Detroit do not want to go by way of North Carolina or Massachusetts or Pennsylvania.

We have already been threatened by voter suppression and a rush of new laws, proposed new laws lurking in the halls of the Michigan legislature.

We do not seek to lose another Congressional representative to political gerrymandering thus reducing the political and department of the state's largest African/American city. Districts must be diverse, providing a respect for the cities and counties and townships in which they are drawn.

They must not be linked or locked, packed, stacked, or racked to maintain the status quo.

Or providing disproportionate disadvantage to the powers that be.

All right, just one final sentence.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Your two minutes.

>> One final sentence.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: We have to be fair.

>> Okay. See you at another time. I got two or three more sentences.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: You can sign up for a second comment.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: You can sign up to speak again.

>> I'm sorry.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: You can sign up to speak again and then you have to go...

>> I got to go.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: You can give us what you were referring to.

>> I'll give it to you.

Lord have mercy, I'll give it to you. But, at any rate, thank you.

I apologize. I only had a few left, but I will submit it to you. And you are missing the best part.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: It's part of the procedure, not my heart.

Give us the piece of paper.

>> Thank you very much for that pastoral moment. I appreciate you. Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Oh, Detroit you all are Detroiting today.

And I love it.

So let's eight and nine.

Eight and nine again www.Michigan.gov/MICRC.

Are you eight? Nine? Okay, for purposes of the public record, we do not have eight present and we will continue to nine.

>> Good afternoon or good evening. My name is Curtis Lipscomb. I'm the Executive Director of LGBT Detroit.

I'd like to read a statement about the people that have served and the place where they gather.

The Palmer Park area began attracting a notable LGBT residential base in the late 1960s. As much of the white population that remained in Detroit moved to the further reaches of the city.

The Parma Park Apartment District had its initial gay heyday in the 1970s where popular gay bars and restaurants opened nearby along McNichols and Woodward Avenue. It was at Menchal's, which is operated at 928 West McNichols where dance instructor, Christopher Flynn, first took his protegee, Madonna, to experience gay male nightlife for the first time.

Some buildings in the neighbor bolster significant queer occupancy. And one home to a number of female impersonators who perform at Bookley's Club, Gate 70 and other clubs, became known as the drag academy. Even after many right gay residents moved out to the suburbs, the more than 60 apartment buildings retained a strong gay cultural imprint, now predominately reflecting an African/American LBGTQ experience.

The park itself was a gathering place for social spots even in the '50s. And served as a location for day-long picnics held the day after Detroit's first pride parade in 1972.

Since 1996 the grades of Palmer Park have been home to the signature picnic of the annual heritage life celebration which I operate. LBGTQ Detroit is North America's largest African/American bound and lead LGBT nonprofit organization located right up the street, on Greenfield.

We request that the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission refrain from dividing this community of interest as maps are developed.

Of the 28 maps submitted, only eight keeps this community of interest together.

Thank you for your time.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you so much, Curtis, for taking the time to speak to the Commission.
Ten.

>> Hi. My name is Robin and I'm from Commerce Township.
I signed the original petition for redistricting.
I signed and notarized and sent in my information to be on the redistricting board, but my number was not drawn. I signed up as an independent.
It's my understanding that Democrats and Republicans seem to want the District areas to have long fingers in which spread far beyond the area that they feel the influence and many other areas.
It's also my understanding that the purpose of the redistricting by the people of Michigan is to keep areas together.
And I interpret this to be by county as much as possible.
And if not a full county, to at least keep cities and townships together.
These areas share Governments and schools, neighborhoods which are critical, and also this keeps the areas reasonably compact.
Thank you very much for representing us and your time.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you for taking the time to address the Commission.
11 and 12.

>> Hello. I wanted to say welcome to the Commission for coming to Detroit.
I...we really appreciate you coming.
My name is Cheryl Webb. I'm a candidate for Mayor of the City of Detroit but ironically, I'm a member of Voters Not Politicians and I'm an advocate for voters.
I came today to talk to you guys just to represent, I wanted to do a map. And I tried, but every time I tried to do a map or think about redistricting, I thought about the homeless.
So I just came to appeal to the Commission and the citizens of the City of Detroit to say what can we do, how does the homeless...I had questions with redistricting how does the homeless play a role in that? What can I do to help? And what can we all do as a community while we are talking about districts and things to include the homeless?
So I don't know if I would take two minutes, but that was my questions and my concerns.

Thank you very much.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you so much for taking the time to address the Commission.

For clarification were you 11?

>> Yes.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Okay, 12.

If 12 is present.

13.

We will move on to 13 because 12 is not present.

>> Good evening, distinguished panel.

My name is Charles Shannon and I'm a lifelong Detroit.

And I would like as you consider your...I concur with all of the contiguous panel, you know, the input that you've received. And I would like you also to consider the vision that America is going forward in.

We are going to need a 21st century strategy.

And this is why these communities need to be together.

You are dealing with infrastructure.

No one has talked about artificial intelligence yet and how that's going to impact all of the America.

You're talking about training.

Labor is the big issue for our entire country.

The pandemic has shown that.

We are short on labor right now.

As you go forward and get into Joe Biden's, President Biden's infrastructure, it's going to happen. It should have happened a decade ago.

Training is going to be the issue. And this is where you're going to need a first-person dialog.

That's where these communities can benefit each other.

Instead of districts that are configured where it's a third-person perspective because there is such an inequity between these people over here and these people over there. So I ask that you consider in your, you know, equations and as you figure things out to understand that these communities need to be together so that they can figure their situations out.

I come from an underserved community. I'm right here in this particular community.

Where 12 communities, I ask that they stay together.

But, please, consider where you're going as we go forward in the 21st century.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you so much, Mr. Shannon, for taking the time to address the Commission.

14.

>> Thank you for listening today.

I'm Sherri. I live and work in the 14th Congressional District.

You know, the District that looks like a deranged lightning bolt? Well, I live in the part of Harper Woods in the Grosse Pointe School District. I talked to our clerk and she thought it would be easier for elections if we kept Grosse Pointe and the Harper Woods together, in the same District. And Harper Woods is wonderfully diverse and brings a lot to that community.

But we also have a lot in common with St. Clair Shores and some of the other shoreline cities, a lot of flooding, water issues, things like that.

Yet our area is all split up and it would be much better represented in one District.

But the area that I work in is of greater concern.

I'm a Detroit public school teacher.

The school that I teach at is in the poorest of the poor neighborhoods.

Not one, but two homeless shelters, the children that we teach.

Their issues are very different.

The houses around our school have maybe one or two livable houses on them.

Or the blocks near our school.

There is a huge shortage of affordable, safe housing.

No reliable public transportation.

No access to healthcare.

Yet, we of the same Congress person who also represents Oakland County, Pontiac, down to Southwest Detroit. The District is too split for one Congress person to be able to be attentive to all of the issues.

The Northwest Detroit Area needs a Congress person who can pay attention to them and assist them with their issues, and hopefully someone who is all in Wayne County.

You are the only hope to give them this voice.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you so much for taking the time to address the Commission.

15.

>> Hello. I'm 15, also known as Nicholas Barns.

First, I want to thank you for being here tonight and sacrificing your most valuable asset, which is your time; that is something you will never get back, so thank you for giving it to us.

I'm here to represent the young people of Detroit, the ones that don't understand, the ones that is not educated or the ones that's unaware to let you know that we want fair District lines. 61% of Michiganders voted to have gerrymandering eliminated. And out of that 61%, that probably wasn't the whole population.

In theory more than half the people in this room want fair District lines. I feel like if that is not enough for a lot of you, I don't know what it is at that point.

As Detroiters we have been preyed on for decades by these District lines, everything from red lining, gentrification of our neighbors and predatory insurance practices and most importantly lack of representation.

We are finally having our voices heard.

Don't let us down like the others have.

Be the agents of change.

Draw fair maps.

I know you can't make everybody happy, at least try to do the right thing, that is all I'm asking.

Have a good day.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Nicholas, we appreciate you taking the time to share your comments with the Commission.

17, 16, sorry.

>> My name is Anita Jones and I grew up in the Cass quarter, which is now known as Midtown.

I have a bachelor's degree from Michigan State and a DDS from the University of Michigan.

I returned to practice dentistry in Ferndale, Michigan for 11 years. And at about that time, I shifted gears and became a massage therapist. I have been self-employed as a massage therapist since 1990 and I've lived in Ferndale since 1984.

The common bond in my community is diversity, diversity by age, race, gender and economic status.

Politically my community is democrat, independent, republican, and nonaffiliated in descending order.

My community is immediately north of 8 Mile, at the 8 Mile and Woodward Corridor. Keeping my community intact means exactly that.

How many things work well when they are fractured or spread out too thin to hold anything? This is about having a cohesive District where District lines don't snake around, go sideways, or up and down in narrow bands to reach favorable voters to any given party.

The Government policies that are important for my community are access to affordable housing, access to affordable and clean water, access to affordable healthcare, and the right to have say regarding personal healthcare, access to free and equitable public education.

People should have the right to learn to read.

Access to living wage jobs.

Equal protection and service by police, fire and emergency professionals.

Access to free and safe public parks and other recreational facilities.

Expedient attention and upgrades to public infrastructure. Thank you for listening.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you so much for sharing the perspective of your community.

17.

>> Good evening. My name is Chewy K. And I'm here, and as you will be able to tell, I'm a Detroiter.

I want to thank you all for your service.

And I want to say to you that there is one word that should govern all of your activities, and that word is fair.

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You must be fair.

In the process you use and the conclusions you reach.

You have a constitutional obligation to avoid partisanship.

You have a constitutional obligation to avoid gerrymandering, a constitutional obligation to avoid stonewalling.

It's not simply discretionary.

It's a constitutional obligation.

Because it is the Constitution of this state that has empowered you to act.

You also have a constitutional obligation to not attempt to divest any community in this state.

You have a constitutional obligation to not treat Detroit as if it were a stepchild.

You have a constitutional obligation to not disenfranchise any particular group of people because of their race, color, gender, et cetera.

You have to avoid those things.

And doing your work, you must be aware and keep in mind and make a priority of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

It governs every step, every action, that you take.

So remember, be fair.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you for addressing the Commission this evening.

18 and 19.

18 and 19.

>> Good evening, Commissioner. My name is Jamil Martin. I'm a lifelong West Side Detroiter.

Once again, like everybody said, I want to thank you for bringing this Commission and public hearing to the West Side of Detroit.

I want to echo what the gentleman just said.

We need fair maps.

Detroit is the largest city in Michigan.

The policies that take place by members who vote outside of our area has direct impact on what goes on in as far as policy that impacts Detroit at the State and Federal level.

So we want to make sure that maps around the state are fair.

Because it shouldn't be a case where 55% of a popular vote in the state legislative election cycle, statewide results in only 47% of the resulting vote total for policy makers of a certain party. So I just want to encourage you guys and ladies, fair maps, please, fair map, Detroit love.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you for taking the time to address the Commission.

19, you can address the Commission.

>> >> I'll take his 30 seconds.

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Hi, I'm Nancy, a long-time volunteer and executive voter for politicians, a grass root group that wrote to establish the Commission and worked really hard to help pass it in 2018.

Under your stewardship, Michigan is turning the page on gerrymandering and restoring voters, not politicians to the heart to be the driving force of our democracy.

It's been such a joy to watch you work and see every day Michiganders step up and tell you their story, tell you their interest that their communities have and their needs and make their requests of you.

We are glad to see such great turnout across the state so far and today in Detroit.

Since the 2018 election, we have been hard at work working with Commissions including LGBT Detroit that you heard from today or Oakland forward in Pontiac.

The agenda is to make this process as open as possible and inclusive as possible to realize the dream of a citizen run transparent redistricting process.

We are glad to see the Commission is taking charge.

It's important you realize that the current maps are a complete disaster, a result of a need and desire to maximize the partisan advantage of one party.

It is important that you realize that you, not the consultants will be remembered for the maps that are drawn.

You are the people that matter here.

We know you are listening with care to each of the speakers and reviewing their testimonies.

You can deliver fair maps to the people of Michigan by ensuring the information you are getting is from real communities of interest on the ground.

That stays the focal point of your redistricting process.

The people of Michigan put their trust in you.

We thank you, again, for doing everything you are doing to earn that trust.

Thank you.

We are so grateful.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you for your support and taking time to address the Commission.

20?

>> Good evening. I'm number 20. My name is Jennifer James.

For the Spartans, go green. Thank you all for attending.

I am very proud of voters, not politicians for their work.

They pulled me and kept me informed.

I appreciate that.

As far as redistricting, my concern is following speaker number 6, be fair.

Don't move things if you don't have to.

My other concern is because you are basing it on census data, I wonder how complete that has been based on the pandemic and the issues behind the postal service.

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Not to lay blame with them, but there were issues with mail and people getting things back.

I want to reiterate what others have said.

Please be fair.

Consider what the citizens want, the Voting Rights Act.

Keep that in.

I thank you for coming and giving a voice for those who do care about the city.

Thank you very much.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you so much.

We appreciate you.

21 and 22?

21 and 22.

Uh-oh.

I'm going to lose the mic.

Good evening.

I'm Ashleigh.

I'm a native Detroiter.

I'm a product of Detroit schools.

I work for General Motors, an autoworker.

I am a business owner.

One of the biggest things I notice, thank God for union contracts.

I went from Wayne County to Oakland County to seen see county.

There should be no issue when it comes to education.

There should be no issue when it comes to childcare.

Many autoworkers, it kills you, most the time your whole paycheck is going to daycare, in all honesty.

These are issues that affect working class people.

My community of interest is that.

We should not have to work to pay for childcare, nor should they go to school if they don't provide viable education to go to college or a trade.

Skilled trades is a large gap we have in this state, the automotive state, correct?

I would like to see this Commission draw lines that issue poverty.

The median income in Michigan is \$30,000.

Perhaps if we work along the lines of economics, we could draw more and do more for the working people and work for the great state of Michigan and constituents.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you for coming to the Commission.

22?

>> Hello, everyone.

Thank you for being here and hearing our communities request.

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I'm asking that you draw district that is keep our communities of interest intact and resist gerrymandering.

My name is Jennifer.

I'm a member of a newer coalition in Detroit called the Detroit Hamtramck coalition for advancing healthy environments.

It was born after the coalition to expose the expansion of U.S. ecology lost our fight against a hazardous waste processing facility that expanded by ten times in our community.

This heavy industry is common in ZIP codes 48211, 48212 and 48213.

In fact, there are two U.S. ecologies within a stone's throw in our community as well as metal scrap yards, scrap yards, I-94 industrial zone and other poisonous industries that you would expect in impoverished communities of color.

You will find farms, restaurants, churches, mosques, a Zen center, schools and a beautifully diverse community.

The area is east of 75, the north side of Gratiot and Upton McNichols.

It's important to keep our community together to advocate with neighbors some of whom English is not a primary language, some of whom are unfortunately having their water shut off, others are exposed to undue pollution.

Our resilient community hopes to stay intact and fight against polluters and resist the spread of gentrification into our part of the city.

Thank you for hearing us.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you for taking time to share your comments with the commission.

23?

>> Good evening.

My name is Marc.

I'm the coach of Detroit Hamtramck Healthy Environment and founder and director of the Urban Farm in Detroit who services our community with school supplies for the youth.

We do clothe giveaways for neighbors.

We are located south of the international airport known as the city airport neighborhood.

I'm here to ask that 48211, 48212 and 48213 not be divide or changed in any way in district remapping.

We ask because of the history of environmental injustice in our area that needs to continue its representation structure.

Further division of the districts could water down the seriousness of issues and representation as we continue to be bombarded with other projects.

It is an area well worth visiting.

Be sure as you redistrict keep communities like ours intact.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you for taking time to address our Commission.
24 and 25?

24 and 25?

>> So, I'm gonna be kind of repeating some of the things Mark and Jen said.
I'm a manager of programs and outreach of Detroit working for environmental justice
and a member of Detroit Hamtramck environment.

I'm from ZIP code 48211.

I can see the former incinerator outside my window.

It took 40 years of grass roots community advocacy to get that incinerator shut down.
As explained by Mark and Jennifer, the area which I live alongside 48212 and 13 are
riddled with heavy industry.

I can give a brief list.

They mentioned U.S. ecology north and south but we have PVS chemical, GM factory
zero, Mt. Elliott industrial corridor, a scrap yard, Hamtramck and the list goes on.

It's a very, very dense industrial area and really no surprise that you would have that
industrial density given the demographics of the neighborhoods around there.

Extremely culturally diverse.

A mixed community from Blacks to middle east earners, south Asian and others.

Also a lot of linguistic isolation.

A lot of times the data reflected is not the reality of the area.

So, I ask the commission, as was asked by others, to keep our community of interest
intact in your process of redistricting and redrawing maps in the state of Michigan.

I would like to reiterate the communities, not only in this area, but across Detroit are
resilient and creative across the injustice they face throughout generations.

I believe it's important to honor that as you redraw the state.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you for taking time to address the commission.

>> Good evening.

My name is Carol Banks.

I represent the far east side of Detroit.

I want to echo what number 14 said.

We are currently drawn in with Grosse Pointe, Grosse Pointe Farms, Grosse Pointe
Woods.

That is totally ridiculous.

We have no interest, at all, with them.

If you look at where I live, I'm a representative of the Fairview block club.

There are four houses on that street.

The issues we have are far different from what's happening in gross z point.

I am asking the far east side be drawn in as Detroit.

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We have more in common with Highland Park and Hamtramck than Grosse Pointe Farms and Harper Woods and all the five Grosse Pointes.

It does not make sense to draw Detroit in with those districts.

I am really, really asking that we not be a part of that area because we have nothing in common.

Our issues are basically housing.

Our issues are looking after the children in terms of getting a positive education.

Our issues are totally different from them.

We have tax issues.

If you are living on the other side, you don't have a tax issue because of your income.

Where I live, the average income is \$30,000.

I'm probably high because the majority of people in my neighborhood are single parents with at least three or four children.

You know their income is not really that high.

I'm saying if we are going to draw the lines, make it fair.

Make it comparable and make sure we share the same issues.

I thank you for coming to Detroit.

I thank you for allowing me to speak to you and explain to you what we feel.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you so much for coming and representing the Fairview block club.

26 and 27.

>> Good evening.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Good evening.

>> Thank you for your service to the state of Michigan.

I'm the president of the block club on Detroit's west side.

I'm a lifelong Detroiter.

We are paying attention to this process.

In the redistricting process, race as is sometimes called is absolutely matters.

In fact, as mentioned, this means you must make sure Black people are not politically marginalized.

Historically Black people have and face unnecessary barriers such as the grandfather clause, literacy and violence.

I might add all history is present and happening in some shape and form or fashion.

Pay attention to the area the Department of Justice has under investigation.

I want to thank you for starting off with a clean slate and not using the old maps.

Please follow the seven criteria.

They are in order of importance.

Please work your VRA lawyer as it pertains to pulling the knowledge he presents and put the knowledge into use.

Ask all the questions that comes to your mind.

Educate yourself as much as possible about Michigan.

To our Commissions from Detroit, advocate our fair of power.

Advocate on behalf of your seat, where you grew up and live.

This is being armed with the legal arguments to justify.

Advocate for what is already laid out in the law.

Don't let lines be drawn that discriminate on race.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you for taking the time to share your comments and a reminder for the Commission.

27?

>> Hi.

I'm Gina Lou.

I'm a daughter of two Chinese immigrants and someone who lives in Detroit.

I often fight by the old Chinatown, the second location of Detroit's Chinatown after the original location was shut down due to racism.

I wonder what Chinatown would look like today if voices were represented electorally.

Historically, the voices of people of color have been ignored in determining futures and education and operating in our own homes.

Today we have a choice but Detroit is threatened by potentially losing a district.

When we do this, we erase marginalized choices and disenfranchising across Michigan.

Today, Chinese, Bonga and Indian populations all have an impact on respective communities in the greater Detroit area.

Make sure they have an impact and translate on the lines being drawn.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you so much for taking time to address the commission. 28 and 29?

>> First and foremost, thank you so very much for coming here, coming to district 2. I represent this district.

I want to thank you so very much for coming in.

District 2 is among the most versatile district in Detroit.

I represent everyone.

We have people that are young that came here like nick Los Barnes.

We have senior citizens who have been here and sacrifice.

I am sitting with two high school members I went to high school with in the '70s.

The fact of the matter is, these folks are here, community leaders, presidents of communities are here to talk to you, not talk at you.

Therefore, they are asking that you work with them, not work around them.

These are the things we are asking for.

I am very concerned because with the way this comes out, we may lose a district, probably will.

Those up in Lansing and other parts of the state that try to conduct voter suppression. This Commission can do us right for the next ten years.

Again, we are very versatile city and district therefore it is about the quality of life of people that we are asking you, please, just make sure the quality of life is fair and the quality of life is considered for everyone.

Again, thank you so very much and I want to thank everyone that came out tonight to be part of this, God "Meet the Press" you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you.

29.

Feel free to use --

>> Okay.

Thank you.

Thank you for listening and thank you for understanding.

My name is Dr. Constance Simon.

I came to clarify what the first speaker said because I walked out behind him and asked a few questions.

I feel the prisoners in Michigan should be count #d for their home residence, not the location where they are incarcerated.

During the last census, 50,000 people were incarcerated at that time.

At that time, the inmates were not getting representation where their families needed it and the schools needed it, where they would return home and be a change.

It gave numbers and gave people, agency and other areas because they were counted in these prisons where there were 2,000 and 4,000 people in smaller cities.

Thank you for listening to me.

I certainly hope you take that into consideration.

That shouldn't happen.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you so much for taking the time to address the Commission.

30 and 31?

We have two mics, keep in minds, 30 and 31.

>> Good evening, Commission.

I'm a lifelong Detroit who deep roots in this city through family, friendships and organizational affiliations.

I am a retired public servant for the city of Detroit and Wayne County and lived on both sides of the city of Detroit.

I am here because I do not want Detroit divided diminishing our power in Washington, D.C.

Detroit is the largest city in the state with unique needs and interests and we have the ability to elect individuals that represent those interests.

I am requesting the Commission keep the following items in mind as you return.

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One, 78% of Detroiters are African-American.

The districts should be drawn fairly to allow us to select candidates that represent our interest and community.

Two, Detroit should maintain two congressional seats.

Remove a congressional seat leads to changes here in Michigan and our representation in Lansing.

That would be detrimental to Detroit.

We also ask you clarify the Commission's position on favoring and not favoring incumbents, clarifying how the Commission will share data from consulting LLC to ensure the Voting Rights Act of 1965 is adhered to and lastly, until present gerrymandering is remedied, incorporate guidelines for district statistics that in -- let me go back, exclude this population of individuals that cannot vote.

I appreciate your time.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you so much for providing those comments to the Commission.

31.

Keep going back and forth.

>> All right.

I like this one.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Making sure they are doing their job.

>> All right.

That's fine.

All right.

Greetings.

My name is Reverend Dr. Steve.

I am the president of Baptist pastors of Detroit vicinity and the state representative and pastor the liberty temple Baptist church a few blocks down the street.

I came here because you came to our neighborhood and I wanted to say welcome.

Thank you for coming and providing this public opportunity for comments and to be able to do what democracy has done with the will of the people and the voice of the people by saying they wanted to have a voice in drawing the lines.

I will, hopefully, participate in another forum given the fact you are having 16.

I just wanted to take this one to say welcome.

I have Bible study that starts at 6:30.

Just remember this, this is not about partisanship, it's about citizenship, it's the voice and will and democracy of our people.

We want to make sure it is done fairly and equitably.

If it had been done that way in the past, you wouldn't have as many people concerned with the process.

I trust you to do the right thing.

We'll be watching to make sure we do the right thing.

Again, welcome.

We thank you for coming.

Let me also say, as you are doing that work, we are praying for you.

I know it's not an easy task.

As we do so, listen to the people.

When you hear a lot of voices, sometimes the melody lulls you into the sleep.

The melody of the song is most important.

Do remember, all the people deserve equity and voice.

The African-American people in the city of Detroit need to be heard.

God bless you, thank you, keep looking up.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you for taking time to address the Commission.
32 and 33.

>> Good afternoon.

My name is Denise.

I am a Detroiter.

One of the things I want to echo is what I was hearing from number 20 because of something that stuck with me when I was listening to the presentation.

I follow you online when you are having your regular meetings, as much as I can.

I'm really troubled because of the census and you are going to be drawing lines according to the census.

Detroit does not need to lose anything.

I pray and ask that you guys look at and keep an open mind and open heart when you do these lines about communities that are together.

Communities not only are streets, you are looking at blocks.

I listened to Mark.

Mark lives in my community.

We are strong politically and not just politically, community.

That's what Detroit is about, community.

Please keep that in mind.

Just be fair.

Follow your heart, open your heart and be fair.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you so much for taking the time to address the Commission.

33?

>> Good afternoon.

My name is Trudy Butler.

I am a community activist.

I worked to help form this group.

I look in the camera up here, it's not really a fair representation by the city of Detroit.

This is the problem that we are having.

We don't have people who really represent us, our needs, our concerns.

Even with the businesses, I'm watching that and the history, just not only in Detroit, this is all over the United States.

When we seem to gain power, they will bring a highway through to destroy the community and the same as if the community never regained the power, it once had.

This is so important.

Fairness.

I'm sick and tired of us being in a position that is always begging for something that we rightly deserve.

I really work in our community to try to make a Chang, to try to make a difference.

I think it's very, very unfair, like I said, I'm looking at the panel.

It's not well represented by the city of Detroit.

That's what I have to say.

The other people have covered the needs and concerns of the communities, gerrymandering and all that.

It's all about power.

This is about power.

As republicans, they want to stay in power and right now they are working all over the country putting up bills to deny our right to exist.

We have given all of the free labor, everything.

We have given it all.

We deserve more.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you so much for taking the time to address the commission.

34 and 35?

34 and 35.

>> Good evening.

Thank you for the opportunity.

My name is Theresa.

I'm a native Detroiter.

I am a -- I just hope you guys be fair.

I'm going to yield the rest of my time to reverend.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you so much for addressing the Commission.

35.

>> How you doing?

I would like to know about is our senior housing.

During the pandemic, first of all, I'm -- during the pandemic, we went and made sure the seniors were okay.

The seniors have no families.

They have no one.

Their apartment buildings, various locations, their apartment buildings are broken down.

Some aren't able to bathe.

They have rats.

They have roaches.

What can we do to help?

That's what I would like to know about the youth.

Why aren't we giving them jobs to help out with the senior homes.

What can you do?

I'm tired of seeing them on the corner.

I stop and talk.

They feel like there's nothing else they can do.

This is the life they have to live.

I want to play a part and help them.

It's little things we can do to change just like, you know, take and fix up the senior homes.

That's all.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you so much to take time and speak on behalf of underserved communities.

36 and 37.

>> I was vaccinated a while ago so I think it's fair to take my mask off.

I grew up in Birmingham.

I have been here the last ten years.

My understanding of what's happened in our state in the 20th century is that we white people divested from the central cities.

Taken money, people and power and, like the lady said, we carved out the Black neighborhoods to run away quickly to the suburbs even farther.

Therefore the fairness people are talking about in this room means somehow rectifying that problem, those series of problems and the fairness would actually if there's fairness for our old cities, my guess is that people who benefited from all that gerrymandering et cetera would then say oh, that's unfair to us now.

Thanks.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you for taking the time to address the Commission.
37?

>> Hello.

My name is Richey Clement.

I'm a life-long Detroiter.

I'm adviser to representative Cynthia A. Johnson, district 5 on public policy and cannabis reform.

My job, also, I was a census taker in the 2020 census.

I know that the numbers aren't there yet.

They are kind of shaky.

My job is to educate the people on how to use their district software, how to draw a district.

I sat down the other day just started drawing using the software.

I'm going to go out there and encourage more people to use that software.

I had a question about the 2020 census numbers being back loaded into the system.

I noticed it was 2010 data.

I do like the community of interest map where you can actually blot communities of interest.

The whole thing about gerrymandering and this and that, you know, that's a history thing.

Ask the Commissioner to stop that, right?

That's what you are supposed to do.

I'm encouraging my whole community to get on that website and get your graphic card on and start drawing.

You have a thing with minority-majority districts.

I am going to report back about how this worked.

She wants to learn how to draw it, too.

Otherwise, I really think it's a pretty cool program to use.

I encourage anyone within a range of my voice to get on it, dog gone it and use the software, submit your map and bash it out.

Okay?

Piece.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you 37.

When you interact with the ideas you have, please submit them at Redistricting@Michigan.Gov/MICRC.

38 and 39?

38 and 39.

38, you can go ahead.

>> Thank you.

Can you hear me?

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Yes.

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>> My name is Colton Dale.

I am -- I grew up in harper woods, born in harper woods and grew up in Grosse Pointe woods, currently a resident of the city of Detroit and also Vice President of the democratic club which serves the five Grosse Pointe municipalities, harper woods and Eastpointe Detroit.

I'm here to advocate to keep the five Grosse Pointe municipalities and harper woods together.

All three, congress, state senate and state house are currently together in congress and state senate.

We are broken into two districts in statehouse.

I am advocating to keep us together in all three.

We have, I believe we have a lot more that binds us together than keeps us apart.

Things such as cultural and recreational facilities, medical facilities, common shopping and commercial corridors, common faith communities, educational resources such as Wayne County reset, Wayne County college and Wayne State University.

Environmental concerns like water quality, rising lake levels and air quality.

The shared values regarding social justice and civic activism.

I'm advocating for keeping the five Grosse Pointe municipalities and harper woods and east side of Detroit together when creating the maps.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you for coming to share.

Go ahead, 39.

>> Thank you, madam chair.

I am Wayne County Commissioner Monique Baker McCormick.

I wanted to come to welcome you to my district.

This is the area which I was born and raised.

One of the areas that I think was gerrymandered and not necessarily evenly.

We want to make sure that when you consider redistricting that we don't have the issues that we have currently especially the 14 Congressional District that runs all the way one way and all the way the other.

Again, I'm here wanting to offer my assistance in any way to help the Commission and ensure that we have representation evenly and that it makes sense.

Thank you very much.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you so much for coming to take the time to address the Commission.

40?

40?

Do we have number 40?

Okay.

For purpose of the public record, we don't have 40 present.

At this time, we have been sitting for quite a while.

We want to keep the active listening.

We want you to continue to be engaged.

Don't run out and disappear.

We are going to take a ten-minute recess.

If there are no objections.

Hearing no objections, you will see our faces and come back to the room at 6:47.

[Back on the record at 6:53 p.m.]

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Everyone back to their seats, can we have everyone back to their seats and into the room? Into the room? Two quick announcements.

We have four minutes if you are interested in signing up for in person public comment rush out and do so.

Also someone left a black iPhone at the registration table, a black iPhone at the registration table.

I call this meeting of the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission back to order at 6:57:00 p.m.

At this time I'll have the Michigan Department of State staff take roll call.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Good evening, Commissioners. Please say present when I call your name. If you are attending the meeting remotely, please announce during roll call that you are attending the meeting remotely. And unless your absence is due to military duty, announce your physical location by stating the county, city, Township or village and the state from which you are attending the meeting remotely.

I'll start with Doug Clark.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Juanita Curry.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Anthony Eid?

>> COMMISSIONER EID: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Brittini Kellom?

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Rhonda Lange?

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Present; attending remotely from Reed City, Michigan.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Steve Lett?

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Cynthia Orton?

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON:

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: MC Rothhorn?

>> COMMISSIONER ROTHORN: Present.

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>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Rebecca Szetela?

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Janice Vallette.

>> COMMISSIONER VALLETTE: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Erin Wagner?

>> COMMISSIONER WAGNER: Present; attending remotely from Charlotte, Michigan.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Richard Weiss?

>> COMMISSIONER WEISS: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Dustin Witjes?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: All 12 Commissioners are present.

And there is a quorum.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you, Michigan Department of State staff.

At this time we are going to move to remote public comment and if there are more signups for our in person public comment for this hearing at the end of our remote public comment period, we will then return to having folks come into the room and speak to us.

Just to be transparent as to what is going on right now.

Individuals who have signed up and indicated they would like to provide live remote public commentary to the Commission will now be allowed to do so.

I will hand the floor over to Michigan Department of State staff who will unmute you if you are on a computer, you will be prompted but I the Zoom app to unmute your microphone and speak.

If you are on the phone a voice will say the voice would like you to speak and prompt you to press star six to unmute.

Department of State staff will introduce you to the room and note that if you experience technical or audio issues and we don't hear from you for three to five seconds we will move on to the next person in line and then return to you after they are done speaking.

If your audio still does not work you can e-mail us at redistricting@Michigan.gov and we will help you troubleshoot so you can participate during the next public comment period or at a later hearing or meeting.

You will have two minutes to address the Commission.

Same as in person.

Please conclude your remarks when your two minutes has ended and you hear the timer.

Again if there is something that you want to say, an area that you are speaking about that you would like to provide further clarification for, please do visit us at www.Michigan.gov/MICRC.

I'll now hand the floor over to Michigan Department of State of staff who will give us our first remote public comment.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Thank you Madam Chair, first to speak is Naja-Harvey Quinn. Give us a second for our staff to unmute you.

We seem to be having difficulties with the first speaker.

We'll move to the second.

The second speaker is Scott Brines.

>> Caller: My name is Scott Brine.

From Wayne County, Detroit, Michigan, 48209 is the community that receives the most disparities when it comes to environmental justice issues.

That is why it is very important to make sure these lines are drawn in a fair map.

We do share with 48217, also the marathon area, which, you know, these ever-included industrial areas do have so many things in common and not in common with river front communities or the way this district snakes around up to Pontiac.

Those are the rules to keep in minds when drawing these lines.

Thank you for your time.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: For the record, the first speaker left.

We will move on to if third speaker, Sharon Connor.

Give us one moment to unmute you.

Sharon, if you are able to unmute yourself, you can address the Commission.

>> Caller: Thank you for having me here.

Thank you for the Commission coming to our city.

Firstly, I want to say as many have addressed earlier, the heart of our city is that we, in the district, when considering redistricting that you would consider be fair and consider our census and also consider the needs of our city.

That's all I would like to say.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you for providing comments to the Commission.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: The next for public comment is Susan Hendricks.

Please give us a moment for our staff to unmute you.

>> Caller: I'm Susan Hendricks.

I'm actually from the grand blank area.

I'm here because I was one of the thousands of people that got signatures, canvassed for this.

Everywhere we went people felt disenfranchised and their voices were not heard.

When they felt they were not being represented.

I'm exciting you guys are here.

What's most important is that when people vote, they know they are one person, one vote, that they know that when votes are counted and done, the legislature numbers, the people, our representatives will represent the numbers of people that vote for them

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so when you look at the numbers of people who voted one way, we don't have a totally different representation in our houses of congress.

Please just make sure that when people do vote, that the results are going to reflect the numbers in the same proportions that people know they are one person, one vote.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you Susan for providing comments to the commission this evening.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: The next public comment participant is -- apologies if I mispronounce your name.

Give us a chance for our staff to unmute you.

>> Caller: Mute.

Hi.

Can you hear me?

Hi.

Can you hear me?

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Yes, we can hear you.

You may now address the Commission.

>> Caller: You said my name right, yay.

I live in Oakland County, but I have relatives in Wayne County in Detroit.

The one issue that is very concerning to me is people who have health care services, mostly mental health, a lot of gerrymandering has broken up communities to where if they have a concern their representative will not -- they believe their representative will probably not care if they have a concern like say in Wayne County, their representative lives in Oakland County.

A person in Oakland County doesn't care what happens in Wayne County.

I believe the district should take into consideration the populations where the health care need is the greatest as in mental health.

Wayne county has and Detroit, they have a lot more issues in mental health than Oakland County.

I would love it if all the communities were kept together within county limits, if possible so they can have a representative that will be more sympathetic to their needs.

That is pretty much all I want to say.

Thank you for taking your time to listen to what I have to say.

I hope you all have a good day.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: We appreciate you taking the time to address the Commission this evening.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Our next public comment participant is Sonia Hill. Please aloe one moment for our staff to unmute you.

>> Caller: Hi, good evening.

My name is Mrs. Hill.

I represent district 3.

Hang on to the world as we spin around.

Just don't let the spin get you down.

Things are moving fast, hold on tight and you will last.

Hear the voices of the people on the east side of Detroit, district 3 where we have been looked over and forgot.

We are strong and resilient.

We ask for fairness across the board.

We can right it and make it plain.

United we stand and divided we fall.

The maps you produce reveal it all.

Take it from me, some day we will all be free.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you, Mrs. Hill for addressing the commission.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: The next is Keith.

Take a moment for staff to unmute you.

Thank you.

>> Caller: Hello.

Can you hear me?

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Yes, we can hear you.

>> Caller: Good evening, thank you for the opportunity to speak.

My name is Keith Harder.

I'm a resident of northwest Detroit.

I would echo a lot of comments that have been spoken here earlier this afternoon and evening.

One of the key phrases that I have been hearing is fairness.

I would implore the Commission to use fairness.

Obviously that term is open to interpretation.

My urgency or encouragement would be to think of fairness as the needs of the people and the constituents, the state and the counties and communities across the state rather than partisanship.

I think that would be an excellent guideline toward using fairness in redrawing the district lines.

Thank you very much.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you, Keith, for taking time to address the commission.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: The next public participant.

Take a moment for the staff to unmute you.

>> Caller: Hello.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Hello, we can hear you.

>> Caller: Hello, can you hear me?

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Yeah, we can hear you.

>> Caller: I represent the mighty district 13.

My issue is the process of developing the members of the commission.

I feel as though it should be more transparent so we can either have an understanding of how the process takes an open form.

We don't want individuals that are pretending to be one thing and something else.

As you well know, up there is divisiveness between parties, there's a lot of inconsistencies and causing chaos.

I'm hoping that the Commission will be transparent and fair and you guys, good luck and God speed.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you so much for taking the time to address the commission.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Next public comment participant is Emma Davis. Please allow a moment to unmute you.

>> Caller: Good evening Commissioners and thank you for the opportunity to provide public comment today.

Several people have spoken about the importance of recognize zing Hamtramck and Highland Park of a community.

I would like to add my voice.

I'm Emma Davis and program manager at global Detroit.

Oi engage residents of the community.

Hamtramck attracted German immigrants and many residents.

It is home to many small businesses, residents staff and support businesses across the region.

I would like to emphasize the population growth in Hamtramck community competed into Highland Park neighborhoods.

Housing stock has dwindled and become less affordable.

Be mindful of this.

We will submit a map on the portal to address the geographic footprint.

We have limited access to resources.

It is imperative the community be kept whole within state and federal districts to advocate for their needs to be met.

Historically, culturally, economically and environmentally, the Hamtramck town and greater community should be regarded as a community of interest and kept whole at every level to ensure representation.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: We appreciate you taking time to use the public comment portal to give additional information.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Next public participant allow a moment to unmute you.

>> Caller: Good evening.

Can you hear me?

Good evening, Commission.

I would like to say welcome to the great city of Detroit, a blessed town with blessed people.

Listen, affordable housing, clean, fresh water, schools, digital tools, safe communities, infrastructure, affordable health care and the like.

I am Yolanda Greer, a precinct delegate.

As you draw lines, pray and ask God for guidance.

As your constitutional duty and moral obligation to set the future preference path of all the children here in Michigan.

We all are very privy to have the affordability of all these things collectively together.

We must look at these lines as not just a line, but as people.

That rightfully deserve to have all God given rights.

I thank God for each one of you.

I am praying for you as you pray for us.

When you draw these lines, again, draw near to God.

God bless you all.

Peace to you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you so much for taking the time to address the commission.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Our next and final public comment participant. Please allow one moment to unmute you.

>> Caller: Good evening.

My name is Kibibi.

I'm a resident of Detroit.

I want to thank the Commission for your work to take public comments and get feedback from Detroit residents as you draw new districts for our state.

I am concerned about the continuity of districts within the city of Detroit as well as Hamtramck and Highland Park and suburbs such as Dearborn, Ferndale, Royal Oak in keeping the districts in such a way that continuous so our communities in Detroit are well represented and our Congressional Districts.

My support having a single district that includes all the neighborhoods of the city of Detroit and doesn't divide our city up into -- into small portions that are included with lots of far out suburbs that have different concerns and different -- different priorities from the residents of the city of Detroit.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you so much for commenting to the Commission this evening.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Madam chair.

The first public comment person rejoined.

The final comment will be from Najanava Harvey-Quinn.

Please allow a moment to unmute you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you.

>> Caller: Thank you.

Can you hear me?

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Yes.

>> Caller: Thank you all for having this meeting.

My name is Najanava Harvey-Quinn from the 48211 ZIP code.

I represent clean smoke community investment project.

We are really concerned about the representation impact of the lines that are being drawn and we want to uphold that we hope that it is redistricted there and honest.

I want you all to keep in mind the impact that it will have on future generations along the lines of funding our communities and funding the programs that we need to make sure our communities can flourish and come back from the divestment of previous districting.

Thank you.

That is my final.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you.

We appreciate you taking the time to address the Commission.

Confirming the Michigan Department of State.

Does that conclude our remote public comment?

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: No further public comment.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you.

At this time, there are no remote public comment and no further -- oh.

You are 40?

>> Yeah.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: We'll go back to in-person public commentary.

As a reminder for in-person public commentary, you have two minutes to address the commission.

Sorry, I can't hear you.

>> Is it all right to give a public comment.

I was out in the hall when you called 40.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Yes.

>> I just want to suggest an alternative.

I know you can't do it, but in future, we should have one house in the state and proportional representation instead of having a house and a senate in the state.

They wrote that article in metro times years ago.

I like that idea.

You can set anybody gets over 6% can represent that 6%.

If you have proportional representation, you wouldn't have to move these boundaries all the time.

Just proportionalize the vote differently.

You know, when you do the census instead of trying to figure out these districts of interest plus get the numbers to match the interest.

You could just get the interest boundaries and then do that.

Also, I like -- instead of florality.

Right now, these big money spenders have an advantage and can pack it with extra candidates to split the votes away from their opponents and so forth.

Rank order, a lot of people think that's the answer.

Actually, if you go for center for election science, their website, they promoted approval voting in North Dakota and just recently in St. Louis, they got it.

You can vote for as many people as you want.

You just can't vote for the same person more than once.

That leaves the strategy up to the voter, not up to people running candidates.

I think that would be a big improvement in our election system to go for system like that.

What you are asked to do is possibly not possible.

I don't know.

This way it will adapt to the changes and people won't get so confused about where the boundaries are.

There's too many of them.

There's city, county, state, school board, federal.

You know?

All these different districts.

This way, you might be able to come up in the future.

I'm not saying you can do it but good luck.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you so much for taking the time to address the Commission.

With number 40 being our last in-person and we have no more remote public comment, at this time we'll move along to our acknowledgement.

Without objection, we'll have acknowledgements brought to us by our general counsel Julianne Pastula.

Thank you, Detroit, for providing in-person and remote public comment.

It's an honor to be here.

Julianne, you have the floor.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: Thank you so much.

Thank you so much, madam chair.

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Thank you, again, to Fellowship Chapel in the city of Detroit for welcoming us this evening.

The Commission would like to thank all the volunteers that staffed the event to help make it a great success and also to the members of the public that either attended and didn't speak or attended and provided public comment.

Thank you as well for your input in making tonight a success.

Thank you, again.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you so much, general counsel.

As a reminder, utilize the public comment portal and fill it up with all, things to help us make this challenging task easier.

We truly depend on your input.

At this time, with all items on the agenda complete and no further business from the Commission, I will entertain a motion to adjourn.

>> So moved.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Motion made by Commissioner Witjes.

Seconded by Commissioner Lett.

Any discussion on the motion?

Hearing none?

All those in favor of adjourning, raise your hand and signify with aye.

>> Aye.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: All opposed signify with a nay.

The ayes have it.

Motion carries.

The meeting is adjourned.

It's 7:24 p.m.

Thank you for coming out.

Be well and be safe.