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MICRC

06/08/21 6:00 pm Public Hearing

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>> CHAIR KELLOM: Bear with me. We have a push to talk mic. So if you don't hear my booming voice the whole time, it's because my thumb is not doing the work it's supposed to do.

Good evening. As Chair of the Commission, I call this meeting of the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission to order at 6:03 p.m.

This meeting is being live streamed at you tube at You tube.

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 at a later date.

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 the public. And the Commission.

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

For the purpose of the public watching and the public record, I will now turn the floor over to department state Staff Sarah Reinhardt who will give roll call this evening.

>> 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.

Douglas 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: Present.
- >> 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 Commissioners are present.
- >> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you, Michigan Department of State staff.

Moving on to our other items on the agenda, without objection, we will have our welcome and introductions coming to us from Commissioner Vallette. And, hearing no objections, I will turn the floor over to Commissioner Vallette who will provide the welcome and introductions for this evening.

>> COMMISSIONER VALLETTE: Hello. Okay. Hello, my name is Commissioner Vallette. Welcome to the MICRC public hearing in Novi. We are happy you are here to learn about Michigan's new redistricting process and how you can engage throughout the process to ensure your voice is 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 your ideas about 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.

>> Good evening. Thanks for welcoming us to Novi. I'm MC Rothhorn; and I live in Lansing, Michigan.

>> Hi, everybody. Thank you for being with us here tonight. I'm Anthony Eid and I'm from Orchard Lake.

>> Hello everybody. My name is Juanita Curry. And I reside in Detroit Michigan.

>> I'm Cynthia Orton. And I live in Battle Creek. And I appreciate you all being here tonight.

>> Thanks for all being here. My name is Dustin Witjes and I'm from Ypsilanti Michigan.

>> Good evening //I'm Richard H. Weiss. I live in Saginaw Township in Saginaw, Michigan.

>> Welcome everybody. My name is Steve Lett and I live Interlochen, Michigan up by Traverse City.

>> Good evening. My name is Douglas Clark and I live in Rochester Hills, Michigan.

>> Good evening. My name is Rebecca Szetela and I live in Canton, Michigan.

>> Hello everyone. Welcome, again, so happy to be in Novi. My name is Brittini Kellom, and I live in Detroit, Michigan.

>> COMMISSIONER VALLETTE: In 2018 Michigan voters passed proposal two a ballot initiative for voters and not legislators to take responsibility for nonpartisan redistricting and created the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission or the MICRC. We are charged to draw fair and independent maps through meaningful public participation.

For the first time in Michigan history MICRC will lead the Commission to draw fair and independent maps, comprised of 13 randomly selected Michigan residents that includes four who are affiliated as democrats, five 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 seats.

As fellow residents the MICRC understands your expectations to draw maps in an open and transparent manner, that meet constitutional mandates. Our mission and vision amplifies our resolve not just for today but for future generations as well.

In your interaction with the MICRC and its staff, you should witness the core values and integrity, respect, transparency and being purposeful.

Once again, we are glad that you are here and we look forward to hearing from you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you so much, Commissioner Vallette. Without objection, we will move on to the next item for this evening, which is Commissioners Szetela telling us a little bit about public hearings.

Hearing no objection, Vice Chair, you have the floor and you may present your presentation.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you. As indicated my name is Rebecca Szetela and I am the Vice Chair of the Commission. To ensure fair and impartial maps, the MICRC is required to solicit public feedback before drawing any redistricting plan for the Michigan Congressional, House and Senate districts through a minimum of ten public hearings. We have actually decided to hold 16 public hearings as our initial hearings, and this hearing tonight in Novi represents nine out of 16.

The purpose for the public meetings is, number one, to inform the public about the redistricting process. Two, to share the purpose and responsibilities of the Commission. And, three, to solicit information from you about potential redistricting plans.

So what is redistricting? Every ten years following the U.S. Census District lines must be redrawn across America to accurately reflect the population. The process of drawing these District lines is called redistricting.

In 2020 the U.S. census reported Michigan's population as slightly over 10 million people. The Michigan districts that will need to be redrawn are 13 Michigan Congressional Districts, 38 Michigan Senate Districts and 110 Michigan House Districts.

The responsibilities and purpose of the Commission are to exercise our constitutional powers, granted solely to the Commission to redistrict Michigan. To operate in a fair and transparent manner that reinforces public confidence and integrity in the redistricting process. To conduct statewide, public outreach and invite meaningful public participation in the redistricting process.

Our goal is to adopt three maps, one for each District, while complying with the U.S. and Michigan Congressional mandates to ensure integrity public availability and accountability for data, public comments and Commission information, and to ensure compliance with the redistricting criteria.

In terms of what the redistricting criteria are, there is actually seven ranked criteria that we are required to follow in drawing our maps. Number one is that we maintain equal populations in compliance with the Voting Rights Act.

Number two is that our districts are geographically contiguous. And by that we mean we can't have islands of areas separated out from other areas in the same District.

We have to respect communities of interest, and I'll touch a little bit more on what that means in a second.

Number four and five relate to political parties. We can't give a disproportionate advantage to any political party and we can't favor or disfavor an incumbent elected official or any candidate for elected office.

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

So what are communities of interest? Communities of interest may include but are not limited to populations that share cultural or historical characteristics or economic interests. We do not include relationships with political parties, incumbents or political candidates.

So what does the MICRC want to know about your community of interest? We have all sorts of questions. What name would you give your community? What is the common bond that creates your community shared identity? What is the geographic area covered by your community? What are the Government policies that are important for your community? And 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 strengthen or weaken your community of interest? We want to know that, too.

So why are we here? The MICRC is here because we want to hear directly from you about your ideas to redistrict Michigan's Congressional, House and Senate districts. We want to listen and to learn about your community of interest.

Why should you care? Well, most importantly this is a historic process. This is the first time that citizens, average citizens the street have the ability to come in and provide input about where they think District lines should be drawn, that best represent their interests, not the interests of politicians.

We want to model openness and transparency to ensure statewide participation.

And, lastly, we want to invite those communities of interest, which is a new concept for redistricting in Michigan, to share their voices on how they would be best represented by District lines.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you so much, Commissioner Szetela. Without objection, our General Counsel will now come to us and share about our public comment guidelines.

Without objection, General Counsel, please take the floor and talk to us about our public comment guidelines.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: Thank you so much, Madam Chair. And thank you to Novi for the warm welcome this evening. The public guidelines I would like to cover this evening are in-person public comments will take place first, followed by 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.

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Please provide public comment and/or submit your proposed maps in the public comment portal, which is available at www.Michigan.gov/MICRC. Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you, General Counsel. Without objection, we will now begin the public comment portion of our meeting.

Hearing no objection, we will now proceed with public comment. Individuals who have signed up and indicated that they would like to provide in-person public commentary to the Commission will now be allowed to do so. You'll step to the nearest microphone when I call your number. Of course, I always I have been telling people please also introduce yourself unless you are fine with just being a number this evening, that is fine with us.

You will have two minutes to address the Commission as General Counsel stated. Please conclude your remarks when your two minutes has ended and you hear the timer. The timer will happen when your two minutes is up. There will also be a clock that you can see on either screen.

And I will try my best not to interrupt you. We don't want to interrupt, but if you finish your sentence and start a whole new paragraph of things to share with us this evening, then you will hear my voice.

Again, because of this, and just in general, if you're here just to listen and watch and learn, perfectly fine. If somebody bubbles up in your spirit and you feel like there is something you want to share in the vain of public comment, go to our public comment tool and share your comments in writing, including any specific area of the map about which you are speaking. The public comment tool is at www.Michigan.gov/MICRC. Again, the public comment tool can be found at www.Michigan.gov/MICRC.

Do we have, yes, we have two mics. So if it's convenient for you, I'm going to have the odd numbers step to the left, to this mic right here; and the even numbers will step to the right. If you are an even number and you're way over here, I don't want to inconvenience you having you to trek over to the mic, so if we can work it out where odds are over here speaking and evens over here, that is great.

First in line for public comment numbers 1, 2, 3 and 4. 1 and 3 will step to my left, which is probably you all's right. And 2 and 4 will step to my right. One, if you are ready, you can begin addressing the Commission.

>> Hi. Bill Bond from Green Oak Township. This Commission is not some good Government exercise operating in laboratory conditions. Read the Court's findings of fact in the trial in the League of Women Voters case that challenged the last redistricting. The republican parties operatives elected representatives, consultants and lawyers connived behind closed doors in secret, away from the other party, and away from the scrutiny of the public to gen up maps for sole purpose of maximizing republican control even in the absence of majority support.

Do you think these same folks gave up just because the voters passed prop two? Be aware of a trojan horse labeled communities of interest. It's a novel concept fraught

with a great deal of subjectivity. As such, expect it will be used by the same forces through District interventions, through the testimony of ringers they have selected and prepped, and by selectively cutting and pasting good-faith testimony offered by ordinary citizens to fit a narrative quilt.

In other words, they will have worked out their best maps and backward engineer a testimonial narrative while their real intentions will be kept hidden to salvage as much of the corrupt system as they can.

Don't be fooled. You must use expert analysis like the expert witness whose testimony was accepted as true in the League of Women Voters litigation. Indeed the Princeton Woodrow Wilson schools of advice to you is to, quote, adopt statistical measures that evaluate partisan fairness for statewide maps as a whole, not on a District by District basis, close quote.

On January 6th we saw a mob assault on the republic, insurrectionists, many holding elective office today are prepared to try it again. Maps permit the majority of the sovereign people to select their representatives may prove to be the one critical piece to save America from the catastrophe of an irredeemable and corrupt one party state in 2024. The stakes could not be higher.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Novi, let's try to keep a nice an orderly meeting. I'm glad that you are all a spirited group. We love spirit and expression.

Number two, if you are ready, you can address the Commission.

>> Thank you, hi. Hi, everyone. My name is Mary Ann Henry and I presently live in Brighton Township, which is in Livingston County. I was born and raised in Michigan. I lived here all but a few months of my 64 years.

I've lived in four counties, numerous cities. And each city and town I lived in I lived there because it had a distinct culture, and that's why I moved into that community and hoping, of course, that it would be a good fit.

Younger you want crowds and excitement you want loudness. But as you get older you move away from all that and I moved into the family stage where I looked for things that dealt with family, family community activities, sports, churches, and, of course, schools. And room to grow.

And now at this stage we look for something a little quieter, but with a vital area and a community involvement. And this community culture is why most of us live where we live. This culture is driven by the municipality and its master plan. These master plans can take years and even decades to develop, maintain and perfect. And as always dependent, every single one, is always dependent on municipal boundaries.

The investment a person will make once they decided on their chosen community and the culture, they would like to fit in will be most likely the biggest and largest and investment they will ever make in their lifetime.

So given that we base those investments on the area we choose to live, it would be devastating to have someone's decision change for them with a line on a map that

perhaps puts their home, their family, their investments into a culture, a community they didn't choose.

So while I know that municipal and county boundaries are on your list of priorities, I would rather be placed higher on that list. I would like to see municipal and county boundaries as the second most important criteria right after the Federal guidelines I know that you have to consider.

Given that there are so much at stake and investments are really large, please consider keeping boundaries intact when you can. Thank you.

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

>> Hello. I'm Ed P. I'm from Livonia, Michigan. I want to take this opportunity to thank you for what you're doing and what you're going to do. And when I first seen proposal two and what it meant and it was on the ballot, I jumped on that like a bass on a bull frog. Because what happens, it appears to me that over the years, party, a certain party abused the power of redistricting. And we want to change that. And you guys got a big job ahead of you. I think you can do it.

When -- there is something wrong when you got hundreds of thousands of people that vote for one party and the other party's five or six, up to 11 seats short, five in the house, six in the Senate, whatever which way it is. It's ridiculous. And it gives the minority at that point a chance to screw the minorities that are out there.

So we want to make sure, I'm not talking about lines. You guys got to do the lines and do it fairly. God bless you and do a good job and help us and get rid of the stuff that is going on out there right now. Thank you very much.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you so much for taking the time to share with the Commission this evening. Four.

>> Geno from Clarkston, Michigan. I want to -- I'm a seven-year resident in Clarkston, a lifetime resident of Michigan. I want to thank you for what you're doing. This is a monumental task. And I've been a voter since 18 years old, never missed a vote. And I believed in this proposal and I voted for it.

So, again, I want to thank you for all you are going to do. But I guess the main thing is how you would be educated to cover all this. And I guess what I really want to see is how or how you're going to educate yourself to cover all these different districts.

I know Clarkston is Northern Oakland County. And we are a small town as opposed to Southern Oakland, which is very busy. So there is vast, different communities there.

And the part that I want to make sure that comes across, and, again, I don't know how you guys will cover yourselves to educate yourself on all the different minorities and different aspects of the community. Thank you.

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

>> Good evening, everyone. My name is Thomas K. I'm from Oakland County, Waterford Township of seven years and lifetime Michigander.

I thank the Commission for what they are about to do. This is going to be a tough job for you, but I appreciate what you're doing.

I was thinking about this and I work in Warren. If I drive down I-75 back when they had that construction, or still construction, you're going to have to know all the back roads to get to Warren, if anybody has drove down 75, especially when they were first doing it.

And one thing I noticed when I travel from Waterford, down Telegraph and hit West Bloomfield, there is no difference. It all looks the same to me, might be a road that divides the two residence but it's the same.

So I ask that you take that into account. Wipe the maps clean, redistrict properly, stop the gerrymandering and make it fair for everybody to vote in the District that they are in. Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you so much for addressing the Commission this evening. Six.

>> Good evening. I'm sorry. I also want -- my name is Thomas Sutton. I live in Livingston County in Howell, Michigan. I've lived there for the last 18 years. And I'm a Michigander my whole life. The other part of my life I lived in Wayne County. I work in Pontiac. So I've had different backgrounds on all these different districts. And every District the demographics are different.

And it's like with Livingston County has different demographics than Southern Oakland County. And we are all in the same District. I mean, we have to draw these, get rid of the old maps. Demographics have changed. We need to have it fair. We have to get away from the antiquated maps that we have now.

You guys are going to have the knowledge. You guys are going to have all the information. You guys are going to be able to draw the lines. You guys will have all the data. You should be able to do a fair and equitable map. And that's all I'm asking for, so everybody has their fair say. Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Tom, thank you so much for sharing your thoughts with the Commission this evening. Seven.

>> Good evening. My name is Mark F. I live in Cohoctah Township, Livingston County, Michigan.

First, I would like to urge you to follow the municipal jurisdictional lines that create the fair districts that you're going to be creating. Keep the cities intact. Keep Township boundary lines intact. Do not split townships into several different districts. It's imperative that these jurisdictional lines be fully recognized by the Commission.

Communities of interest have a higher priority than County, City and Township boundaries. The testimony as to communities of interest show that the vast majority of comments being made are that the Commission should be respecting County, City and

Township boundaries. By doing in the people have elevated this provision to a higher priority in line with communities of interest.

This brings me to my first community of interest. I reside in Cohoctah Township, Livingston County. To the north is Shiawassee County, Burns Township. And Cohoctah Township has no connection with Shiawassee County. Rather, we consider ourselves part of the overall community of Livingston County. Keep our Township in Livingston County for State Senate and State Representative districts.

My second community of interest involves our local fire department. Cohoctah Township is a part of the Howell area fire authority. This authority is composed of Township of Cohoctah, Howell, Osceola, Marian and the City of Howell. To split this authority into different districts for Congressional District and State Representative or State Senator would be devastating to our representation.

I believe that when you draw the lines the fire districts and police districts are critical and must be considered as a community of interest that is meaningful. Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Mark, thank you for taking the time to address the Commission. Eight, please.

>> Good afternoon. My name is Persey Johnson and I'm from Troy, Michigan. My zip code is 48098. And I live right next to Mr. Clark. So I'm asking for our cities to be connected. You know, close, so that when you draw the maps that we have, maps that are shaped, that have connected cities because we can, you know -- there is the concerns that I have in Troy and the concerns that we have in Rochester are a lot different from the concerns that are out here in Novi where we are now. Or even in Detroit and some of our other cities.

So I'm really asking for you to focus on keeping the lines as tight as possible. This proposal two was -- I have been involved in getting signatures for quite a few different concerns that we have had in our state. And I'm going to tell you, this proposal was one of the most easiest petitions that I ever had to get people in our state to sign. I mean, from both parties and from all nationalities, from all cities. Everybody was so willing and so excited. And we are -- I'm happy for you that you are in the position that you're in. And you are able to sit down and you see the existing maps that we have, please throw them away and make our maps so our maps are shaped fairly, so everybody gets fair representation.

I sat in at another redistricting. And I was listening to some of the other challenges from Dearborn and Wyandotte, and all are concerned about their community. And, not only that, when you draw these districts, these are elected officials that are supporting our communities, so we want to be able to have elected officials that are able to represent our communities that are familiar with our communities and having them all spread out over the State of Michigan. It makes it hard for them, too. Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Well, thank you so much Neighbor Persey of Commissioner Clark for coming to share your thoughts and comments with the Commission. We appreciate that. Nine, please.

>> Hi, my name is Marsha Dicks. I've been a resident of Livingston County for 30 years. Livingston County is basically a rural community and offers citizen as large variety of parks, walking trails and many lakes.

Livingston County's north border connects to parts of Genesee and Shiawassee Counties. Both of those counties are relatively rural, have many parks and lakes such as Lobdell, Hoisington and Bennett. So it would see a natural choice for our District border to go north and encompass those areas. Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you so much. Ten.

>> Hi. Good evening. My name is Dan Lorea. I live in Hamburg Township in Livingston County. My wife and I pay Hamburg taxes, have a Brighton mailing address and sent our children to Pickney Schools. We shop in Brighton and Howell but seldom if ever venture north of M59 into the northern half of Livingston County.

Based on the experience, I have some ideas how new House Districts should be drawn. But let me get to that in a minute.

First, I want to make a more general point and support some things that have been said already. You really do need to start from scratch.

We know the current maps are part of an obvious republican gerrymander. We know that simply from the fact that the number of seats in the State House and State Senate bear very little resemblance to how the popular vote actually went.

So your job, as I see it, and as I've heard many other people say tonight, is to draw maps that result in more contested districts. Safe seats are places where politicians don't have to respond to the voters. The whole reason prop two passed is that is not what the majority of the people in the state want to see.

So turning to Livingston County, I don't agree that it's a rural county. It has an urban, suburban southeast and a rural northwest. The cities of Brighton and Howell belong to together. They are part of the relatively dense urban center, defined by the Grand River Corridor. 82% of all the retail and professional office space in the county is on or just off Grand River. The southeast part of the county is closely tied to Ann Arbor. The northwest part is in many cases closer to both Novi and Lansing as it is to Ann Arbor. There is almost no farmland in the southeast, but a great deal of it in the northwest. I don't think the urban, suburban versus rural split could be much clearer. That would result in two districts. And only one Township would be split, and that would be Brighton Township. And that would give you two districts of 91,000. Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you for sharing your comments with the Commission.
11.

>> Hello. My name is Paula Sader and I am from Hamburg Township. And I've been a Livingston County resident for 44 years. My community of interest is my church. In

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2013 the church my husband and I belong to built a new 1300 seated capacity church in Livingston County. The high concentration of its members have moved from Farmington Hills to Livingston County. The congregation was growing, so the decision was made to Livingston County.

Three of our four children and ten of our 12 grandchildren also live in Livingston County. It's the only physical church building in the Lower Peninsula. The church community is a foundation of our lives. It provides us with the opportunity to worship together and celebrate significant milestones in our lives, weddings, baptisms, confirmations, funerals.

Supporting one another and raising our children, sharing the joys of life and lending support in times of need. Livingston County's low tax base provides affordable housing options for people of all stages of life, single families and senior citizens. Parents can choose from numerous school options, private, public, charter, and home schooling.

Parental support in any of these options is critical to the educational success of the children. The rural environment provides an abundance of recreational activities outside of organized sports. Livingston County has many lakes to enjoy swimming and boating. The terrain and groomed trails welcome bikers and the woods provides hunting opportunities for the sports enthusiast.

The winter season offers downhill skiing, cross country skiing, snowshoeing and ice fishing.

Livingston County's healthy business environment is in part due to the low tax base. And businesses provide job opportunities for adults and also for youth. Many young men and women have gone on to start their own business based upon skills and experience learned on jobs in their adolescence. It's important to have elected representation from within the local Livingston County community, to know it well and understand and relate to our community values and needs.

Thank you for your hard work in this very important process.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you so much for taking the time to address the Commission this evening. 12.

>> Hello. My name is James Gallant. I'm with the Marquette County suicide Prevention Coalition. And my community of interest is the entire United States of American and the Constitution.

In my personal opinion, based on the facts, I believe that I have found the source of all of the confusion about the Constitution saying that you can make your own rules. And the definition of autonomy. Mr. Brady, Chief Civil Counsel for the Department of the Secretary of State, in the State of Michigan, submitted self-contradicting statements upon the public record is September of 2020. And one of them may be slanderous in nature.

He said very matter of factually that this Commission must follow Robert's Rules of Order. And I'm assuming he did that by analyzing the Constitution and Commissions of this type in Michigan.

He then stated very vaguely that you can just do whatever you want. And then Secretary Benson come on the record and she said matter of factually you have autonomy and you can just do whatever you want. Well, the secretary did not qualify that to say, yeah, you can do everything you want but within the perimeters of the rules of procedures, the general, the fundamental principles of parliamentary law in America. You can do anything you want, not outside of this.

Because you have autonomy. There is 11 definitions of autonomy in the Webster's dictionary. And you have autonomy, independent autonomy, like an independent school District that is in a series of school districts in the whole entire system. But what you don't have is free autonomy. Free autonomy would be that, yeah, you can do anything you want like the Sault Nation in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan. That is a sovereign nation within the boundaries of Michigan. Okay, they can do whatever they want. And they sometimes don't have to follow Michigan law because they have a sovereign nation.

You don't have that autonomy and can't make your rules like that. And can't just contravene the fundamental principles of parliamentary law in America, which, by definition, is Robert's Rules of Order over the last hundred years. So whether you like it or not, these are the rules. And you have approved them. And I would appreciate if you would do the thing and get yourself a hearing about the Bylaws and rules of procedure and have a hearing on that. And get some real advice from real lawyers about. That thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you, Mr. Gallant. 13

>> Commissioners, good evening. And thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today, Commissioner MC and Commissioner Rebecca and Mr. Woods, III. Thank you for taking the time to speak to us of the Asian American community last night.

My community supports the Commission and holds you in high esteem. We trust that the Independent Redistricting Committee will carry forward the will of the people in fairness.

My name is Linda Sliker. My community of interest is the Asian American Community. Novi and Farmington Hills has a high concentration of Asian Americans. This is why Farmington Hills should be looped in with the Novi District.

I live like 4.1 miles away from here. My daughter lives 4.6. My sister who lives in Farmington Hills lives about 3.94, 4.0 miles from here as well. But she is not in our District. So I feel that it's important that we throw out that old map and add Farmington Hills to the Novi District.

One example of why looping Farmington Hills and Novi is important to the Asian community is the ability to access language material in native tongues. Many of my

community have limited English proficiency. Health and education, reading material is really crucial to, well, everyone. So this is just one example.

The API community trust that you will hear our needs and consider them when you redistrict. In conclusion, Farmington Hills should be looped in with Novi District. And not doing so, I feel it would have a grave impact on the Asian American voice in our community.

And I want to thank you all for your hard work and thank you for listening to me this evening.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you Ms. Sliker. We appreciate you for sharing your comments with the Commission this evening. 14.

>> Good evening. My name is Denise O'Connell. I'm a resident of Hartland Township, Livingston County. I've been a resident of Livingston County for over 50 years.

Livingston County is made up of many rural communities. Most residents live on small lots, half acre in the country. We prefer to live in the country and commute to work because of the lower taxes, less crime, and enjoy the small town feel of our communities. We enjoy hunting and fishing as well as firearm ownership.

My community of interest is the Hartland, Deerfield fire authority. Hartland is located at the intersection of U.S. 23 and M59 with Deerfield Township located north and west of Hartland.

The fire authority is responsible for fire protection, rescue, emergency response, and both of the Township as well as providing by contracts portions of Tyrone Township. It covers roughly 80 square miles. These fire authorities work very well for decades and needs to continue. I ask that our small communities in Livingston County continue with the elected representation that truly represents us. With this information I ask that you consider that all community, fire authorities within our state would think about them when you're drawing the District lines. Thank you very much for your time.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you for taking the time to address the Commission. 15.

>> Good evening. My name is Chip Warner. I'm the community relations director for Disability Network Oakland and Macomb or DENOM. We are located in Troy, Michigan and serve the population of Oakland and Macomb Counties. DNOM is a center for independent living committed to promoting inclusion for all with breaking down barriers and opening paths towards independence and personal choice.

I've attended previous MICRC meetings and noted that citizens are highlighting access to resources, relatable representation, equity and fairness when defining communities of interests, which are all reflective of our mission.

I'm a proud advocate that allowed our population to receive early access to the COVID-19 vaccine. And I'm honored on advocate on behalf of our population again. COVID-19 revealed the difference between the visible and nonvisible disability. Most

vaccine centers were accessible, ADA accessible, for the physical disability, yet failed to consider the nonvisible disability.

I ask you to reflect on your experience when you receive that vaccine. I'm sure we all felt anxious when we entered that walk appointment. Now consider those facing developmental or emotional barriers who rely on city services.

Our reach at DNOM is vast. We serve all of Oakland and Macomb County. We are a population. Our consumers live in many communities. Their communities need to be kept intact with fair boundaries that consider accessible transportation and affordable housing, the two most common calls for requests that we receive.

Our population relies on their communities or city services. And they need to be fairly represented rather than selfishly divided. We urge you to keep cities intact when drawing new lines, especially those that share services with bordering cities.

And please consider both the visible and nonvisible disability as you draw these lines.

Lastly thank you. This is far more accessible than Dearborn. I was terrified for folks who were walking downstairs. I ushered people up and down stairs. Please continue these types of environments moving forward. Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Chip, we appreciate your comments in addressing the Commission. 16.

>> Good evening, everyone. My name is Alexander G. I just graduated the University of Michigan, so I'm here from Ann Arbor.

I wanted to talk very briefly about a core tenet of our democracy, not only of ours but of everyone. And that is a very simple proposition, that if you are an elected representative who chooses not to do your job, not to deliver results to your constituents, then you should be voted out of office and replaced with someone who will.

Unfortunately, that doesn't happen very often in our system. And a big part of that is because of gerrymandering. But another part that contributes to that is safe seats. What do I mean when I say safe seats? These are districts that are so overwhelmingly republican or democratic that they will never elect a member of the opposite party.

In the 2020 elections, over 14 members of Congress, ten of them were elected in safe seats, which means ten of those 14 essentially didn't have to win a single vote for more than 40% of their constituents. And in our State House, the difference is even more stark. We have 110 State House members, 89 of them come from safe seats.

Now, it is constitutionally obligated that this Commission take party advantage into consideration when drawing its maps. But what I recommend that this Commission avoids is creating a map that has 50 safe republican seats, 50 safe democratic, and only ten competitive.

I encourage this Commission to draw as many competitive seats as possible while maintaining those communities of interest, and, by extension, creating more districts for better elected representatives.

Thank you and I look forward to seeing the maps you submit.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you, Alexander, for taking the time and congratulations on your recent graduation.

[APPLAUSE]

17.

>> Good evening. My name is Connie Robinson. And I live in Hartland Township for about 40 years. Hartland is a small community on the eastern side of Livingston County. I appreciate the opportunity to speak this evening. And I would like to thank you all for being on this Commission. This is an immense job and, as you know, and also an immensely important job.

My community of interest is the Catholic Church. Livingston County has eight Catholic Churches, four of which also provide K-8 education. I belong to St. Patrick Catholic Church in Brighton where I'm very active in the respect live ministry. Our ministry works closely with the Livingston County chapter of Right to Live and also with the pregnancy help clinic, which is a nonprofit that helps women in crisis and also has assisted literally thousands of families in Livingston County throughout the years.

Our church partners with and promotes these organizations through volunteering through fundraising and also through community outreach. One of the really important ways that we accomplish this community outreach is through the many summer fairs and festivals throughout Livingston County that occur every year. These events are important to me and gives me an opportunity to represent our church, our ministry and also, again, allow us to do community outreach for Livingston, Right to Live, and the pregnancy help clinic.

It's really important to me that Hartland Township and Livingston County remain intact. Lines that would split us would fragment our churches, their schools, and our partnerships. So I, therefore, very respectfully and strongly, urge you not to divide Livingston County. Thank you so much for your time.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you for coming to talk to us and share about your concerns about Livingston County. 18.

>> Good afternoon. My name is Eugene Breenstine and I live at Farmington Hills at 14 and Middlebelt, a stone's throw from West Bloomfield. Our school district also extends into West Bloomfield.

Farmington and Farmington Hills are a community of interest. And it's important to me as we share a common school District, library and other services. Downtown Farmington is in effect the downtown of Farmington Hills. We should be a contiguous unit when it comes to state and national representation as our issues are the same. And we also share civic organization such as the Farmington Musical, Farmington Community Arts Council, and the Farmington Historical Society, all of which my wife has been a very active member.

Being close to close to West Bloomfield and Franklin Village and having relationships with people and the businesses in those areas makes them, from my perspective, part of my community of interest.

Today's situation when it comes to Congressional representation is problematic as we have little in common with the Grosse Pointe and Detroit and while we are split from those, we have common interests as is most obvious when it comes to Farmington/Farmington Hills. Thank you for your consideration and thank you for all your work.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Eugene, thank you for taking the time to come and address the Commission. 19.

>> Good evening. My name is Wes. And I'm from Hartland Township in Livingston County, Michigan. And my community of interest is Livingston County. I want to give a handful of examples.

In Livingston County a lot of myself and a lot of my friends, very proud individualists. We enjoy the lowest county property tax rate in all of Michigan. And we also accept that we may not get the same level of services as other counties. But that's how -- and that is what attracted me to the county.

I'm hoping to keep Livingston County intact. If you look to the south of us, to the east of us, to the north of us we have counties that have vastly higher taxes, more services. And that is great for their lifestyle. But I think the people that live in Livingston County are looking for that more of, I will say the more individual, you know, individualist point of view.

I also want to mention from a public safety standpoint, you know, keeping our county intact, we have a sheriff's department and several city and police departments, many, many Township police departments. I think it's important from a public safety standpoint to keep us intact because there is a lot of coordination that goes on between the various police agencies to keep the counties safe.

I'd also like to say that, you know, during some of the turmoil in this last summer with defunding of police, while some of our surrounding communities, and I had that point of view within Livingston County. We are very strongly support the police and like that community to say that way.

Lastly, I have worked quite a bit within the Home School Network in Livingston County. There was a robust home school network in Livingston County. And that is another reason why I'm hoping that you will keep the county together.

And my last seconds I want to thank the Commission. I look forward to districts that are well shaped, not these gerrymandered districts. And thank you very much for your service.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Eugene, thank you for taking the time to address the Commission. We appreciate that. 20.

>> My name is Larry Schmitt and I live in Novi. And I was a precinct worker, District precinct worker for ten years. And I know we had a safe and secure election. And I just don't want you, because we have some legislatures that are lying, and they're threatening and they want to dismantle you as a Commission. Don't listen to them.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Larry, thank you for taking the time to address the Commission.
[APPLAUSE]
21.

>> Hi, Dan Walahan. I'm from Genoa Township in Livingston County. I spoke at the Lansing meeting about keeping our county together as we are a group of rural communities that have no more than 25,000 people. And one thing you hear from all sides of the political spectrum here tonight is everyone wants their communities kept together if at all possible. And that's one thing I definitely do agree with.

We all know what a gerrymander is. You look at the current map, when you see a District that's about one hundred miles long or a District that's shaped the strange tail, like the 14th District, and you have all different districts wrapped around there because when you have one that's a crazy shape, you have four that are crazy shapes as well. Those type of districts need to go away.

I brought three clean maps here for areas of my community in Livingston County, what I think will be good, fair maps. The Congressional map that I brought is a fair map as well, that for Livingston County area along with some surrounding areas, that went for President Trump. It went for President Obama. It may have gone from President Biden or Trump, I'm not sure. And went for Governor Whitmer. So I brought some fair, clean maps that are shaped normally. And I think that we need overall clean maps that are fair, that look a little bit different than what we have today. And that will keep everyone's community together as much as possible. Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you, Dan, for addressing the Commission.
[APPLAUSE]

If you would like to give us the maps, you can. 22.

>> I'm Ross with the City of North Novi. And my community of interest is Southeast Michigan, which is composed of Livingston County, Oakland County, Macomb County, Washtenaw County, Wayne County, and Monroe County.

Currently seven counties are broken into two or more Congressional districts. Kent, Montcalm, Saginaw, Washtenaw, Macomb, Oakland, and Wayne Counties. Although I have some concerns for the prior three, I have even more concerns for the latter four, Washtenaw, Macomb, and especially Oakland and Wayne County.

In Southeast Michigan I believe counties should be kept whole. When they cannot be kept whole, I believe they should be divided by north, south lines along Township lines as practically as possible. Any deviations should be along east, west Township lines. Or city, town, village or neighborhood lines, keeping said units intact as practically as possible.

The current District lines in Oakland and Wayne Counties are ridiculous and should be avoided by this current Commission. The lines should be drawn geographically and not politically. Thank you for this opportunity to express my recommendations to this Commission.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you for taking the time to share with the Commission this evening. 23.

Sometimes we have numbers that high, 23. 24.

>> Good afternoon. My name is Mike Orlando. I'm from Macomb Township so I guess I'm representing the east side today. Two and a half million Michiganders voted in favor of prop two, and that is not all democrats. It certainly wasn't all republicans. But there is, as Percy mentioned earlier, there is no debate that people want this change. There needs to be a hard reset. These District lines need to go. And I know that this Commission is ready to do the hard work to make that happen.

We really need to look at communities and the commonality. And I know we have touched on it. But when you have Grosse Pointe and New Baltimore and all these Eastside communities that are on Lake St. Clare and they are still -- they are with Southfield and all these other Districts that have nothing to do with waterfront life. And it's just we need to focus on the commonalities. And I know that you guys are going to do that.

We also need to look at the will of the people. We had a lot of people voting this last election. But it didn't transcribe to what the representation ended up in Lansing. So we need to do that, and in D.C. So we need to look at that will of the people. And please keep that in mind.

No political party should have an overwhelming advantage with the gerrymandering. And I know that you will look at that. At the end of the day, all I can hope is that this committee will always look at the will of the people. I thank you very much for your time.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you so much for taking the time to address the Commission. 25.

>> Hello, Michigan citizens, Redistricting Commission, and all members of the community that are here to join or observe public commentary.

My name is James Jewel and I live in Sterling Heights, Macomb County. I'm here to ask the Redistricting Commission to draw new lines that make sense for the communities in Michigan and the citizens that live in them without any partisan or political agenda and instead with a commonsense mind framing from a place of servitude.

As a union member and an avid musician, I may live and work mostly in Sterling Heights where I've recently bought my first home. But I spend a lot of time in surrounds areas as well. Just as an example, I would consider Sterling Heights and Warren to be communities of interest together. I often visit one of my favorite barbecues places when I am in Warren, especially when I I'm attending occasional work trainings down there.

My metal band has also played numerous shows in Warren and that is where we stop for food, gas, and everything along the way.

With a lot of people like myself that may live in one of the cities and work in the other and these people doing their daily routine things such as shopping, social life, visiting down, across both city lines, those are examples of two cities that very well may belong in the same District for good and justifiable reasons. There are hundreds of similar examples across our state.

However, our current District map has a lot of problems. There are some District lines drawn so obscurely and in such a contorted shape that some have referenced tonight already, but they have gained a level of notoriety for the obvious gerrymandering that took place when the lines were drawn. These districts share little to no culture or economic similarities, nothing to do with each other. Nothing that makes sense or makes community of interest together other than granting partisan advantage in our elections.

All I'm asking you to do today is to make sure that no partisan pressure and no political agenda has any effect on our new District map. Our voters should be choosing our politicians and not the other way around. Thank you for your time.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you Mr. Jewel, for taking the time to address the Commission. 26.

>> Good evening. I'm Donald M from Northville Township, Western Wayne County. And I'm old enough to remember being taught about gerrymandering and how it came about and why it was unfair.

If we look at the districts that we have in Southeast Michigan today, I think we have to really admit that they are a total mess. As far as the area of community concern, well, you know, I grew up in Oakland County on the west side of Woodward and I guess that would make me a west sider. And today I live in Northville Township, Western Wayne County. And I lived here a long time ago. I watched this area to continue to grow without the constraints of a Lake St. Clare or a Detroit River but with a lot of open farmland that has gradually been converted to industrial and residential use.

In Northville, which is part of that, we share a lot of common concerns with zoning schools, water, sewage, roads and now landfills as well. The same as our neighboring communities of the kind of the I-75 or 275 corridor of Canton, Plymouth, Plymouth Township, and even in Oakland County, the City of Novi.

I encourage you to take into consideration the common concerns of these expanding Western Wayne communities that we share. You have a terrific opportunity, something enduring, a model for the future and possibly even for other states. I say make it fair, square and compact as possible without crossing city lines, Township or municipal lines. Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Donald, we appreciate you coming to address the Commission. 27.

>> Greetings to everyone. I'm Audry K. Anderson and I live in Washtenaw County. I know there are several points, bullet points to look at. However, the one that stands out for me is the community that I live in. So community of interest is what I value. I value a compassionate community. I value a community that has the resources that we need. I value a community that is diverse.

In Washtenaw County we are split. There is the 7th and there is the 12th District. Personally, I'm speaking for the 12th District, I represent the 12th District. It is diverse. And I know you look at the numbers in terms of population. The 7th District has 710,000. The 12th District has 704,000. So I'm asking that you use wisdom in redistricting. I do not have a map to submit today. I will be submitting one later because I need help withdrawing the maps. This is a complex process. But even with the complexity of this process, I ask that you use wisdom in redistricting. Thank you for your work and your time.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Audry, we appreciate you taking time out to address the Commission. And she is going to submit her map later. And we direct and encourage you to interact with our comment portal at www.michigan.gov/micrc, that is a place you can express your thoughts in writing and submit your maps and speak specifically about the communities you live, play and work in. 28.

>> Good evening. I would like to thank all of you for allowing us the opportunity to share our thoughts and insights on the redistricting process. I was excited to learn that we could be involved and it wasn't going to be politics as usual thank you.

My name is Eva and I live in the City of Brighton in Livingston County. I've resided here for 30 years. When I think of communities of interest, I immediately think of Livingston County as a whole and I would love to see it remain as an intact direction.

There is something unique about our District. It has kept up with the times while continuing to have a small-town feel. The reason for this is community involvement and volunteerism that has encapsulated our District.

A couple of personal examples that I'd like to share. When our local town of Brighton was building the Imagination Station, we all volunteered our time, donated money, donated bakery. I remember it feeling like a block party. And my neighborhood in the City of Brighton still feels like that.

There was a time when my kids and I rescued a bunch of baby squirrels from a bird house they were squatting in. We started by bottle feeding them and then contacted the Howell Nature Center, 15 minutes away, to help us understand of how to reintroduce them to their original Habitat.

We went there to release these squirrels and were educated along the way. In turn, the Howell Nature Center has our children's best interest in heart in teaching them about animals, wildlife preservation, and allowing them to have field trips and many interactive experiences there.

The annual 4H fair held in Fowlerville brings the whole community together enjoy the farm life, crafting, and small-town activities. The glue that keeps districts together is common interest. And I feel even those who have moved to our community in recent times have done so in search of community-centered towns and villages. And now I have discussed this, I bet I have six new neighbors. And that is exactly what they said to me while they looked at moving to our community.

These are just a few of the reasons I feel that our District would benefit from keeping the County of Livingston intact. Thank you again for all your time and efforts and consideration of all of our thoughts and ideas.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you so much for taking the time to come and address the Commission. [APPLAUSE]
29.

>> Hello. My name is Levi. I live in Brighton, Michigan in Livingston County. I'm 15 years old. I decided to voice my opinion regarding my community of interest because the lines that are drawn will be in place throughout my high school years, college years, all the way until I'm 25.

My community of interest is where I play sports with and against my friends. I play hockey and golf. Some of my best rivalries and friendships for me come from my home school of Brighton but include Hartland and Howell, all in Livingston County. Please keep these communities together. There is nothing better than a good game against the kids that I hang out with.

I know that schools usually try to keep their conferences within their county or close by. Please keep Livingston County together. It is important to me. I appreciate your time tonight.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Levi, we appreciate you more. Thank you so much for coming to address the Commission.
[APPLAUSE]
30.

>> Hello, everyone. My name is Taroon. I was born and raised here in Michigan. And I do plan on living here for a long time. I just have a few points about Oakland County. Oakland County deserves a fair redraw from its current maps. It's a diverse place, and currently the maps are not fully reflecting the diversity. And that the maps should be competitive, giving candidates a fair chance to win. And not having to fight seemingly predetermines with the outcomes. So thank you for your time and thank you for your efforts.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you for coming to address the Commission. 31.

>> Good evening, Honorable Board of Commissions. I live in Hillsdale County. I love my Tri-county. As a business owner I specialize in early development. I primarily cater to Hillsdale, Lenawee and Jackson County, which includes Monroe, Lenawee, Hillsdale,

and Branch County, all these are aligned based on demographics to create service areas.

Now we have Michigan International Speedway, that's a great tourism spot. The Jackson College works in partnerships with Lenawee ISD and Hillsdale location. Energy sector which is Consumers Energy and headquartered in Jackson and Monroe and altogether has multiple DTE operations.

We hold pride in local businesses, steel industries. For example, Bergdorf Steel in Jackson and Monroe. And Alro Steel headquartered in Jackson. We have Michigan State police post, Jackson and Hillsdale both, and that connects and compliments Tri-county.

Our education system, that heavily contributes to Tri-county, relies heavily on Michigan Department of Transportation as well. We have Life Community Health as well, which caters to Jackson and Hillsdale. We have Michigan Department of Health, Human Services, which is all around three counties. These are very critical.

We have region of Irish Hills Narcotics Office, which is very critical and not the least farmland, agricultural, which it adds more life and possible reasons for people to come and do the traditional way of living as farmers. We have traditional crops, some of them that cater as Jackson County, Hillsdale County and Lenawee County, all in strong dairy, hog, livestock and potato grower. This is what creates a strong community economic connection between the counties. And it's perfect example for a common bond that will keep community intact. Thank you for your time and God bless you all.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you for coming to share your comments with the Commission. 32.

>> Hello. My name is Chip Miller. I'm from Commerce Township, Michigan, I was a member of the legion of volunteers who gathered signatures for proposal two, standing at farm markets and courthouses and even the dream cruise.

I can remember this is a grass roots effort, not financed by corporations or politicians or any group like that. I was always happy to say when I was asked that how much are you getting for a signature. And I would say nothing. I'm a volunteer. Not even the marijuana proposal people could say that.

Several times while standing and harkening at people to come sign my petition, usually people will go by and they hear you but they will ignore you, until I said the one word gerrymandering. More often than not heads would whip around and come back to me and either sign on the spot or they want to hear my spiel, then they would sign on the spot.

I'm here to urge the Commission to always remember that proposal two is passed by the people overwhelmingly and got more votes than any political party or candidate. Definitely truly a people's effort to make politics fair in Michigan. Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you for that reminder and sharing your comments with the Commission this evening. 33.

>> Hello. My name is Anna P. I'm from Brighton, Michigan. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to share my opinion tonight about my community of interest. I -- like I said I'm from Livingston County, that is my community of interest, particularly my school District of Brighton Area Schools. I would like to see our District stay together. I feel proud of our District. I would be heartbroken to see any part of that District not in one group.

I have four children that attend the District. And it's where almost all their activities take place. Their friendships reside and that is where our heart belongs. I love my community. It hosts a wonderful part of my life from the daily things such as school, grocery shopping, and errand running to the weekly items such as attending the farmer's market in Brighton on Saturdays, church in Howell on Sundays, or visiting family in Fowlerville whenever we get a chance.

Please keep Livingston County together. Thank you for your time.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you, Anna, for taking the time to share your comments with the Commission this evening. 34.

>> Good evening. My name is Gwen-Markum, I live right here in Novi. I want to, first of all, thank all of you for your service on this Commission. I think it's really important. I think we are going to be a model for the United States if we do this right. And I very much appreciate the seriousness with which you're taking your jobs.

I served for five years on the City Council here in Novi. I'm currently the County Commissioner, but I want to speak about Novi specifically and ask you to keep it as a community intact. We currently have four different school Directors in Novi, which already creates a barrier for us to have a unified community when it comes to communicating and activities and so on. We work very hard to try to pull our community together. If Novi were to be separated in the new districts in any way, it would just add more confusion, divide our community more.

I think it would be a great burden on the clerks and those who run the elections to have that much more confusion. So I very strongly urge you to keep the City of Novi as an one unit in any maps that you draw. Thank you very much.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you. 35.

>> Welcome to Novi. Good evening, Commissioners. First, I would like to thank all of you for your service and dedication to this very important project. My name is Cecilia Gallagher and I'm a residents of Novi, within Oakland County.

I'm on the older adult services board for Novi. Novi provides many services for our seniors including activities, Meals on Wheels, health issues and transportation. I am proud to be on this board.

I also belong to CERT. This stands for the Community Emergency Response Team. We are trained in disaster for the hazards that may impact our area and educated on basic disaster response skills such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization and disaster medical operation. Novi has an awesome team.

Novi is a great place to live. There are many beautiful parks, activities, our schools, police and fire are exceptional. I would not want to see this beautiful city broken apart. I also reside within Oakland County. And in our Congressional District we are added in with Wayne County. I would like to see this changed. We do not use any services within Wayne County. Our services are with Oakland County only, which includes our sheriff and all other Oakland County services provided to us.

Therefore, I would like to see Novi's District added to other Oakland County cities or townships. And I will send a map through. This is our map right now for our Congressional District. So I will make sure I add that and upload it. Thank you for your time. It is much appreciated.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you so much. 36.

>> Thank you for the opportunity to speak. This is a very important initiative. You've got a tough job ahead of you. And it's absolutely critical that you are doing exactly what you're doing here, hearing perspectives from a lot of the constituents. The outcome needs to be fair and equitable.

My name is Roger Lundberg. I'm a lifetime Michigander and I've been a resident of Northville Township for the past 16 years. And before that I was a resident of Plymouth Township for almost 23 years. I'm currently the Clerk of the charter Township of Northville whereas I'm here speaking as a resident of the Northville Township. Being the clerk gives me somewhat of an unique perspective.

As you consider the redistricting task before you, I would ask that you give priority to the following items: Number one, you have heard this many times already this evening, do not split up governing jurisdictions; i.e., don't split up a city or a Township into multiple districts unless size and the population dictates it.

Keep similar like communities together in one District. For example, Novi, Northville City, Northville Township, Plymouth City and Township, Canton all have a lot of commonality.

Keep District maps as simple or compact as possible. Square, rectangular or following natural boundaries such as major roads, rivers. And, if possible, and this one is probably the toughest, is try to keep the public school districts together.

Thank you for your time and I know you've got an awful tough job ahead of you. Thanks again.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you for taking the time to address the Commission. We have been at it for quite a while. And I'm seeing someone in the seats. At in time, if there is no objection, I'm suggesting that we take a ten-minute recess to allow folks to stretch and go to the rest room and do what they need to do in terms of self-care. That means we will return promptly, promise, at 7:33 to continue our second half of the public hearing. Thank you so much. At this time we will take a recess until 7:33.

[Recess]

>> CHAIR KELLOM: I call this meeting of the Michigan Independent Redistricting -- Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission back to order at 7:39.

For purposes of the public record, I'll have the Michigan Department of State staff, Sarah Reinhardt, give a roll call for Commissioners present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Hello again, 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.

Douglas 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: Present.

>> 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 Commissioners are present.

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>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you Sarah again 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. You will step to the nearest microphone when I call your number.

As a reminder, you will have two minutes to address the Commission. And please conclude your remarks after your two minutes has ended or when your two minutes has ended, not after, when you hear the timer, please not after you hear the timer.

Please go to the public comment tool and share your comments in writing including any specific area of the map you might be speaking of. Again, the website is www.Michigan.gov/MICRC. We will now hear from 37.

>> Thank you, Commissioners, for listening to our comments. My name is Jill Adams. My community of interest is Lenawee County, which is on the Ohio border, between Hillsdale and Monroe Counties. Lenawee County has just under 100,000 residents, which include small towns, rural areas, and farms. My desire is to keep Lenawee County whole, to maintain the cohesiveness within our nonprofit community.

Our community, Lenawee County, best understands the basic needs and growth of our citizens and, therefore, should remain whole. Lenawee County has amazing community support for well over 100 nonprofit organizations. These organizations include, but are not limited to, food pantries, animal rescue services, pregnancy care centers, homeless shelters, child advocacy centers, Veteran's groups, rehabilitation, the arts, domestic violence centers, youth organization, housing help, and people with disabilities. Every single one of these nonprofit organizations is essential to our community, which is Lenawee County. We all work together by volunteering and donating to keep these organizations running for citizens who need them to survive.

It is imperative that Lenawee County remain intact to keep our nonprofit community thriving. We do not want to encounter conflicts of interest that would be competing for basic needs and services for the community if we were to be divided. In addition, I believe, and it sounds like everyone that is here, in this room has the same thought, that every non-densely populated county in Michigan should remain whole whenever possible. Most counties have a uniqueness that defines the essence of community. Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you for taking the time to address the Commission. 38. 38. For purpose of the public record, 38 is not present. We will move to 39.

>> All right. Hi, everyone. Thanks for being here tonight. My name is Jordan S. Pronoun she, her. And I'm a lifelong Michigander and Farming Hills resident. It's incredibly important for me tonight to draw attention what I have noticed as far as my own districts, particularly Congressional District 14.

If you aren't familiar, it quite literally is in the shape of a really odd S, scooping up some of the east side of Detroit and the Grosse Pointe, running west along 8 mile to Southfield and Farmington Hills and north to Pontiac.

It seems to me with the current maps that racial gerrymandering has been happening under the guise of political gerrymandering in what I assume is an effort to dilute the voting power of predominantly Black communities in Metro Detroit. For these reasons, in my mind, it's imperative not only under the mandate of this new commission to be nonpartisan, but also the Voting Rights Act guarantees of the racial discrimination, that current maps are totally erased and not considered when drawing the new District boundaries.

The second point I'd like to make is that despite being kept together in the 11th Senate District and the 37th House District, Farmington is split off from Farmington Hills in the current Congressional District. This is incredibly silly. All my life people from outside this immediate area have mistaken Farmington and Farmington Hills for the same community despite being two distinct municipalities. We are a very diverse community that shares a school District and incredible library system and we support the same downtown area located in Farmington proper. I urge the Commission to keep these two municipalities intact at all levels.

Finally, as a young person who is working with other young people to submit public comments, I urge you to find ways to intentionally reach out to and involve young people in this process. A 15-year-old today will almost certainly vote from the redistricting plans under discussion tonight in the very near future. They are experts in their communities and they speak to their own interests and issues. It is incredibly important that we hear from them too.

Thank you so much for being here tonight. I look forward to seeing your drafts.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Jordan, thank you so much for your thoughtful comments to the Commission this evening. 40, please.

>> Hello. Good evening. My name is Craig. I'm a resident of Livingston County, Tyrone Township. I moved to Livingston County from Oakland County to take advantage of the unique qualities that I feel are within a rural community of my community of interest in Livingston County. And I desire representation that reflects the unique needs and qualities of the unique rural community of interest. And I urge the Commission to retain the District lines in my county of Livingston County. Thank you very much for your time.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Craig, thank you for taking the time to address the Commission. We appreciate you. 41.

>> Good evening, everyone. My name is Nancy Miller. I live in Farmington Hills. And I'm here representing Michigan people's campaign. Since I live in Farmington Hills, I will focus on the 14th District. And, as you have heard from several speakers tonight, Farmington Hills is in District 14, along with Pontiac, Detroit, Grosse Pointe. And my concern is why not restructure the District with similar needs and interests of other communities. Today that District is shaped to me similar to a horseshoe. Not a horseshoe but a seahorse. There is a head, it comes down and there is a tail.

So and also the law states that the 14th -- the highest numbered District should be located in Southeast Michigan. Will you follow the law?

I think District 7 is now in Southeast Michigan, not District 14. The Federal law stipulate that districts must have nearly equal population and must not discriminate on the basis of race or ethnicity.

As I stated before, the District stretches from Detroit westward to Farmington Hills, north to Pontiac, and it's actually the center of Wayne and Oakland Counties. Why not group communities with similar needs and interests? Are you planning to actually follow the law which I've stated already? Or the redistricting be based on the law?

The 14th District will become obsolete as of 2022 based on the census. Okay, wrapping up. Does the Commission have any Bylaws? How will you prevent gerrymandering and create fair representation? Thank you for your service.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you, Nancy, for taking the time to share your public comment. We will do our best to stick to the eight criteria outlined earlier today by Vice Chair Commissioner Szetela. And we hope you look forward to checking out and looking over what we come up with. 42.

>> Hi there. My name is Noah Arbit. And I'm from West Bloomfield Township, a municipality of almost 65,000 people and the 22nd largest in Michigan. West Bloomfield is ethnically diverse and it's the home to the largest population of Jewish Michigander in the entire state and has a major Chaldean and Iraqi Christian population, a large Black community, Arab Community, Indian Community, and the largest Japanese American Community in the state.

Greater West Bloomfield includes the neighboring cities of Orchard Lake, Sylvan Lake and Keego Harbor. The four towns share emergency service, the Greater West Bloomfield Chamber of Commerce, the Historical Society Community Coalition, Cable Commission and more. They also share policy interests overlapping the West Bloomfield 2 District as well as the headwaters of the Huron, Clinton, and Rouge River Watersheds.

Greater West Bloomfield is a clearly defined community of interest. And the Commission must keep it together in state legislative and Congressional maps. The 2011 sliced through Greater West Bloomfield to such a degree that even the most attune voter struggled to remember which District they lived in and who represents them.

As you can see, our communities divided in five areas with little overlap in Federal and state representation. It also bears the unfortunate distinction as one of the only larger towns in the state to be so divided into two house and two Senate and two Congressional districts. The current map disempowers our community and stifles collective political action in Greater West Bloomfield. You have the power and duty to change that.

As you can see, the 2011 gerrymander is blatant. They tore up the competitive 39 House Districts, which a democrat won by just 87 votes in 2010. And created two republican leaning districts by cracking West Bloomfield in half and replacing democratic precincts where the incumbent happened to live and with the republican precincts. The current gerrymander was motivated by bipartisanship. But in doing it is not. The Commission must not divide West Bloomfield Township and must keep all of West Bloomfield, Orchard Lake, Silvan Lake, and Keego Harbor together for the State House, State Senate and Congress.

Drawing maps even remotely similar to the current ones, adding a few precincts here and there, would perpetuate this punitive partisan gerrymander, which is exactly what the Commission was established to prevent. Thank you so much. I appreciate your time and service to our state.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: We appreciate you and thank you so much for sharing your comment with the Commission this evening. 43.

43. And we will move on to 44.

>> Good evening. My name is Tom H. I live in Ryan Township in Southwest Oakland County. I've been living there for 15 years now. I gathered signatures for prop two and I'm glad you're here.

I like Districts that are square or rectangular, not salamanders. I hope you can respect city boundaries as much as possible. Lion Township is a growing community with infrastructure issues like water and sewer and roads especially.

I agree with speaker 26 that growth is a common interest with other growing communities. Thanks for your work and wish you the best of luck with your challenging job. Thanks.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Tom, we appreciate you taking the time to provide public comment this evening. 45.

>> Good evening. My name is Bob. I'm a 25-year resident of Novi. I have nothing new to add in spite of what I have written on paper because other people have already addressed this. Let me add some punctuation though to what several of the speakers, including County Commissioner Markum have said regarding the jurisdictions that municipalities, town, cities, et cetera. And Commissioner Markum's that Novi is comprised of four school systems.

If this Redistricting Commission were to slice up Novi or other communities, that would not help to remedy a very difficult situation amongst these four districts. It would exacerbate it. So I implore you to listen to the input you receive tonight. And to the best of your ability maintain the jurisdictional boundaries of your cities, villages, towns and other communities.

I thank you for your service to the citizens of the State of Michigan. I'm sure this is happening with no small sacrifice on your part. I would also implore anyone still here this evening with all the noise and the dust in the air over the recent Presidential

election, if you have never volunteered in your community to work in a polling place, go do it. Learn the process. And you will see exactly how robust and secure our election process is in the State of Michigan. Thank you all for your service.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Bob, thank you so much for taking the time to address the Commission this evening.

[APPLAUSE]

46.

>> Good evening and thank you, Commissioners, for your work on behalf of this noble cause. My name is Robin O'Keefe and I live in Birmingham, Michigan where I work as a special education paraprofessional in the Birmingham Public School District.

I'm a proud lifelong Michigander, a parent of four young adult children, and an engaged citizen and volunteer. In 2018 I was crowned queen of canvassing by a local grass roots organization in recognition of the hundreds of hours I had spent knocking doors and lead up to the 2018 mid-terms.

The lion's share in support of a nonpartisan ballot initiative then known as voters, not politicians. I take great pride in this work because partisan gerrymandering is an existential threat to our democracy.

When Michigan voters agreed and overwhelmingly passed proposal two, we did so in recognition of a broken system where grotesque partisan manipulation of our voting districts has the undesirable effect of diluting the power of some of our votes while strengthening that of others and threatens democracy by contributing to increasing political polarization and voter cynicism.

For this reason, I'm appealing to you to, as they say, go back to the drawing boards. Throw out those old districts, which have been drawn with partisan interests and create new, fair, just maps, which will ensure that all citizens have a fair and equitable voice in our civic process.

For me this crown is a valuable reminder of my small part in the creation of this Commission and our common commitment to the future health of our democracy. Through the creation of new, fair, and competitive voting districts, which reflect the will of Michigan voters, we will ensure that the democracy future generations of Michiganders, like my current students, inherit is a fair, vibrant, and thriving one. Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you, Robin, for taking the time to address the Commission. 47.

47 if you are not here, we are going to move to 48 please.

>> Thank you. Hi. My name is Jeannette Mansfield. I live in Oakland County, Milford Township right now. I moved here about three years ago. Before that I lived in Livonia, Wayne County for most of my life. And it is a culture shock to me from my point of view. And so I understand the different needs of the different communities and would very much like you -- like to see whole cities remain intact. I completely understand that.

I also would like to see you just wipe the board and start over because it is a cluster right now.

Also, what I would like to see is whenever there is messaging, whether it's from you, anybody regarding gerrymandering, that we make a little inclusiveness tenor to it as opposed to, you know, we are doing this because, you know, we have different ideas than you. And I know that is not what we are thinking, but in this political climate I would hope that when we communicate about things like these redistricting, that we keep a message of unity in it because I think that's the best way for us to grow as a society and we really need it now. Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you so much for taking the time to address the Commission. 49.

>> Hello. My name is Abdul. I'm a college student at the University of Michigan. I'm from Canton, Michigan, that is where I currently live right now in the summer.

I had a few comments to make about, number one, State House districts. Number two, the Congressional districts for the Federal Congress and some more comments about Districting.

So, first of all, throw out the old Districts, the republican gerrymanders and they're very outright in their intentions.

Number two, do not use school Districts as communities of interest. They are communities of racism and wealth. For example, my school district is intentionally drawn to keep the poor, not as white communities of Belleville and Van Buren out of Plymouth/Canton Schools.

Also, I wanted to add that safe seats are not a bad thing inherently. And Michigan is going to have to see safe seats done regardless because of the way the voters are distributed around the state.

Also now I have some comments about State House. For State House I think Canton should be kept united for the State House District. I think that Livonia should also be united for its State House District. This leaves Plymouth kind of lonely and with nowhere to go in the traditional mindset where you think it should go north. So I think that it should go west and take some of Northern Washtenaw in the State House District.

For Congressional districts I have a few comments. I want Canton to be drawn into a District with Ann Arbor and other highly educated Western Wayne and Southwest Oakland County and Townships. I'm going include anything from Louding Township to Van Buren Township all the way up to White Lake Township and then on the northwest corner Hartland Township. This may seem strange, but these counties, these townships are necessary to reach the population of 76,000. This District is going to have a strong community of interest with highly educated voters and similar interests around the board. And it's going to be a great District for everyone involved. Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Abdul, we appreciate you taking time to share your comments with the Commission. At this time we will have 50.

>> Hello. My name is Alice. I'm from Suane, Michigan, just outside of Ann Arbor, about a 15 Minute Drive to it. And today I would ask the Commission to keep Washtenaw County intact for Congressional redistricting specifically. Other residents of the meandering 7th Congressional District have already addressed this body, asking Eaton County be considered part of the Greater Lansing Area or that Jackson be considered a community of interest with Battle Creek and its abeyance.

I will simply state I have only ever been in Eaton County when I attended college in Lansing. And the last time I was in Coldwater in Branch County, which is also in the 7th Congressional District, was over 15 years ago as I passed through on my way to Chicago. These are not communities I'm invested in.

I am, however, close to Downtown Ann Arbor. And I live, work and shop there and I socialize there, as well as in Ypsilanti. I will not hesitate to assert that most residents of Washtenaw County are connected to the Ann Arbor/Ypsilanti Area in some way, if only economically. And yet this urban center has been carved out of Washtenaw County and tacked onto the Greater Metro Detroit suburbs. I think this was done to better create, and I'm quoting here, a glorious way that makes it easier to cram all of the dem garbage in Wayne, Washtenaw, Oakland and Macomb Counties into only four districts.

Please fix this fractured Congressional District. And give me and many others like me an actual say in our closest communities.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Alice, thank you for taking the time to address the Commission this evening. 51.

51. We will move on to 52. Now, come on you all. 52. 53. I'm not giving you all any more breaks. Are you 53?

>> I am 53.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: You are 53. Okay. Good evening, 53.

>> Thank you for your time and thank you for giving me the opportunity to come up here and talk this evening. I would first like to thank the Commission for the general work that you do. It's not an enviable task. And I know that there are many people who volunteered to serve in your position, but you were the ones chosen. And I would like to thank you for the time and effort you are putting into it.

My name is Trent Varva. I am a resident of West Bloomfield Township. The first thing that I would like to say a generality about the process here.

We all know why we are here, because in 2018 the Michigan citizens decided they were tired of the gerrymandered maps that deprives our electoral districts over the last several decades. They had enough of the politicians controlling that process and they put it in your hands to make the wise decisions that will affect how they are represented going forward.

So please follow the eight points that are outlined in the Constitution on how to draw those maps. And I think that you will do a fantastic job.

I'd like to now talk about my community of interest, West Bloomfield. It is -- fits very nicely into its own State House District as do many of the communities surrounding it, Novi Farmington, Waterford, other places. But then I'd like to talk a little more broadly about a potential community of interest for the State Senate. My wife is a nurse practitioner that services or that serves at Women's Excellence, which is an obstetrics practice. So she services communities in West Bloomfield, Waterford, all the way up into Clarkston Area. And as well as many of our friends and family live up in that area as well. So we are -- I spend a lot of time going up and down that corridor. And it would serve well as a State Senate District.

Congressional, there is not a whole lot I have to say. I think that getting rid of some of the snake-ish districts that have been pointed out before would be excellent. And if we can focus on trying to keep those in and tight knit communities that would be really great.

Thank you again for your time today. I really appreciate it. And look forward to your draft maps later this summer.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you for taking the time to address the Commission this evening. 54.

>> Good evening. I would like to thank you for your work, yeah, work, for choosing to do this difficult job. We all know why we are here today. It's to talk about gerrymandering. Sorry, I'm just really nervous right now.

I would like to talk about how that since I am fairly young, the age of 14, about four years I will be in an election. So me and my friends, we learned about gerrymandering a little bit. And we know that it's the process of a party dividing up districts so that it has an unfair advantage. Me and my friends understand that is unfair. And we think -- and we think that -- and we think that you are going to do your best job for how you're going to organize these new districts.

I would like to thank you for your work. And have a good evening.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you so much for taking the time and having the courage to speak. That makes you an exceptional 14-year-old. I can't say that I was looking forward for Redistricting Commissions or Commissions to speak at your age, so you are already ahead of the curve. 55.

>> Good evening. I'm happy to see this Commission is underway. This has been a long time coming. My name is Lynn Bosa, and I'm a resident of Farmington Hills, have been a resident of Farmington Hills for 32 years.

And the thing that I would like you to consider when you are drawing the District lines is that you keep Farmington and Farmington Hills together. Others have said that before this evening. Farmington and Farmington Hills share school system. They

share a number of public works. And they are a community of interest. Thank you for your service.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Lynn, thank you for taking the time to speak with the Commission. We appreciate you. 56.

>> As a reminder everyone, please go to www.Michigan.gov/MICRC and check out our public comment portal. You don't just have to just feel this is the only time that you can share and connect and talk about your areas of interest. You can do that at the site that I just provided with you. Go ahead.

>> Thank you. My name is Jason Nicoles. I'm from Dearborn Heights. Unfortunately, I missed the Dearborn meeting, so I'm happy to be here today. And thank you all for your service.

I wanted to just speak and share with those of the community and of the state who are watching. There is actually a great tool that the Commission has provided called District R.org. It's a great place where you can go and draw your own maps. And on there you can see are you sticking to the rules of the Voting Rights Act, what is the partisan breakdown of the districts you've drawn. I would encourage those who are interested to go and utilize that tool.

And then, finally, I just wanted to say that I hope whatever the districts end up looking like, they create as many competitive districts as possible. I know that that impossible to make every District competitive. But even just playing around with the tool, I have seen it's quite possible to make four or five competitive U.S. House Congressional Districts as well as a few others that are lean one way or the other but still could become competitive one way or the other in the future.

I hope that you will consider that. And I thank you again for your service.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you so much for taking the time to share your comments and thoughts with the Commission as well as sharing your link with all of us here today. 57.

>> Good evening. My name is William Lefman Junior. I'm here to talk to you about my community of interest, which is Waterford. By the time I'm done you will say go Waterford.

And I want to thank the Commission for your time and dedication to this initiative. And thank you for hearing our testimony.

My community of interest, as I stated, is Waterford Township. We have 36 lakes in our community. And it's a sportsman's paradise. Our lakes offer a vast array of activities from sailing schools to fishing contests. We are environmentally conscious as we wish to protect our natural resources.

Waterford offers a vast amount of outdoor activities for both young and old. Waterford has an outdoor water park, which is great fun for all ages. Waterford has a fantastic farmer's market offering items from plants to vegetables and much more. Waterford has a BMX bike course, promoting a supervised, safe activity for the bike enthusiasts.

Waterford has a 35 foot high zip line, which most cities or townships cannot say they have even thought of.

Waterford has nature centers for those interested in discovering and learning more about plants, wild and aquatic life. For the winter enthusiasts, Waterford not only offers sledding opportunities and Waterford has a covered toboggan run where all you have to do is walk to the top to get a new toboggan.

Waterford has dog parks where people of all ages can walk their dog or let them play in a safe environment. As you have heard, Waterford offers a vast amount of activities for the community to partake in.

However, we want to keep Waterford Township one community of interest. Not split up with any other large Metropolitan area.

Thank you for your time. Good evening.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Go Waterford. 58.

>> I was going to say that. I was going to so go Waterford.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: We can say it together before your time starts. 1, 2, 3 go Waterford.

>> I'm Chris Greg. I am a resident of Farmington Hills and I have the honor of serving as the state representative for Farmington Hills for six years, ending last December.

I wanted to just reiterate some of the points that have already been made, but from a different perspective, from that of a legislator. When we keep municipalities together and counties together where possible, it increases the effectiveness of our representation of your elected officials. So when I had the good fortune of representing Farmington and Farmington Hills, I had two mayors that I worked with. I had one Senator that I worked with. But I had two Congressional -- two Congresswomen that I worked with and, so it split the attention on that.

So if we can make sure when we are drawing these new boundaries that when you have a State House, it rolls up to a state State Senate, and rolls up to a Congressional District. It makes it much more efficient for representing constituents. And we all want a very efficient Government because when you are in the state legislature some of your main responsibilities are the state budget. The state budget is generally organized around county municipalities. And so when you are working directly with those communities that you are trying to work on an appropriation issues with, that is very important that, again, you have a clear focus of what your goals are for advocating for your constituency.

We work on taxes. We work on economic development. We work on school funding. And, again, the more you dilute the districts, the harder it is to give your constituents the best representation that you can.

So I want to thank you for volunteering for being on this. It was an honor for me to also be part of the process. I've served as a democratic house leader as well for the last two years. And this has been such a long time coming. We have to strengthen our

democracy. It would have been fun to draw the lines if we were the majority but that is not right. This is what is right, for the people to have their voice and fair representation for everyone. Thank you very much.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you for your passion and sharing your thoughts with the Commission this evening.

[APPLAUSE]

59.

>> Good evening. I'm Robert Harris. I've been a resident of Plymouth Township for 22 years. Guys, thank you for serving. You've got a challenging job ahead of you. This is the easy part. You have the tough part ahead of you yet. I would like to urge you to keep Plymouth and Northville Townships together.

Back in the 1800s when in the State of Michigan townships were formed, Plymouth Township included Northville. And then later, many years later, Northville succeeded. And they were part, back when it was Plymouth Township, it was called North Plymouth and so they became Northville. So I would urge you to keep them together.

And, in addition, I think it's important to keep townships together. And in the case of Northville, some of that, you know, the southern parts in Wayne and Northern parts of Oakland, and a lot of people have spoken to keep counties together, but I think it's more important in this case to keep townships together. Thank you very much.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Robert, we appreciate you taking the time to share your comments with the Commission. 60.

>> Hi. I'm a resident of Plymouth Township in Wayne County. My community of interest are Plymouth and Northville just like Bob's. These contiguous communities have many things in common. They are a place where you want to raise your family and enjoy your retirement. Each has a city with excellent restaurants, shopping and small businesses. And there are many places to worship. Both school districts are excellent and some areas Northville students attend Plymouth/Canton Schools.

Not everyone shares the same political ideologies, however. We all respect each other's rights to their own opinion. And these communities, if someone's lawn is overgrown, instead of calling an ordinance officer, you would walk over and ask them if they need help.

Besides the great quality of life and education, these communities participate jointly in economic development, mutual aid, and share the 35th District Court. The MIPC, which stands for Michigan International Technology Center, is a collaborate real estate development initiative between the Plymouth and Northville communities. Many leading on a mode of research and development firms have chosen to be located in MITC. And the area is designated for elite class of global technology, mobility, life science and engineering innovators.

There is a small part of the City of Northville that is in Oakland County and I'm also asking that it stay part of the Plymouth/Northville District. For the reasons I've just

mentioned, please keep Plymouth and Northville as one District. Thank you for your time.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Stella, thank you for your time. And thank you for sharing your comments with the Commission this evening. 61.

61 if you are not here, 62.

>> Good evening. My name is Steven Jacob, a resident of Bloomfield Township. I guess my community of interest is really all the voters of Michigan. I think we are all entitled to have fairly drawn districts so that the outcome of our elections reflect of the people. We shouldn't have a situation where one party wins more votes than the other party, yet they become the minority, which is the situation in our State House and State Senate.

I live in the 9th Congressional District, which is as you probably, I'm sure you know, is a crazy shaped District. It extends all the way to Lake St. Clare. St. Clare Shores is in my District. And I feel I have more in common with my neighborhood, which is Birmingham and Bloomfield Hills. And they are in different districts. I am in the Birmingham School District. And, again, I feel I have more in common, kind of with north, south situation, going north and south, rather than east, west. So I think it's obvious that I'm in a District that was gerrymandered to pack one political party. And I think, I feel the districts should be competitive so we get politicians that, you know, is not a forgone conclusion who is going to win the election. So thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you for addressing the Commission. 63.

>> I think I may be the last one. Good evening. I appreciate the task that this Redistricting Commission is charged with. And thank each of you for serving on the committee.

My name is Margaret Earl and I'm a resident of Livonia in Wayne County. After World War II when our servicemen returned home, they got married and looked for houses. At the time Livonia was a Township with lots of farmland.

In 1950 Livonia was incorporated as a city. Manufacturing, small businesses and housing came to Livonia. Families were started, schools and churches were built. And the city motto families, first reflected the lifestyle. Attending parent teacher conferences, PTA meetings, coaching little league sports, serving as troop leaders for boys and girl scouts, attending church, sports, volunteering at St. Mary's Hospital, participating in various clubs and at civic events brought the people in the community together.

Today Livonia is the tenth largest municipality in Michigan. And the third largest city in Wayne County. Many of the residents live in the traditional neighborhoods, most of which were built in the 50s and 60s.

And the young people that are moving into Livonia are choosing the same families first lifestyle. You see, Livonia is my community of interest. And I want to keep the city of Livonia intact. As you follow the Voting Rights Act and comply with other regulations,

I hope you will be able to keep all of Livonia's residents in the same U.S. Congressional District and the same Michigan house and Senate districts.

As the residents continue to work, at keeping Livonia in the top ten happiest mid-sized cities and in the top 100 communities to raise a family, I hope you will be able to keep Livonia intact. Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you for taking the time to address the Commission. 64.

>> My name is Dwayne N. I live in Novi, Michigan. And I do want to also thank you for your work.

I think communities of interest are the potential problem in the process because I think that it can contribute some of the partisan politics we currently see. I believe redistricting should be entirely based only on population numbers. County boundaries could be used since they already exist.

With any county that is a population that requires more than one District broken down by a grid of basically equal squares, the characteristics and certainly the politics of the population should be ignored. Communities of interest should only be considered to slightly amend a grid line if necessary. This at least in theory should help to lead to competitive districts. Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you, Dwayne. You were right. You were the last of the people who came for the first time this evening. We will now move to our remote public comment. We have one person.

Those that have signed up for a second time to speak in person will do so after our remote public comment period has ended. So hold tight. Those 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 call your name and our staff will unmute you. If you are on a computer, you will be prompted by the Zoom app to unmute your microphone and speak. If you are on the phone, a voice will say that the host would like you to -- the host would like you to speak and prompt you to press star six. Again, I will call you by your name.

Also, please note, that if you experience audio or technical issues or we do not hear from you from three to five seconds, we will move on to the next person in line, though we only have one person today, and then return to you after you are done speaking. If your audio still does not work, you can e-mail redistricting@Michigan.gov and we will help you troubleshoot so that 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. Please conclude your remarks when your two minutes has ended and you hear the timer. Again, you all --- those that are participating through our remote public comment, you are more than welcome to visit www.Michigan.gov/MICRC to utilize our public comment tool for any area that you are speaking of, things you have in writing or other thoughts that you would like to share.

At this time we will have our first person and only person to speak for our public comment. And that is Mr. Tom Kuhn. If I mispronounce your last name or first name, please do correct me. And allow a few moments for staff to unmute you.

>> Thank you, Madam Chair. Can you hear me.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Yes. We can. Good evening.

>> Good evening. And, again, my name is Tom Kuhn. I would like to thank the Commission for allowing those of us who cannot attend in person to provide our comments remotely.

I'm a lifelong resident of Oakland County. I have lived in Troy for the last 20 years. Troy is on the eastern border of Oakland County with the city of Sterling Heights to our east and Bloomfield Township to our west. Troy is just north of several smaller cities and just south of Rochester Hills. The City of Troy is an unique community of interest with a very diverse population, including a large percentage of Asian American individuals and families. Troy also has a large number of religious institutions, including churches, Synagogues and temples, which reflect the city's diverse ethnic heritage.

This unique community of interest in Troy, along with the size of our city, around 84,000 people, emphasizes the need to keep it together as one unit for purposes of drawing State Representative and State Senate districts. The current District boundaries do not divide up the city. That should continue.

Our State Representative and State Senate districts have helped assure that our community of interest in Troy is represented in the state legislature. Troy also has its own District Court and has a large number of youth sports organizations. Troy is served by a newspaper, Detroit Times, which reinforces our community of interest.

Again, Madam Chair and Commissioners, thank you for your time and interest.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Tom, thank you so much for taking the time to speak with the Commission this evening.

At this time we will now return to our in person public comment. I will now call the first person to provide in person public comment for the second time this evening. Number one, the first person who has signed up go ahead.

>> Yes, James Gallant, Marquette County Suicide Prevention Coalition. And my community of interest is the entire United States and the Constitution of the United States. And I would like to thank you, Madam Chair, for reminder the public that anybody here can get in right behind me, right now and get two more minutes. But your attorney neglected to tell the public that when she gave her presentation at the beginning of the meeting and said the rules here. So I'm not sure why she didn't say that and that is a problem.

And, you know, I've identified, and, you know, this is my opinion, based on the facts, so I believe I have identified much of the confusion that has happened here amongst you members. It appears that, for one thing, the member of the public just said this is a Commission of the people.

That's true. And this, Robert's Rules of Order, is the rules of the people in the United States of America. This represents the fundamental principles of parliamentary law in America. And I believe that what you are doing here is un-America. This is different than the way we do it in America and that is why it's inappropriate.

And so I believe this confusion is coming into play because you appearing to replicate the California and Arizona Redistricting Commissions. I contacted those. I'm analyzing their minutes. They just opened up in California. Do you know what they did? Ten years ago the guy said, oh, Secretary of State is required by the Constitution to Chair the first meeting. Who would like to Chair? Well, just a few months ago they opened up the meeting and what did they do? The one member said he is going to be the Chair Pro Tem, not the Secretary of State. Every next Chair changes it just like this Chair right here is changing it every time.

And this thing about hearing no objections, that's not a real way to make decisions. You have to vote in America. That is the way it works. And these rules have been gerrymandered. So I believe that you should just download these rules altogether that you now, that you approved. Because they were approved in closed session, by your attorney and some undisclosed people, and whoever they were, in closed session, secret sessions. And all the sudden they showed up with them, here, good to go, and you rubber stamped them. Completely inappropriate.

And you have been starting the time before people give their name and you have been stealing our time. And please, everybody, get in line behind me because you got two more minutes coming. Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you for your insights and providing thoughtful time to the Commission.

As a correction, you all are more than welcome to always speak more than once, but you must sign up by the appropriate sign up time. And then you can have your second time to share with the Commission.

Two, I'm now calling number two, the second person who is signed up for in-person public comment. Number two, Ms. Anderson. Audry Anderson.

For purposes of the public record, it does not appear that -- it doesn't appear we have a second person to provide in-person public comment.

With no objections, at this time we will now have our acknowledgments. Hearing no objections, we would like to thank all of the volunteers who made this hearing happen. And actually I'm going to pass the mic or pass the floor over to General Counsel to continue our acknowledgments and thank yous.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: Thank you so much, Madam Chair. And thank you again to the community of Novi for hosting us this evening. I would like to acknowledge the League of Women Voters as well as the Voters, Not Politicians for volunteering this evening and making the event a success.

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I would also like to encourage everyone to visit our website as well as the public comment portal, which is found at www.Michigan.gov/MICRC.

And, lastly, I would like to thank all of the participants who either provided public comment or who sat and participated in the meeting by listening. It's because of you it was such a success. Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you so much, General Counsel. I paused myself because I realize I was not, I mean, I could give the thank you, but there is someone else that is more equipped to make sure we don't leave anyone out.

As the items of the agenda are completed and the Commission has no further business, a motion to adjourn is in order.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: So moved.

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Second.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: I got Commissioner Witjes with the motion, a second by Commissioner Lett. All in favor raise your hand and say aye.

>> Aye.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: All opposed raise your hand and say nay. The ayes have it.

The meeting is adjourned at 8:33 p.m. Thank you so much for attending and thank you for staying with us. Thank you so much.

[Meeting concludes]