

Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission
June 3, 2021 Meeting Public Comment

Date of Submission: Wednesday, June 2, 2021 9:14 AM
Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>
Name: GP Dems Communications
Subject: Resolution: Michigan Redistricting Commission

Good morning,

Attached is a resolution passed by the Grosse Pointe Democratic Club requesting that the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission keep the Grosse Pointes, Harper Woods, and the East Side of Detroit together in the new legislative district maps.

We are urging local activists, partner organizations, and governmental leaders to join us in this effort by issuing similar statements and/or attending the Commission's two upcoming public hearings in Detroit:

#1: Tuesday, June 15, 2021 at 6:00pm
Fellowship Chapel - 7707 W Outer Dr, Detroit, MI 48235
www.facebook.com/events/336797431114227

#2: Thursday, June 17, 2021 at 6:00pm
TCF Center - 1 Washington Blvd, Detroit, MI 48226
www.facebook.com/events/805003547069766

In solidarity,

Executive Board
Grosse Pointe Democratic Club
www.gpdems.com

Date of Submission: Tuesday, June 1, 2021 11:32 AM
Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>
Name: Greg Karmazin
Subject: Possible error in the MICRC's online mapping tool

Dear MICRC,

On May 31, I submitted a public comment in the form of a proposed map for Congressional District in the southeastern corner of Michigan:

<https://www.michigan-mapping.org/submission/p470>

When examining the map built with the MICRC's online mapping tool Districtr, I noticed that it appears there are precincts that cannot possibly all be connected that the tool "paints" when used to make the map (see screen capture of the errors on the map in the attached PDF file).

I tried to remove them, and an entire group of unconnected districts would be erased. Then I tried to add just the precincts that I want, and it still added the unconnected outlying precincts too.

It appears there is a data or functionality error in the MICRC's online mapping tool Districtr (see attached screen capture).

I would very much appreciate the MICRC examining this map and informing me if indeed the MICRC's online mapping tool Districtr is producing erroneous maps.

Thank you for your attention to this request. If you wish to reach me by cell phone, I can be reached at

[REDACTED]

Sincerely,

Greg Karmazin

Date of Submission: Thursday, May 27, 2021 5:02 PM

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

Name: Steve

Subject: Please Include ALL of Washtenaw County in a redrawn district

I have lived in Washtenaw County for much of my adult life. I am in the 7th district.

As you know, this district is represented by Tim Walberg in the House. I have never known a congressman who is so opposite to my views and values and those of many of my friends and neighbors in the district. As someone with longstanding close ties to my community, it astounds us all that Ann Arbor is explicitly severed from the rest of the County as the district is currently drawn. As a result our community is not represented adequately.

It is a widely shared belief that without a gerrymandered district, Mr. Walberg could not hold a popular majority. It is my view that Washtenaw County in particular would be better served with a district boundary that includes the entire county.

Thank you.

Steve Burdick



Dexter MI 48130

Date of Submission: Thursday, May 27, 2021 8:26 AM
Method of Submission: Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>
Name: Nancy A. Smith
Subject: Comments and maps – 5/11/21 Hearing

Good morning,

I submitted written comments through the portal on May 11th about state house district lines and state senate district lines. I also submitted a .pdf (with maps) through the portal that was intended to accompany my comments about state house districts. After some delay, my maps ultimately landed in the meeting materials of the May 13th hearing, which I did not think was helpful.

SO ... At the recommendation of Sarah Reinhardt, I am attaching, with this email, the comments together with the maps that I originally intended to be together. These comments and maps relate to state house redistricting in Jackson County, which is where I live.


Thank you for the important and difficult work you are doing.


Sincerely,

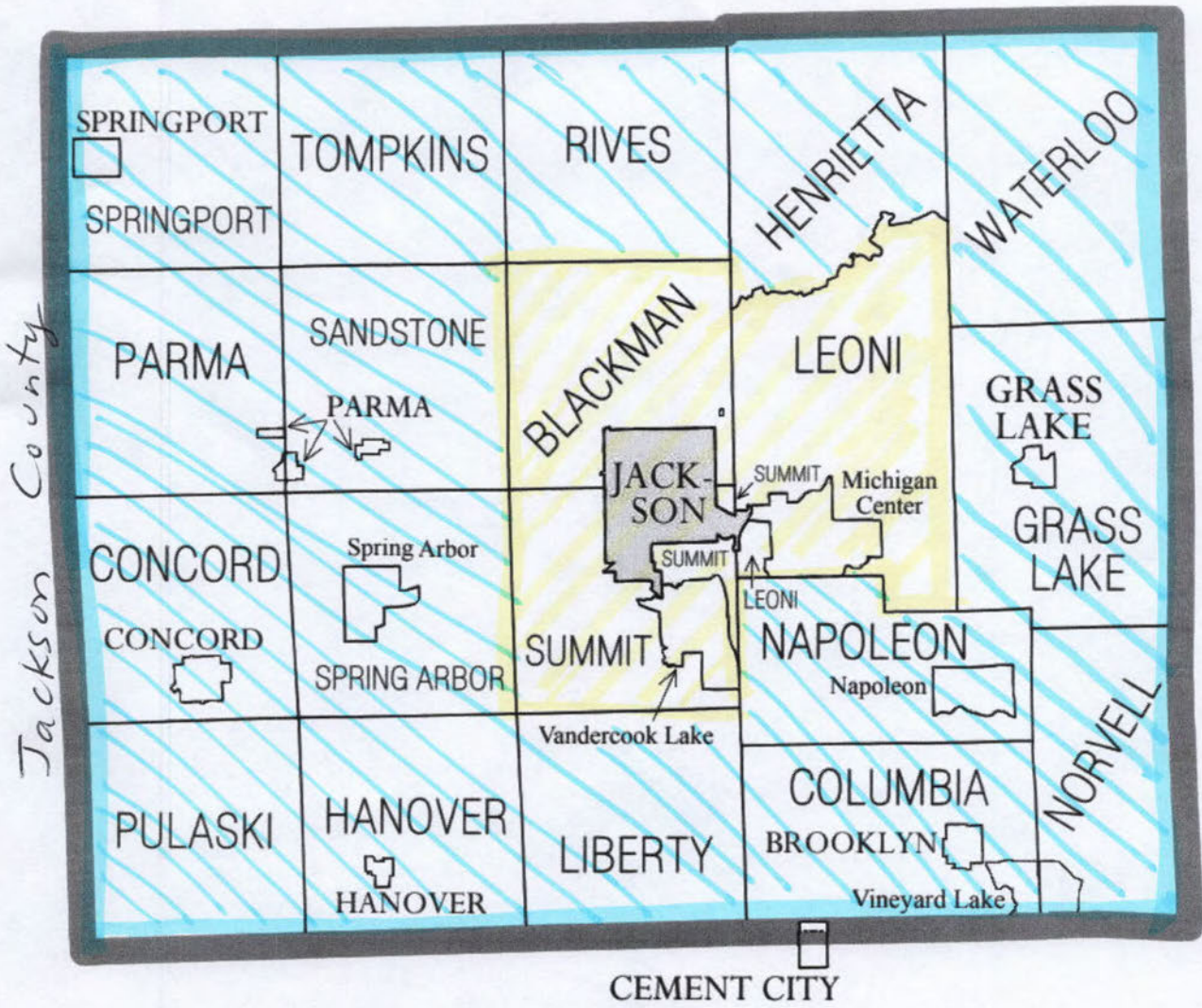
Nancy A. Smith, Jackson (Liberty Twp.)

5/11/21

C.O.I. Testimony from Nancy A. Smith - Map Attachment

 = Jackson County Rural

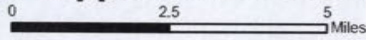
 = Jackson Co. Urban / Suburban



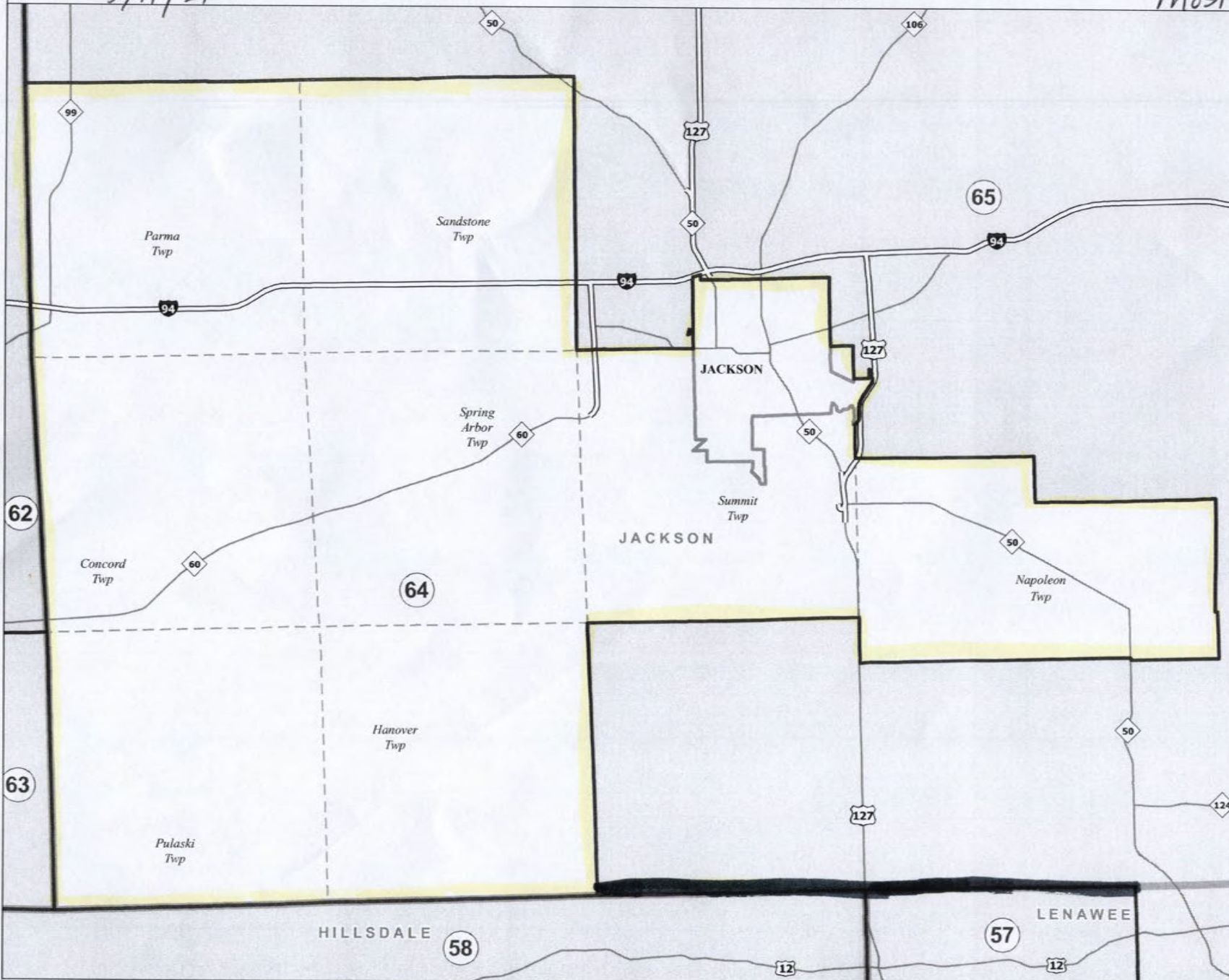
This map shows fairer and more compact district lines if Jackson Co. is to be divided into 2 new State House Districts.

COI Testimony
from Nancy A. Smith
5/11/21

MICHIGAN STATE HOUSE DISTRICT 64 2011 Apportionment Plan



Elected Rep. is
from rural area.
Most of population
in District is
Urban &
Suburban.



Legend

- House District
- City
- County
- Township
- Freeway
- Highway



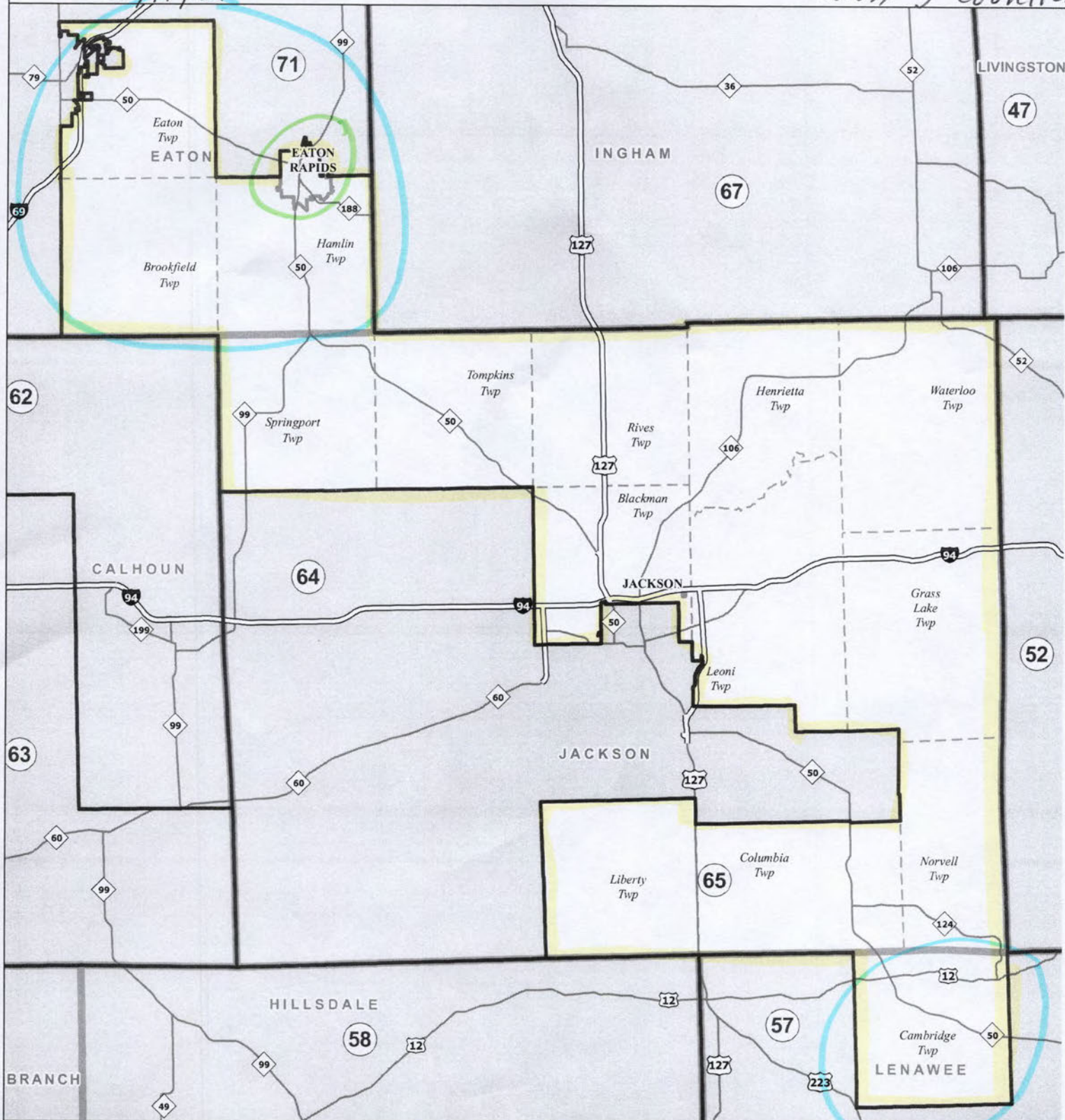
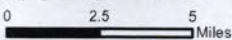
Source:
Base Map:
Michigan Geographic Framework v11a
Legislative District Boundaries:
2011 Apportionment Plan
(as enacted by PA 129 of 2011)



COI Testimony
from Nancy A. Smith
5/11/21

MICHIGAN STATE HOUSE DISTRICT 65
2011 Apportionment Plan

NON-compact
in shape
& meanders
across 3 counties!



Produced by:
Center for Shared Solutions and Technology Partnerships
Michigan Department of Technology, Management, and Budget
12/20/11

Source: Base Map - Michigan Geographic Framework v11a
Legislative District Boundaries - 2011 Apportionment Plan (as enacted by PA 129 of 2011)

Legend

	House District		County		Freeway
	City		Township		Highway





**RESOLUTION BY GROSSE POINTE DEMOCRATIC CLUB
REQUESTING REDISTRICTING COMMISSION KEEP GROSSE POINTES, HARPER
WOODS, AND THE EAST SIDE OF DETROIT TOGETHER IN NEW MAPS
(RESOLUTION 2021-03)**

Grosse Pointe Democratic Club
P.O. Box 36881
Grosse Pointe Farms, MI 48236
www.gpdems.com

June 2, 2021

WHEREAS, Pursuant to the passing of Proposal 2 of 2018, the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission is currently working on creating new district maps for the State of Michigan; and

WHEREAS, The stated mission of the Commission is “To lead Michigan’s redistricting process to assure Michigan’s Congressional, State Senate, and State House district lines are drawn fairly in a citizen-led, transparent process, meeting Constitutional mandates”; and

WHEREAS, The Commission must consider communities of interest, such as school districts and regions that share economic characteristics, when creating the new maps; and

WHEREAS, The Grosse Pointes, Harper Woods, and the neighborhoods of Detroit’s East Side are currently together in Congressional District 14, but are split up between State Senate Districts 1 and 2 and State House Districts 1 and 2; and

WHEREAS, The Grosse Pointes, Harper Woods, and the neighborhoods of Detroit’s East Side have several shared and common interests such as commerce, culture, recreation, public transit, public health, and K-12 public schooling; and

WHEREAS, The Commission is currently accepting public input from Michigan residents, organizations, and interest groups; and

WHEREAS, Based on the Commission’s timeline, final maps must be adopted by the Commission by November 1, 2021 so that they can become law no later than December 31, 2021;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Executive Board of the Grosse Pointe Democratic Club requests that the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission keep Grosse Pointe Woods, Grosse Pointe Shores, Grosse Pointe Farms, Grosse Pointe City, Grosse Pointe Park, Harper Woods, and the East Side of Detroit together when creating the new maps for Congress, State Senate, and State House because of the shared and common interests among us.

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**RESOLUTION BY GROSSE POINTE DEMOCRATIC CLUB
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###

[← Next](#)

[Previous →](#)

Downriver-Monroe County-SE MI Corner

Basic Info

Submitter: Greg Karmazin

Location: Grosse Ile Township

Submitted: 5/31/2021

Type: plan

Congressional Districts

ID: p470

Tags

More Info

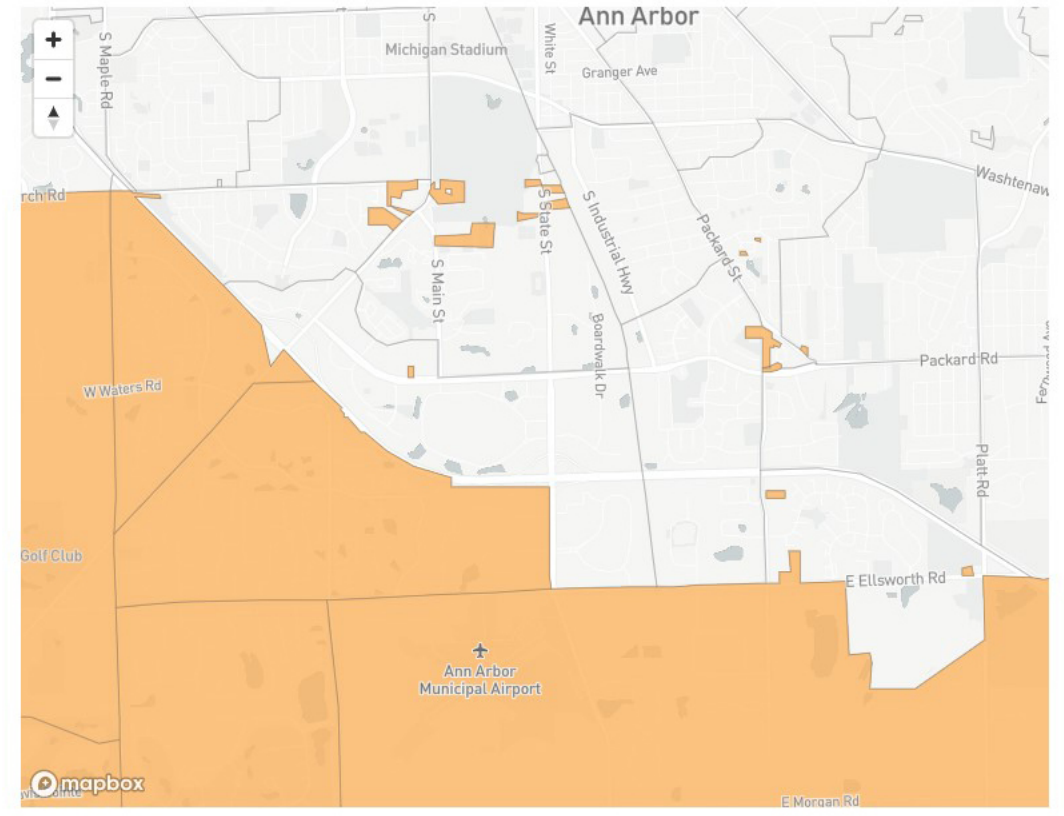
Downriver-Monroe County-Southeastern Michigan Corner Congressional District
The proposed map for the Downriver-Monroe County-Southeastern Michigan Corner Congressional District keeps numerous important communities of interest together while building around key transportation corridors, economic development regions, natural features and educational institutions service areas.

I. Highlights of the Downriver-Monroe County-Southeastern Michigan Corner Congressional District include:

- (1) 100% geographically contiguous with nominal deviation in linear geometry.
- (2) Maintains historic regional place identities such as Downriver and Monroe County with no divisions of communities.
- (3) Very close to the ideal population target with 764,754 registered voters (within maximum allowed population deviation of 50%)

You can pan and zoom in the embedded map with your mouse or the +/- buttons.

Map



[View in District](#) (To see statistics on this map, or to modify it yourself.)



Subject Redistricting
Speaker Deshon Leek
Date 5-27-21

Good Morning Commissioners. Thanks for allowing us to speak on the Redistricting Hearing, my name is Deshon Leek, I've lived in Lansing MI all my life. I'm the Southeast Rep for Michigan Building Trades and currently the 3rd ward Commissioner for the Board of Water and Light. I don't speak on behalf of the BwL or for any Commissioner's of the BwL. But I think we need to get rid of the old Gerrymandering map.

The Board of Water and Light serve many communities in the Tri-County Area, and the Tri-County area is split between 3 Congressional districts. Moving forward I would love to see those areas combined when the new map is drawn. Thank you again for allowing us to speak tonight. Thank you

5/27/21

My name is John F. Greenslit, 1127 Arlington, Lansing, 48917, located within the 7th Congressional District, which runs from Monroe to Hillsdale to Lansing, in an "L" shaped convoluted gerrymandered example of the challenge that the Commission is facing to realign boundaries to provide logical and reasonable representation to Michigan voters.

As a 52 year resident of Delta Township, located the northern most area of the 7th District, I have experienced many re-drawings of the District. We have seen the loss of Kalamazoo and Battle Creek over the years, only to be replaced by partisan boundaries to deny representation for urban and labor interests.

Delta Township has more in common with Congressional District 8 than its current 7 County boundaries, providing no representation but secures holding of office for career elected Members of Congress.

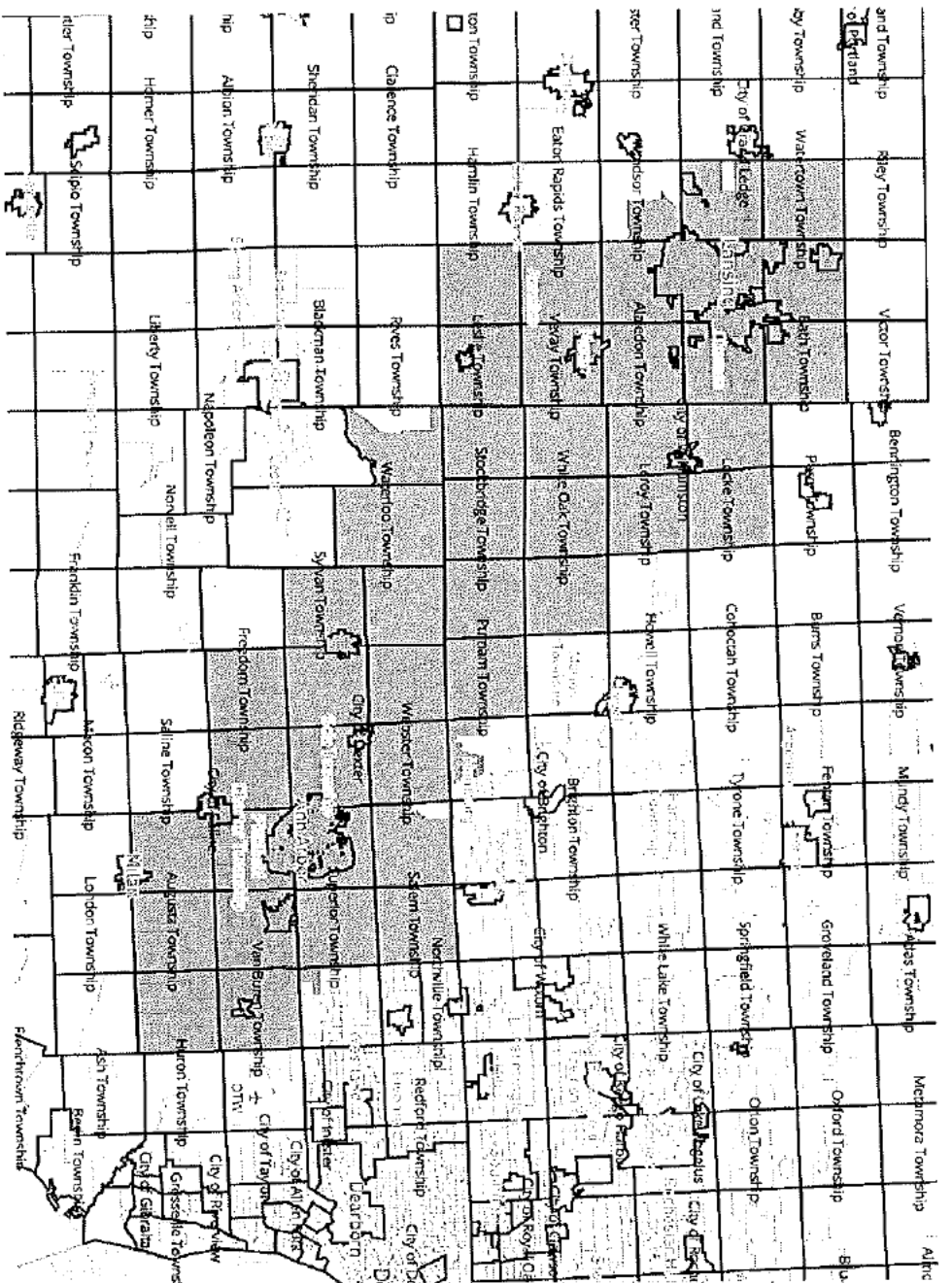
As a former candidate for this Commission, and more than 60 years in the public policy arena on the federal, state and local levels, it is my suggestion the mission and purpose of the Commission must realign the best possible solution to address the imbalance and partisanship that haunts this process.

A new East-West alignment with greater Lansing, Livingston County and western Oakland would serve us well. With my personal address within 5 minutes of 3 adjacent Congressional Districts, the common denominator is certainly not what exists today. There is a good model to examine, as this area is served well by the Tri-County Commission on Aging, with segments of three Congressional Districts.

Finally, with the loss of one Congressional seat for Michigan in 2022, your product should reflect balance, integrity, ethics and logic. It is a challenge that is attainable. If there are task forces, alternate positions or consultation interests, I am pleased to volunteer and serve.

JG

56
Lansing 5/27/21



- ▶ Contiguity
- About import/export options
- Export assignment as CSV
- Export plan as GeoJSON
- Export plan as SHP
- Export District-JSON
- Print / PDF
- New plan
- District homepage
- Save plan
- About the data
- About redistricting

Emma Menard

Communities of Interest:

Lansing / East Lansing / Ann Arbor

#54 - Lansing 5/20/21

Lansing, MI 48933

Good evening, my name is Carol Heron. I'm a retired Bay City math teacher. I've lived in Bay County for over 38 years. I'm here to discuss the State Senate District maps.

My community is Bay County which is on Saginaw Bay. We are adjacent to both Saginaw and Midland Counties.

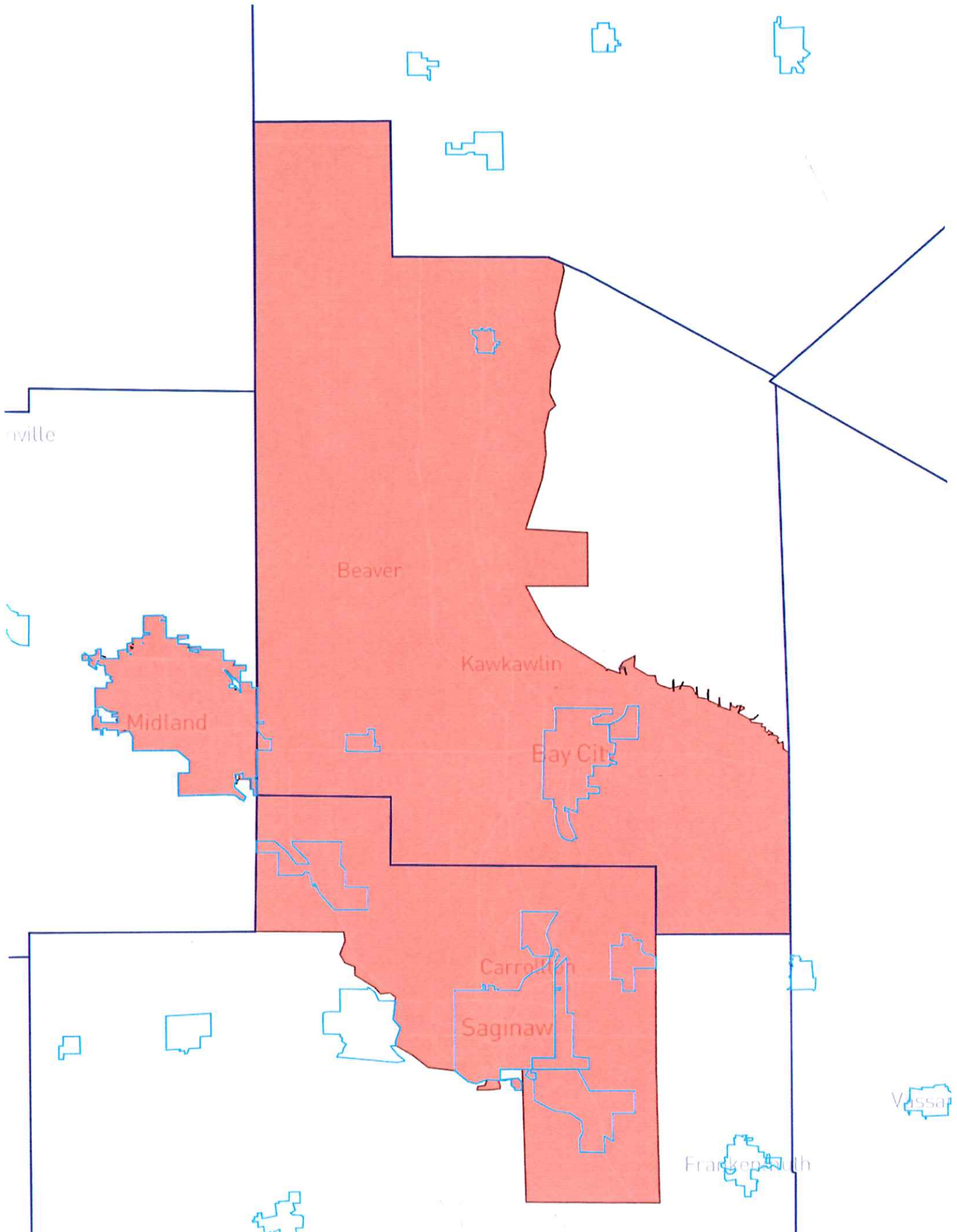
I am asking that When drawing district lines for the State Senate please put Bay, Saginaw and Midland Cities together in a Senate District with as much surrounding county as District totals allow..

I have submitted written testimony to the portal, which includes a video link addressing the impact the government has recently had on our waterway. I hope you will watch it.

Bay County's defining landmark is the Saginaw River and the Saginaw Bay. Saginaw and Bay City share the impacts and economic influence of the Saginaw Bay and River shipping channels which are maintained by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. We also share the designation of the Saginaw River/Bay Area of Concern by the International Joint Commission. As such, we are one of the most polluted places in the Great Lakes. Thousands of people in the Saginaw Bay Watershed are working to protect and restore it's health and beauty. The video posted to the portal with submitted written testimony shows one example of how government policy and funds can directly improve conditions of a major resource of transportation, recreation, fishing and the economy in this area.

The City of Midland is connected to Bay City by US 10 and Midland road. And to Saginaw by M-47,M-46 and I-75 and I-675. Thousands of commuters use these roads to travel between these three cities for work, shopping, arts and entertainment, and health care each day. These cities are known as the Tri-Cities. They share history, development, MBS airport, sports competitions, and higher level educational institutions. There is enough population that they should be represented in the State Senate.

Again When drawing district lines for the State Senate please put Bay, Saginaw and Midland Cities together in a Senate District with as much surrounding county as District totals allow.



...ville

Beaver

Kawkawlin

Midland

Bay City

Carrollton

Saginaw

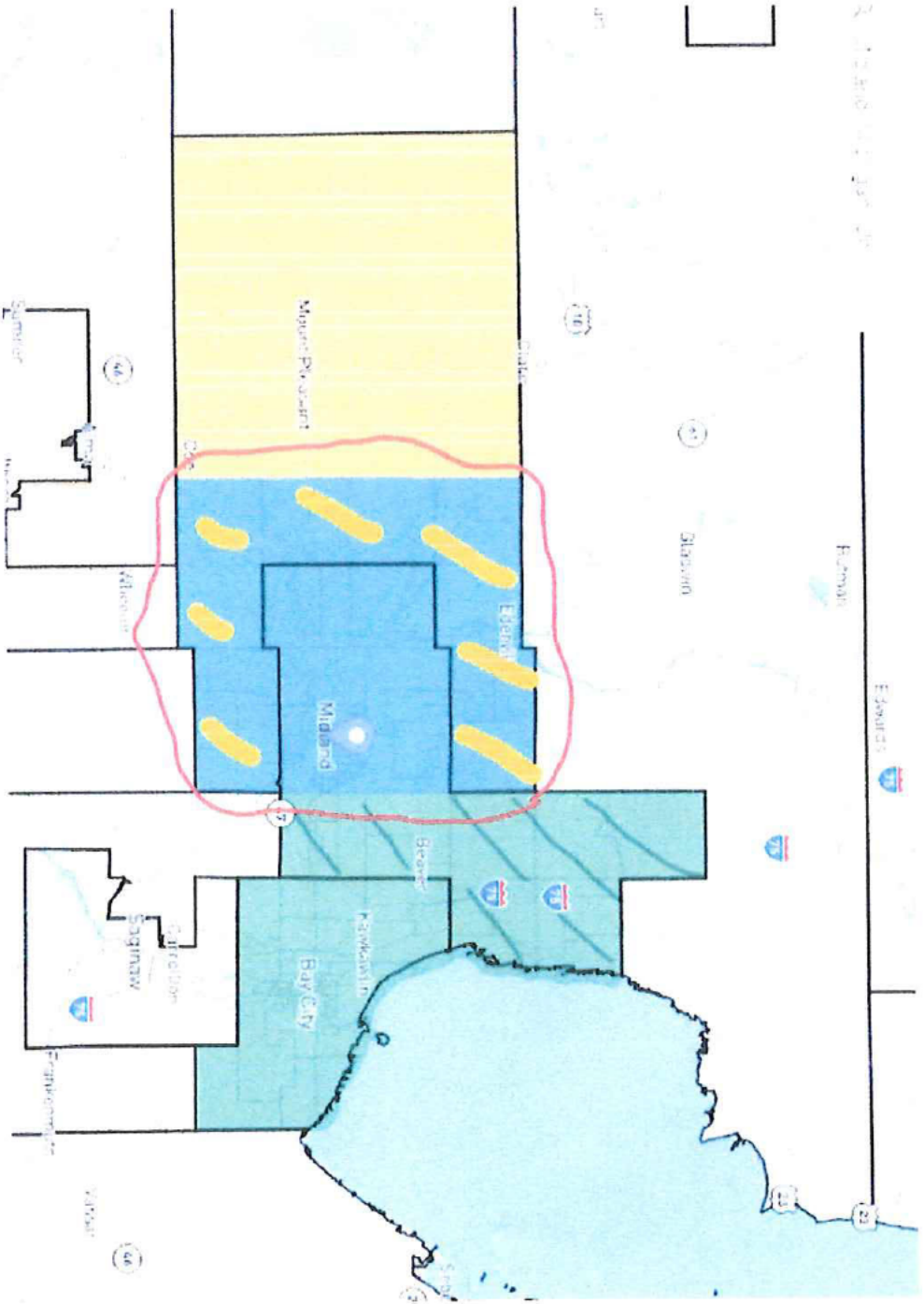
Vassar

Frankenmuth

Midland County as the 98th House District

Please restore the crosshatched areas to their respective counties.

Red encircled blue area is Midland County – this should be our 98th.



Jill Haver-Crissman

#MidlandCounty

Blue Area encircled in red = Midland County for the 98th

Bay County – Green + Green striped area

Isabella Co. -- Yellow

Current 99th – Yellow Isabella Co. + yellow striped blue ar

Current 98th – Blue without yellow and green with stripes

Kurt H. Schindler, AICP

[REDACTED]
Wellston, Michigan 40689

May 23, 2021

Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission
P.O. Box 30318
Lansing, Michigan 48909

RE: Hearing submission concerning "community of interest"

Dear Madams and Sirs;

Enclosed please find my submission to the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission hearings concerning use of Michigan Prosperity Regions as "communities of interest." It is applicable to redistricting of the Michigan House and Senate, and the United States Congressional districts.

I am familiar with Michigan Prosperity Regions as a result of my job (now retired) with Michigan State University Extension with a job focus on teaching and assisting local governments transition to using these regions and economic development work in relationship to these regions.

Thank you for your attention to my thoughts on this matter.

My contact information follows:

- U.S. Postal Service mailing address is above
- email: [REDACTED]
- telephone: [REDACTED]
- County: Manistee

I will be happy to try to answer any further questions one may have concerning this submission.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]
Kurt H. Schindler, AICP

Community of Interest from work done to create Michigan Prosperity Regions

This is a submission to the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission hearings concerning “community of interest.” It is written and submitted by Kurt H. Schindler.¹ It is applicable to redistricting of the Michigan House and Senate, and the United States Congressional districts.

Summary

Michigan Prosperity Regions are a creation of a “community of interest” throughout Michigan that still exists today. It should be reinforced through redistricting.

The creation of a Prosperity Regions in the first place, is a result of research and documented existing commonalities of these parts of the state, reflecting what was and still is “communities of interest” and reinforced as Prosperity Regions. It also should be reinforced through redistricting.

Detail

There is, in existence Michigan Prosperity Regions. These should be considered large scale “communities of interest” which reflect multi-county regions in Michigan which share common economic, labor market, shopping, governmental, regional planning, and more attributes.

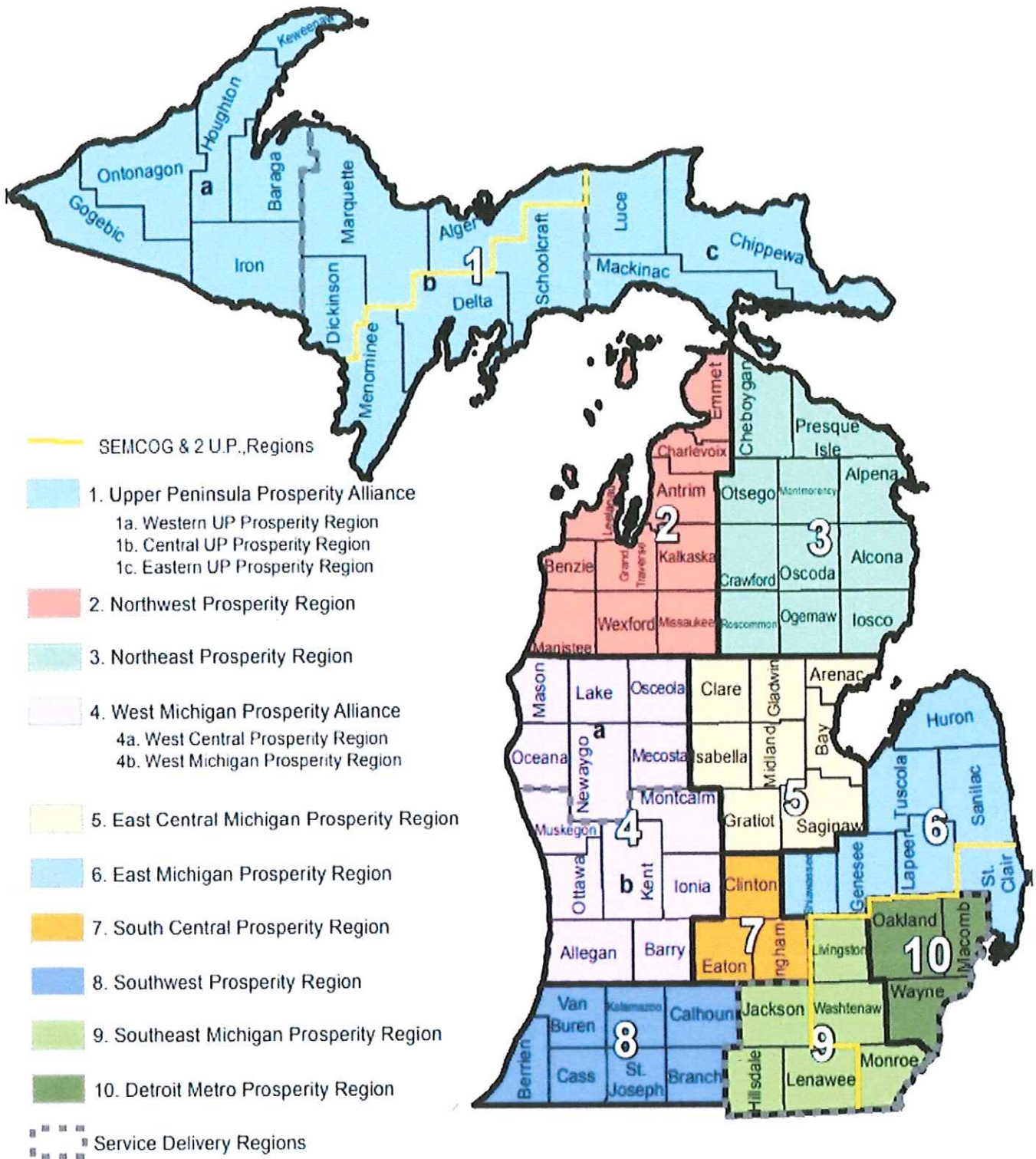
Prosperity regions were created by Governor Richard Snyder upon review of extensive research done by the Land Policy Institute at Michigan State University.² That report was presented to Governor Snyder³ which resulted in the governor creating the Prosperity Regions in 2013.⁴ A map of those “communities of interest” is on page two.

¹Kurt H. Schindler’s contact information is included in a separate cover letter accompanying this submission.

²<https://www.canr.msu.edu/landpolicy/program-archive>. The Land Policy Institute disbanded. Some materials developed by the program can be accessed by contacting Heidi Macwan, charronh@msu.edu or Mary Beth Graebert lakemary@msu.edu.

³The report was developed under the direction of Dr. Adesoji “Soji” Obafemi Adelaja, Hannah Distinguished Professor in Land Policy, Agricultural and Food Resource Economics, MSU, and former director of the Land Policy Institute, and Mr. Mark A. Wyckoff, FAICP former Assistant Director of the MSU Land Policy Institute (now retired). The report is not on line and not at LPI. It would be accessible as archive materials for Gov. Snyder’s Governor Office.

⁴https://www.michigan.gov/mdot/0,4616,7-151-9623_85502---,00.html
https://www.michigan.gov/mshda/0,4641,7-141-5587_85624-463034--,00.html
https://gis-michigan.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/ae387365c550430ebbdc2c54b839030d_30?geometry=139.447%2C43.313%2C-136.530%2C84.230
https://www.michigan.gov/treasury/0,4679,7-121-1751_2194_100549---,00.html
https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/0,5885,7-339-73970_5093_87097---,00.html
https://www.michigan.gov/documents/dmb/Prosperity_Map1_430346_7.pdf



Michigan Prosperity Regions proposed for “Communities of Interest” for the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission. Includes possibly having two “Communities of Interest in the U.P. and another reflecting SEMCOG’s service area.

At the time, the issue being addressed was overlapping disjointed service areas by state agencies,⁵ 83 counties, 275 cities, 258 villages, 1,242 townships, 545 school districts, and 56 intermediate school districts, and more. This resulted in state government and agency service areas cutting the state up 80 different ways.

Michigan Prosperity Regions were put into place to create a single set of regions, state-wide.

- Each state department and agency was to organize around these regions. (Standardization of regions, going from 80 different state service areas to 10 Prosperity Regions.)
- Funding for regional planning was to create a single economic development plan for each Prosperity region.
- Encouraging communities and local governments to collaborate within these regions.
- State planning regions, or council of governments, are also encouraged to organize around the Prosperity Regions to:
 - Create a common economic vision
 - Coordination of regional services
 - Eliminate redundancies
 - Eliminate gaps

The overall idea was that there would be one “single team” of state agency, local government, county, school district, regional planning officials for each region. These people would get to know each other, be able to collaborate and work cooperatively for various projects. The goal was to foster regional framework within these boundaries.

That is a creation of a “community of interest” that still exists today. It should be reinforced through redistricting.

The Michigan Prosperity Regions were also created with lots of research and data crunching to draw these region boundaries. MSU’s Land Policy Institute assisted the governor’s office to compile the data⁶ to produce regions as they are now drawn.

This process looked at large amount of data: economic hinterlands, shopping (sales and leakage) patterns, commuting patterns, existing governmental cooperative relationships, common geography, to name just a few. This type of data was analyzed to draw the boundaries of the regions.

The goal in drawing the boundaries was to define existing economic and social regions that have, the following attributes which can compete globally:

- Population
- Synergy
- Economic activity
- A core, or multiple core cities – an economic or urban center, or group of centers.

⁵For example, but not only: Department of Community Health, EGLE (formerly DEQ), Department of Health, DNR, Agriculture and Rural Development, Economic Development, Department of Transportation, Department of Housing Development Authority, Michigan State Police, Work Force Development agencies.

⁶The report is not on line and not at LPI. It would be accessible as archive materials for Gov. Snyder’s Governor Office.

- Large enough to provide a full set of resources needed to succeed in a global marketplace
- Has a variety of resources to nearly have something for everyone.
- Has a four-year, or more, university as a one of its resources. (All but two Prosperity Regions met this criteria.)

Seventy six counties clearly fit in a region. The data strongly indicating what region the county should be placed within. But there were seven counties that might be considered “orphans.” Those counties did not have as strong a data-indication of what region in which they should be placed.

For example Mason, Lake, Osceola, Clare, and Gladwin Counties could be a part of prosperity regions to their north or south. Those counties have a strong east-west economic tie along U.S.-10 (Ludington-Reed City-Big Rapids). Livingston County is the “center” between Detroit metro, Lansing, and Ann Arbor. Barry County is pulled to Grand Rapids as well as Kalamazoo-Battle Creek. But even with out a very clear dominance of data indicating where those counties should be placed, there is still a preponderance of data which support those counties in the region’s where shown on the map on page two.



In the Upper Peninsula there was discussion of having two Prosperity Regions, instead of one. The yellow line on the map (this page and page two) show how the Upper Peninsula would have been divided as two regions. But, again data was not as strong, with a preponderance of data showing the U.P. as one economic region.

The service area of the South East Michigan Council of Governments⁷ could also be considered its own Prosperity Region, but that may short-change region number nine on the map on page two..

The creation of a Prosperity Regions in the first place, is a result of research and documented existing commonalities of these parts of the state, reflecting what was and still is “communities of interest” and reinforced as Prosperity Regions. It also should be reinforced through redistricting.

⁷Livingston, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, St. Clair, Washtenaw, and Wayne Counties.

Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission:

Dear Commission,

I am writing you to please consider removing Powell Township from the current 110th State House District to the current 109th State House District. However the districts are formed and perhaps renumbered during redistricting after receiving the census data, Powell Township in Marquette County Michigan needs to be in the same district as Marquette Township and the City of Marquette.

The reasons for this request are necessitated through Powell Township's shared Communities of Interest with Marquette Township and the City of Marquette, as well as Marquette County as a whole.

- Powell shares the only paved road into and out of our township with Marquette Township and the City of Marquette
- Driving the 70 miles of paved road to get to Baraga County in the outskirts of the eastern 110th district, we must pass through seven other Marquette County townships and the City of Marquette.
- Our State House Representatives since 2002 have all lived 3-4 hours away from Powell Township. We rarely see them.
- High school students in Powell Township attend school in either Negaunee or Marquette.
- The Marquette County Road Commission services our roads
- Other than frequenting our small town gas/grocery store and restaurants we make our major food, building supply, and entertainment choices in the City of Marquette or Marquette Township.
- Some residents attend church in Marquette; there are two churches in Big Bay, Powell Township.
- The majority of Powell Township residents work in the City of Marquette or surrounding townships
- The closest hospital, doctors, and medical facilities are in the City of Marquette.
- Powell residents share a contiguous coastline on Lake Superior with Marquette Township, Chocolay Township, and the City of Marquette.

For these reasons our community interests are shared predominantly with the City of Marquette and Marquette Township. The citizens of Powell Township deserve fair representation that shares and understands our needs and our aspirations for the future. The residents of Powell Township need to be represented by people we know and see in our community.

Thank you for your hard work on the commission and considering my recommendation.

Signed *Kelli Santelle*

Date *5-8-2021*

Address/Contact Info

Powell Township

Big Bay, MI 49808

5/27/21

Dear Members of the Redistricting Commission and the People of the State of Michigan,

My name is LeAnn Kirmann. I am an RN. I have practiced for over 34 years in the acute care and critical care settings of Sparrow Hospital. I am retired but take care of my fragile Mother in my home and babysit for my Granddaughter in my home. I literally live in the middle of a corn field. The most basic aspect of health is food and nutrition. I live in a rural setting and understand the plight of the farming community in my area. The interests of the farming communities is VITAL for food and food production. It is vital for those interests to be considered when drawing redistricting maps. Developers, big government interests, commercial interests, educational and even medical interests must not interfere with those vital interests that support us all.

Our Seventh Congressional District contains one medium sized city, several small cities, several colleges and several hospitals. We know that many people are fleeing the cities to our district for a variety of reasons, and are moving into our small townships. I live in Oneida Township and farmland is selling off at an alarming rate. Big businesses are moving in. We would like to keep our district more rural for farming. Nobody is listening to us. Not anybody in Washington is listening. Not anybody in Lansing is listening. Not even our County Commission. Now people want to redraw the districts to make it "more fair." I once thought this was a good idea. Now I wonder if we will all lose out. I am concerned with a lack of accountability in the redrawing of districts.

I am concerned about redrawing maps and placing big city concerns that may override country folk concerns. They are not the same. I used to think people were the same everywhere. They are not. They do not have the same concerns, respect towards others, and hold way differences of opinions on health, government, family, ect. There are huge cultural divides. There are differences between what is right and what is wrong. Some people want what they can get from the "system" and some people want the "system" to leave them alone.

"Growing Locally," seems to be an overriding theme these days and when I grew up it was too. That is one very good idea that seems to be making a comeback. Please consider our rural areas as a "Culture" to be considered when drawing your maps as we as the depopulation of our cities as the result of their own doing. If people don't want to live there, maybe they are doing something wrong and they shouldn't have the undue representation.

Sincerely,

LeAnn Kirmann, RN
LeAnn Kirmann, RN

Grand Ledge, MI 48837

Consider - 5/27

5/27/21

Dear Members of the Redistricting Commission and the People of the State of Michigan,

My name is LeAnn Kirmann. I am an RN. I have practiced for over 34 years in the acute care and critical care settings of Sparrow Hospital. I am retired but take care of my fragile Mother in my home and babysit for my Granddaughter in my home. I literally live in the middle of a corn field. The most basic aspect of health is food and nutrition. I live in a rural setting and understand the plight of the farming community in my area. The interests of the farming communities is VITAL for food and food production. It is vital for those interests to be considered when drawing redistricting maps. Developers, big government interests, commercial interests, educational and even medical interests must not interfere with those vital interests that support us all.

Our Seventh Congressional District contains one medium sized city, several small cities, several colleges and several hospitals. We know that many people are fleeing the cities to our district for a variety of reasons, and are moving into our small townships. I live in Oneida Township and farmland is selling off at an alarming rate. Big businesses are moving in. We would like to keep our district more rural for farming. Nobody is listening to us. Not anybody in Washington is listening. Not anybody in Lansing is listening. Not even our County Commission. Now people want to redraw the districts to make it "more fair." I once thought this was a good idea. Now I wonder if we will all lose out. I am concerned with a lack of accountability in the redrawing of districts.

I am concerned about redrawing maps and placing big city concerns that may override country folk concerns. They are not the same. I used to think people were the same everywhere. They are not. They do not have the same concerns, respect towards others, and hold way differences of opinions on health, government, family, ect. There are huge cultural divides. There are differences between what is right and what is wrong. Some people want what they can get from the "system" and some people want the "system" to leave them alone.

"Growing Locally," seems to be an overriding theme these days and when I grew up it was too. That is one very good idea that seems to be making a comeback. Please consider our rural areas as a "Culture" to be considered when drawing your maps as we as the depopulation of our cities as the result of their own doing. If people don't want to live there, maybe they are doing something wrong and they shouldn't have the undue representation.

Sincerely,

[Redacted Signature]

LeAnn Kirmann, RN

[Redacted Address]

Grand Ledge, MI 48837

Lansing 5/27/21

Redistricting Michigan Comments 5/26/2021

Bruce Barlund

Dimondale, Mi
Eaton County

Ladies and Gentlemen Commissioners,
Thank you for being here for Michigan and Michigan Citizens!

Please, when you are Redistricting Michigan, I ask that you keep in mind the rural flavor of out-state Michigan! I grew up on a farm in rural Michigan near Olivet. I know for a fact that farm life is not easy and that the interests of farmers and the families who live in the rural communities of Michigan are far different than the interests of the people who live in cities!

Michigan's 7th District is mostly rural! Please keep it that way!!

Please keep the rural flavor of out state Michigan in mind while drawing State Senate and House Districts! Rural Michigan needs State Senators and Representatives who represent the interests of the people who live in rural Michigan!

Likewise, other areas of the State are urban and have interests that center on urban living that differ from the interests of rural Michigan! Please keep that fact in mind when drawing State Senate and House Districts!

This is not just about we here in this room. It is about the futures of our children, grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren

Commissioners,
I thank you for listening!

#20 Lansing 5/27/21

My name is Linda Appling. I moved to Lansing from Detroit about 40 years ago. I reside in that part of Lansing Mi, which is in Eaton co. I am a member of the NAACP and active in a number of organizations. The 7th district is my congressional district. The district is one of the most weirdly shaped districts in Michigan. Counties in District 7 are Eaton, Jackson, Branch, Hillsdale, Lenawee, Monroe and part of Washtenaw. These counties do not have a community of interest. Eaton county except for Jackson does not touch on any of the other counties. No joint projects exist between Eaton and the other counties. Shopping between Eaton and the other Counties is virtually nonexistent. It is clear that District 7 has been Gerrymandered to favor the election of Republicans. The existence of this District reduces the value of my vote. I am thrown in with a group of people that are unaware of the problems and issues faced by my area. These include an Airport, public transportation, and housing for the homeless.

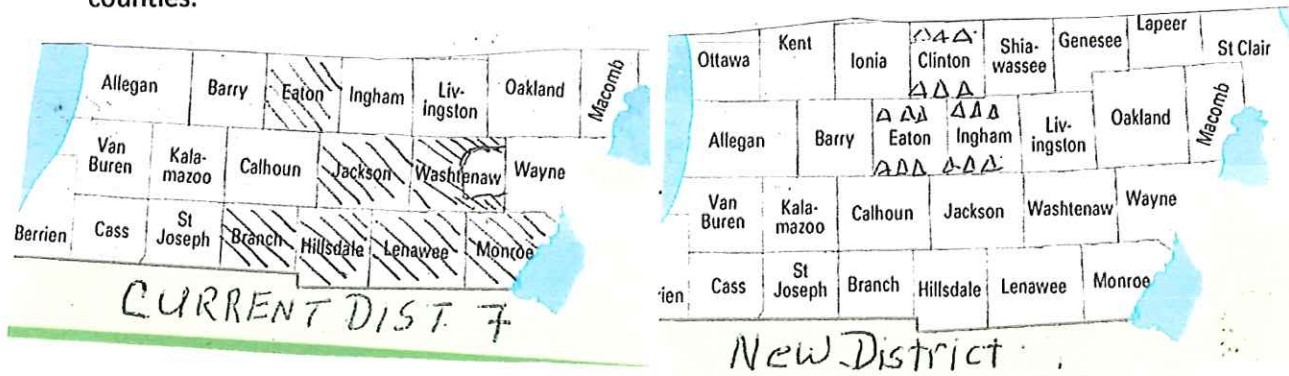
A community of interest for Eaton co. exist with the counties of Ingham, and Clinton. These counties touch each other and are in close proximity. Lansing Community College (LCC) is one thing they all have in common. LCC draws students from all three counties. The Tri-County office on Aging consist of Ingham, Eaton and Clinton counties. This office provides services to seniors living in Ingham, Eaton and Clinton counties. Shopping is entertained within the 3 counties. Costco is located in Ingham co. However it is used by shoppers from Eaton and Clinton. Walmart another large organization has locations in Eaton co. and Ingham co.

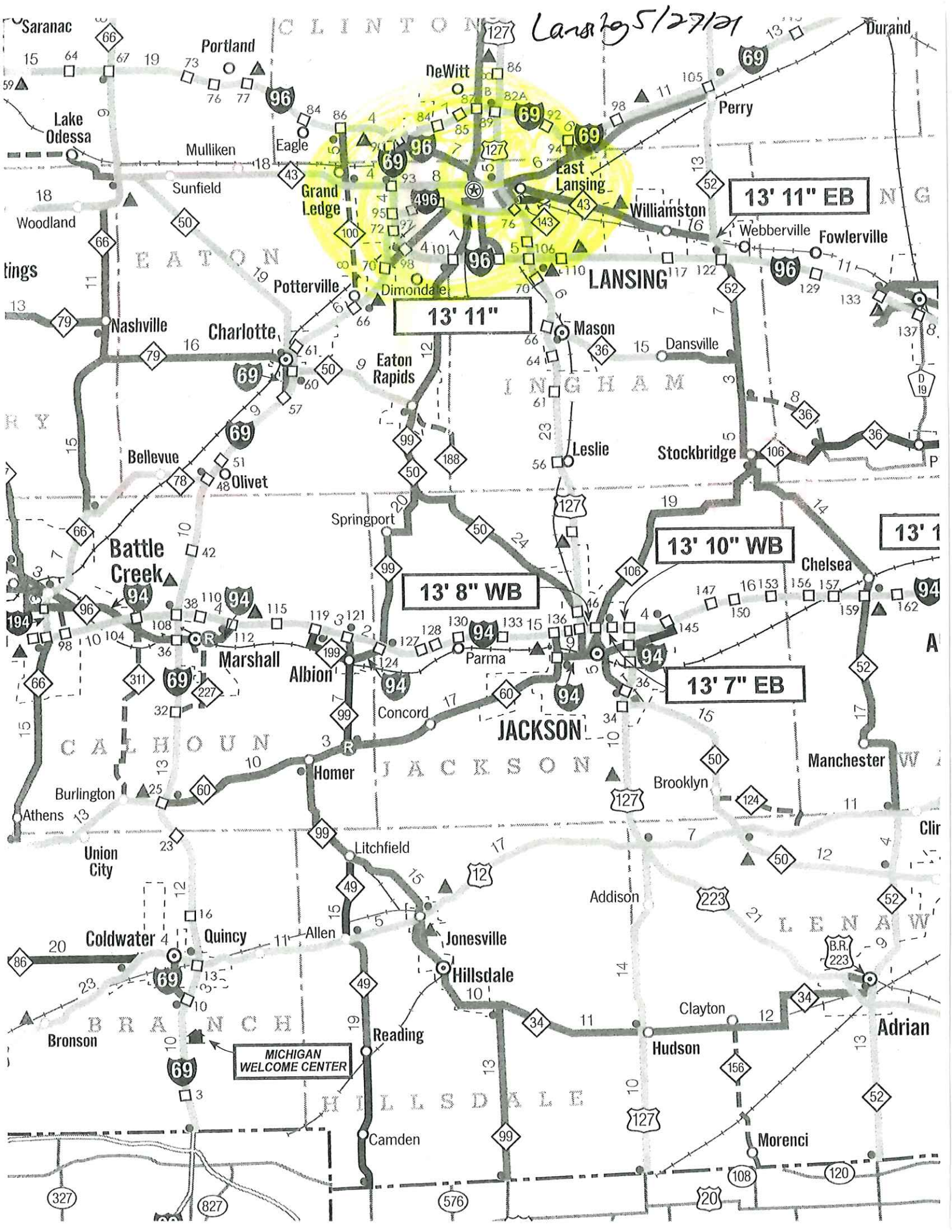
Organizations such as the NAACP draw their membership from the three counties. Sororities and fraternities also draw membership from the three counties. Two major hospitals, Sparrow and McLaren, have their primary sites in Ingham co.. However each has satellite offices in Eaton and Clinton counties. Frequently people cross county lines to attend the church of their choice. Employment is sought across the tri-county area.

Clearly the community of interest between Eaton, Ingham and Clinton is very strong.

This contrast with the current District 7 composition has little to no community of interest.

Based on this I encourage you to create a district that includes Eaton, Ingham and Clinton counties.





Good Evening Commissioners. Thank you for taking your time to listen to us this evening. I know you have a tough job in front of you and many opinions to listen to and understand. My name is Chris Stewart. I have my residency in Grand Ledge while my parents still own my childhood home in Bath. I've been apart of the Lansing Regional Community most of my life. My family has been apart of the Grand Ledge community for close to 110 years. We own a local small business for about that same amount of time in town too. Ive been fortunate enough to work on farms as a kid, be in higher education straight out of college as an educator and coach, to having my own small business while marketing for another in Emergency Water Removal which serves Clinton, Eaton, and Ingham counties. I list these three areas of my community interests-- Agricultural, Education and Small Business because they've allowed me to travel, talk to and to my best effort understand the similarities and differences in all of the communities in the region. There are significant differences, none of which is good or bad, but they are different in communities outside of Lansing although they may share a county. There are also similarities to areas bordering the city limits. For instance, Delta township although in Eaton county is very similar to the city of Lansing which is in Ingham County. While communities such as Bath and Dewitt, both in Clinton County hold very similar values, ethics and education as Grand Ledge which is in Eaton County. Places such as Williamston and Mason both in Ingham county are also very similar due to both their agricultural and small business communities. When I travel to Lansing and speak to home owners, there needs are different than the communities I listed prior. How they choose to see the world and operate is much different than say places like Charlotte, Olivet, Bellevue, Vermontville and Mulliken. Places like Delta township, also in Eaton County, however do hold much closer values and far more similarities with their neighbors in Lansing. I provide this information because although they are different, some more rural than the other, each of those communities deserve the proper fit and ultimately the best representation in governance at all levels. Bath, Dewitt and Grand Ledge may choose to raise their children differently than Delta Township and Lansing. And ya know what, that's ok. In my experience all of these communities are filled with exceptional people ALL of which has provided me joy in all three of the communities I've chosen to work and live. However they should all be represented fairly and appropriately. Thank you again for your time, your work. We all wish you the very best! Thank you!

Chris Stewart

Grand Ledge, MI 48837

My name is Ray Snyder. I live in Dewitt Township in Clinton County. I grew up on a farm in Clinton County on the county line road between Clinton and Gratiot Counties. I spent 21 years in the United States Air Force and then returned to Michigan. Then went to Texas with the job for 24 years. I returned to our home area because we feel at home with our culture here. We love Clinton County and highly request that you keep our lines straight and not all crooked, but please go north on Gratiot County for any population numbers that are needed.

Thank you for working on this and hearing our concerns.

My name is Elaine Snyder and I live in DeWitt Township in the County of Clinton. I appreciate the time and interest each of you have taken to serve on this Commission.

I was raised in Clinton County. As an adult our job took us out of the country and to many other states to live. As we grew close to retirement age, it was important to come back to the place where our values and life-style were formed. The rural and small town atmosphere of Clinton County still offers that.

I humbly ask you to keep Clinton County intact and in District 4. In including our county with any other to make to population numbers meet requirements, I ask that we are included with Gratiot County where the interests and live-style are similar.

My name is Llinda Appling. I moved to Lansing from Detroit about 40 years ago. I reside in that part of Lansing Mi, which is in Eaton co. I am a member of the NAACP and active in a number of organizations. The 7th district is my congressional district. The district is one of the most weirdly shaped districts in Michigan. Counties in District 7 are Eaton, Jackson, Branch, Hillsdale, Lenawee, Monroe and part of Washtenaw. These counties do not have a community of interest. Eaton county except for Jackson does not touch on any of the other counties. No joint projects exist between Eaton and the other counties. Shopping between Eaton and the other Counties is virtually nonexistent. It is clear that District 7 has been Gerrymandered to favor the election of Republicans. The existence of this District reduces the value of my vote. I am thrown in with a group of people that are unaware of the problems and issues faced by my area. These include an Airport, public transportation, and housing for the homeless.

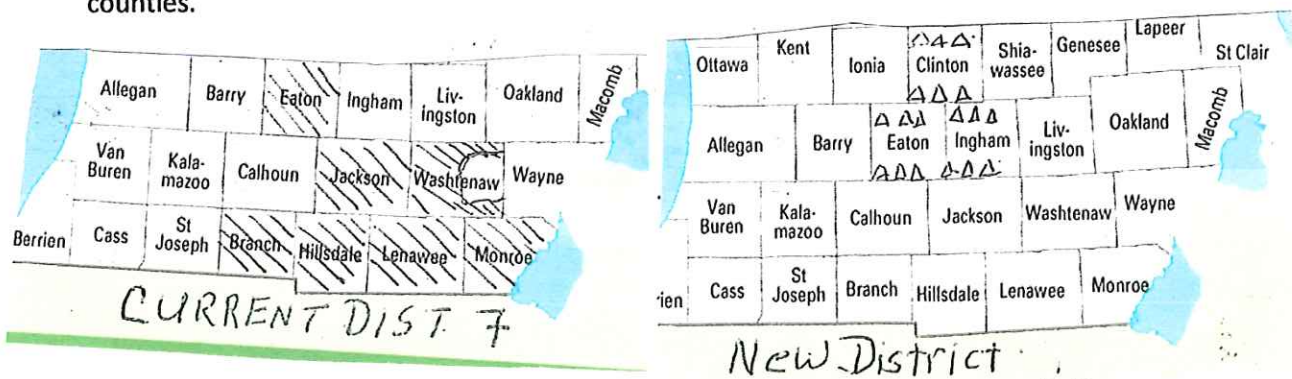
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**Presentation to MI Redistricting Commission 6-1-21, Flint, MI
Doris Suci, resident of Flint, MI, 48532 (Flint Township)**

My concern is in regard to the erosion of true representation of the Michigan voting population due to actions by partisan bodies which change the impact of a majority of voters such that it becomes a minority. And this goes for ANY elected partisan group, which in this case in Michigan refers mainly to political parties, in particular to the Republican or Democratic parties, though there are many people who belong to neither, or who do not vote.

And, though there are a number of ways of effecting this same result, this commission, as I understand, is focusing on how districts in Michigan are to be drawn up. It was not created, I believe, to address actions which bring about the same result by other means, such as disrupting the US Postal Service in ways that impact certain groups more than others; by markedly cutting down on or eliminating ballot boxes around the state in a particular pattern that would impact those not likely to vote for them; or to cut down on or eliminate voting times which disproportionately impact certain targeted populations; or significantly limit or to cut out absentee voting, which makes voting more convenient or even possible for certain people; or which attempts to make lines so long, which may take several hours, such that many cannot reach the voting booth in time due to needs of children or family or their work hours, or their limited physical resilience; or actions which make voting more intimidating or threatening by, for instance, making it a felony to give those in line water (attempted in Florida, but which I understand was not ultimately made into law), but which to me is so inhumane as to be shocking as having even been attempted and possibly allowed by a political party in this country. This list is by no means exhaustive, but gives an idea of the myriad ways that misrepresentation, or underrepresentation, can be made to occur.

Although these are examples with the same goal in mind, the commission is addressing only the redistricting process that occurs every ten years, a process which I strongly believe should NOT be a partisan matter.

The fact that this current situation, which has existed for at least two decades, has so concerned Michigan voters that they put in a great deal of time and effort to bring about a referendum in 2018 so that the voters, themselves, could address this issue, with the result being 60% in favor of it, though the state legislature, which is supposed to represent the people, strongly opposed such a measure, and those representing or aligned with the political party (in this case, the Republican Party) fought against this referendum and its result by filing lawsuits, which were not upheld by the courts. That situation, I contend, reflects the problem we are dealing with, which this commission has been created to address.

The bottom line as I see it is that we claim to believe in democracy, and certain freedoms, a crucial one being the right to vote and to be fairly represented.

#31 - Flint Meeting

I heard at a previous public hearing various persons speaking about wanting their particular demographic, their urban or rural living situation, their common “values” to be taken into consideration, and to keep a “competitive” situation in place. If “competitive” means that a minority should have the overall voting be such that they are “spotted” more votes than their numbers in the population represent, or the districts should be drawn to render them more influential than their numbers represent, I do not believe that definition of “competitive” is right or fair, NO MATTER WHAT party or political group we are talking about. It ends up skewing the vote in a way that is LESS representative of the population as a whole.

My request, and hope, is that however you attempt to address the concerns presented to you in these hearings and written communications, that you will be attentive to whether such efforts have the result of continuing or furthering misrepresentation of the people, as clearly the current gerrymandering practice does, and that your decisions in redrawing Michigan districts will NOT do that.

Thank you for this opportunity to have our voices heard.

Michigan Redistricting Commission

Bridge Michigan



July 6, 2020

Federal judge dismisses GOP case against Michigan redistricting commission

A federal judge Monday dismissed a lawsuit by Michigan Republican groups seeking to block a new state redistricting commission. The ruling is the latest legal setback for Republicans, who earlier this year **failed to win an injunction** that would prevent the formation of the commission, which they contend is unconstitutional.

The decision Monday — by U.S. District Court Judge Janet Neff, appointed by GOP President George W. Bush — is a blow to state Republicans who fought against the implementation of the redistricting commission, which was created in 2018.

The litigation involved two cases first filed against Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson by the Michigan Republican Party and a number of individual plaintiffs, including Michigan Freedom Fund Director Tony Daunt, in July and August last year. The suits were later consolidated.

Republicans argued that the commission is unconstitutional primarily because it disqualifies several types of people from applying to become a member, including partisan elected officials, lobbyists, political candidates and political

consultants. This violates their First Amendment rights to participate, the plaintiffs argued.

The state Republican Party separately argued, among other claims, that the commission's rules violate their freedom of association because applicants are required to state which party they're affiliated with without the consent of the party.

These arguments don't hold water, Neff wrote Monday, siding with Benson and Voters Not Politicians, the group that campaigned for the creation of the redistricting commission.

"We continue to believe that these restrictions unfairly prohibit certain Michigan citizens from serving their state, targeting them for exercising their constitutional rights or, most egregiously, for simply being related to someone who does. We will be reviewing the order and discussing next steps in the days ahead," Daunt told Bridge via email. The Michigan Republican Party did not immediately return request for comment Monday.

Michigan's redistricting commission was approved by a majority of statewide voters in 2018 to redraw voting district lines. The commission is to take over that duty from the state Legislature, which traditionally approved political boundaries in Michigan by a simple majority vote. That put voting boundaries in the hands of whichever political party held the majority, which was criticized for producing irregular voting districts that provided an advantage to that party. For the last two redistricting cycles, the party in charge has been Republicans.

The commission will have 13 members: Four Republicans, four Democrats and five people unaffiliated with either party. Applicants self-identify under threat of perjury, but there is no official record of party affiliation because Michigan voters don't register to vote by political party.

The semi-finalist pool of 200 applicants for the first commission were randomly drawn in late June. Leaders of both parties in the state Legislature have until the end of the month to strike 20 people from this pool, and the final commission will be randomly drawn from the remaining 180 in August. The commission then has until November 2021 to complete the voting maps.

Bridge Michigan

Michigan's nonpartisan, nonprofit news source

Michigan wanted to end gerrymandering. Census delays make it 'really messy'



Joe Biden carried Michigan by extending his support into the suburbs to withstand a surge for Republican Donald Trump in rural parts of the state. But precinct-level data shows many. (Shutterstock)

February 17, 2021

[Madeline Halpert](#)

A delay in the release of crucial U.S. Census population data is jeopardizing the timeline of Michigan's first independent redistricting commission and sowing 'chaos' for potential candidates in the 2022 election.

On Friday, the Census Bureau announced it is [pushing back](#) the release of data needed to draw Michigan's new district lines until Sep. 30. The 13-member commission has a deadline of Sep. 17 to finish the first maps.

"The commission's plate is already extra full because this is their first time," said Tom Ivacko, executive director of the University of Michigan Center for Local, State and Urban Policy. "They're building the plane as they're flying it, and that's difficult enough without an additional hassle like this."

Political districts are redrawn every 10 years, typically by the party in power in Lansing. That's changing this year, bolstering hopes of ending decades of gerrymandering that have allowed Republicans to [keep control in the state Legislature](#) despite getting fewer overall votes than Democrats.

The process also has heightened importance this year because Michigan's congressional delegation is expected to fall from 14 to 13.

But if population data is delayed until September, it's unlikely the nonpartisan commission will finish the maps in time. That benefits incumbents by persuading candidates to sit out races for competitive districts, political consultants say.

The Census announcement has sent a “shockwave” through the political system in Michigan, said John Sellek, a public relations advisor who worked for former Attorney General Bill Schuette, a Republican.

“It just leaves the door open for a sense of chaos and disorganization for voters who already are having a hard time having faith in government to begin with,” Sellek said. “I think it’s going to be really messy.”

Before last week’s announcement, the Census had planned to release the data in late July. That still would have been later than 2010, when population data was released in March.

The commission — which was created after voters approved a constitutional amendment to create it in 2018 — had planned to draw the maps after conducting 10 hearings over six months.

Now, legal action may be necessary to amend the Sept. 17 deadline, since it is included in a constitutional amendment creating the commission, said Nancy Wang, the executive director of Voters Not Politicians, the group that campaigned for the commission.

That’s what happened [in California](#) last year when the state Supreme Court granted the redistricting commission a four-month extension to its deadlines due to the pandemic.

Another option is seeking an opinion on deadlines from Attorney General Dana Nessel, said Steve Liedel, an attorney who worked for former Gov. Jennifer Granholm, a Democrat.

The commission also could keep the current maps through the 2022 election for Michigan House and Senate districts, while drawing new congressional districts, said Jamie Roe, a GOP consultant who was involved in Republican redistricting efforts and who opposed the 2018 ballot initiative.

“I’m hopeful this could also buy the commission more time to draw some good maps,” he said.

‘We’ve got lots of work to do’

The delay tempers some of the optimism about the commission, which was approved by more than 60 percent of voters and created to end districts that federal judges have called a [“political gerrymander of historical proportions.”](#)

Voters Not Politicians is meeting with the national redistricting leaders and community organizations to discuss the best ways to adapt the timeline.

One big challenge: The current schedule requires 45 days for public comment after districts are approved, with final maps to be adopted on Nov. 1. Unless that deadline is pushed back, the public would have little time to give their input during a crucial step of the process, Wang said.

Using old Census data and other records, the commission can get about 85 percent of work done before the new population data is released, said Michael Li, redistricting expert at the Brennan Center for Justice at New York University School of Law.

Susan Hammersmith, the commission's executive director, said members will begin discussing plans for responding to the delays at their next public meeting on Thursday.

"I just told (the commission) to keep calm and carry on," Hammersmith said. "That's all we can do right now. We've got lots of work to do."

There's no situation in which the courts or the Republican-led Legislature would become involved in the actual drawing of Michigan's maps, Wang said.

'You have no case if you have no district'

Others are less optimistic about the effects of the Census delays.

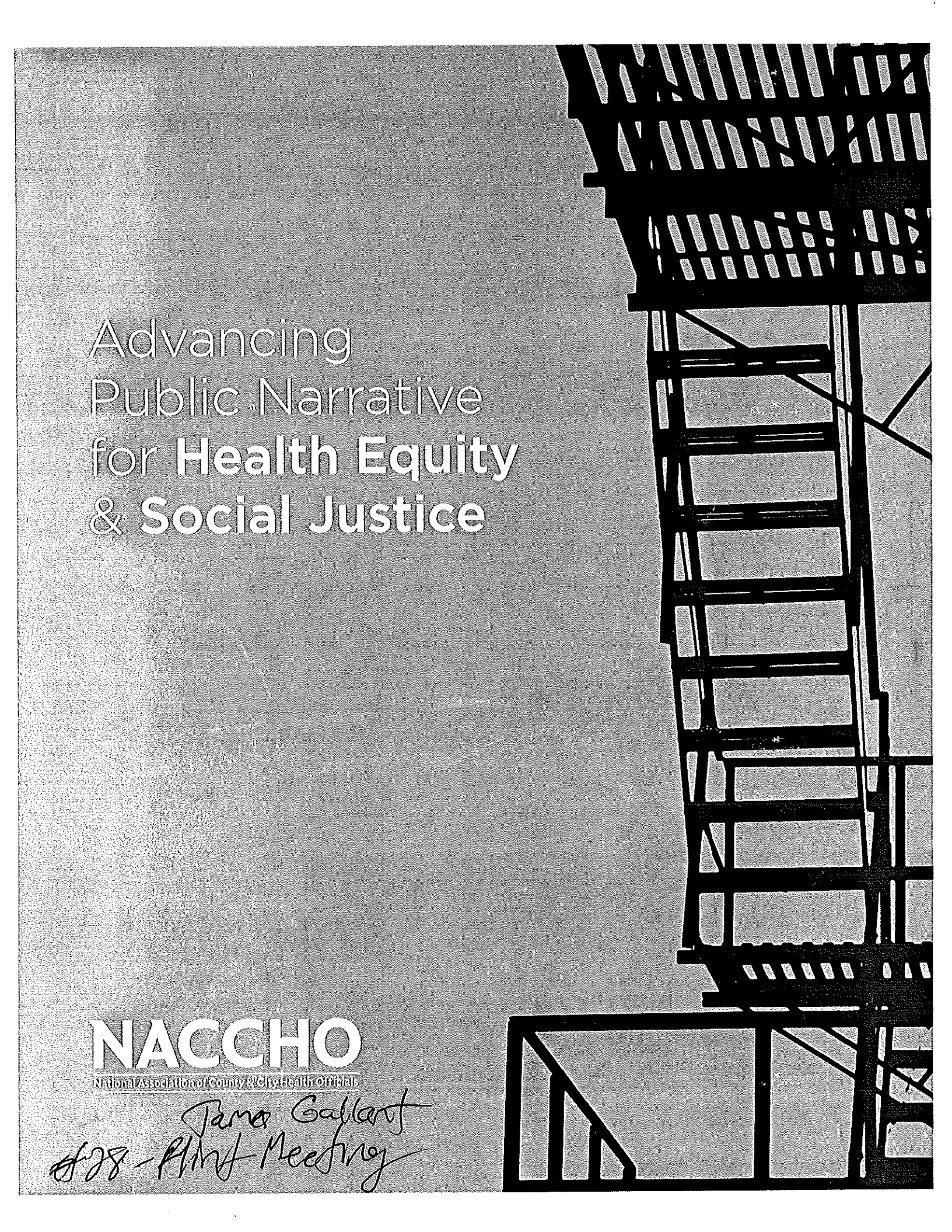
Adrian Hemond, a Democratic consultant, said they will make it hard for candidates to raise money and deter experienced candidates — who are in the prime earning years of their careers — from running on short notice.

"You can't even look at an interest group with a straight face and tell them what district you're running in now," Hemond said. "And you have no case if you don't have a district."

The delays may force the Legislature to move or change filing requirements to allow candidates more time to collect signatures, said Roe, the GOP political consultant.

Time is of the essence in political campaigns, Sellek said, and candidates would typically begin organizing and announcing their candidacy in the coming months. But some may have to hold off because of the census data holdups. Others may choose not to run at all.

"It will be very much a wait and see approach," Hemond said. "Combining the uncertainty with the difficulty in fundraising means some candidates are far less likely to actually decide to take the plunge."



Advancing
Public Narrative
for **Health Equity**
& **Social Justice**

NACCHO

National Association of County & City Health Officials

Diana Gallant
of 28 - Phil Needing

FACILITATED DIALOGUE:

A Brief Guide for Replacing Dominant Narratives
with Actionable Equity and Social Justice Narratives

RENEE BRANCH CANADY AND MARIJATA DANIEL-ECHOLS

Introduction

Public health has its foundation in pursuing social justice, yet it is not impervious to the influence of dominant narratives. If the field is to return to identifying and confronting root causes of inequity (for example racism, gender, and economic oppression), its practitioners must be prepared disrupt these narratives. Narratives requires reinforcement because they are malleable. We can act collectively to transform them. How do we do that?

Ingham County public health professionals, working with their colleagues and their communities over decades developed and refined approaches to dialogue that can be applied to reclaim social justice narratives and pursue equitable health outcomes for individuals and communities.¹ The intentional practice of facilitated dialogue is a methodology for action and change. When done well, it provides participants an opportunity to question what they think they know and, as a community, develop alternative interpretations, shared understanding, raise the voices of those who have been excluded, and promote a social justice-based public narrative. This chapter presents an overview for engaging in effective facilitated dialogue.

What Is Facilitated Dialogue?

Facilitated dialogue is a multi-faceted process that integrates the techniques of facilitation with the principles of dialogue to advance action across difficult topics.

How often have you heard the question “When are we going to stop talking about this and start doing something?!” In our years of facilitating workshops on health equity and social justice, it always amazes us how often this question will arise. The tension in this statement assumes that “talking” and “doing” are mutually exclusive. In our experience, working with public health professionals around the sensitive issues of equity and justice, nothing can be more stifling of action than silence.

This push to “stop talking” has also revealed itself in another slightly counter-intuitive way. A participant in our workshop who was a white woman shared her experience of camping with several couples who all had prior relationships. As they all sat around the campfire, a few began to discuss issues of race in this nation. The conversation began to swell, and the passion, frustration, and perhaps even anger was audible to everyone. Suddenly, one of the women, who was not a part of the discussion, stood and walked to the area of the discussion and shouted, “This conversation has to stop!” The inability or refusal to engage each other effectively around challenging and difficult topics is a barrier to advancing change. Therein lies the critical distinction – dialogue is different from conversation, producing a deeper level of understanding, interpretation, and application. Dialogue is a methodology to advance change.

Four Major Features of Facilitated Dialogue

Combining facilitation and dialogue produces a new approach from how they operate independently. Firstly, facilitation and dialogue independently are often described by the goal of neutrality. Facilitated dialogue as a methodology is not neutral; the facilitator sets the context but does not feed the content. With facilitated dialogue, the facilitator is a partner in building the content which will guide shared conclusions.

Secondly, even more than not being neutral, facilitated dialogue for health equity has a standpoint: in this case, a clear, social justice point of view. Thus, facilitated dialogue requires strong facilitation skills, knowledge of the mechanisms of systemic oppression, and the motivation to work in community to create solutions to inequality.

Third, facilitated dialogue does not seek consensus as is a common goal of facilitation. We would submit that in consensus neither party gets what they want but they reconcile and settle for less. Facilitated dialogue moves people to build shared meaning and likely new solutions that would not have been created independently.

Lastly, dialogue is an exchange of ideas without judgment. However, in facilitated dialogue we seek transparency of judgement rather than removal of judgement. Judgements have an impact on the exchange, whether spoken or unspoken, and inviting this dynamic into the exchange brings authenticity, supports the participation of everyone, and advances action. In the context of developing effective strategies to promote social justice, we engage in action-oriented activities.

Facilitated dialogue integrates the best of these three techniques and skillfully adapts them to fulfill a vitally important need. Facilitated dialogue is adaptable to the participating players and contexts and offers guiderails for keeping the discourse moving forward.

How Do You Do Facilitated Dialogue?

Guidelines for Dialogue

Establishing guidelines is an essential part of creating a context within which dialogue can happen. Oftentimes facilitators set ‘ground rules’ for how people will interact during a workshop or meeting. While the facilitated dialogue guidelines below do serve the purpose of establishing how people should conduct themselves, they are also foundational, functional strategies that can be used to identify and challenge dominant narrative. The guidelines for facilitated dialogue include:

- ▶ *It is OK to disagree.* Our opinions are informed by our lived, varied experiences. It is to be expected that disagreements come up during dialogue. If there is no disagreement we are not thinking keenly.
- ▶ *Make space for discomfort.* Given that during dialogue there will be disagreements, we must increase comfort with discomfort – both our own and the discomfort of others.
- ▶ *Practice self-focus.* Each of us can only speak from our own experiences and understandings. In dialogue you must tell your own story. Using I statements brings authenticity to your narrative and can compel others to listen deeply.
- ▶ *Practice both/and thinking.* Within dominant narratives we are socialized to use either/or thinking. That paradigm makes it easy to make individuals and groups that are different from us the ‘other.’ It limits our ability to disrupt dominant narrative and construct social justice narratives.
- ▶ *Try on.* Similar to both/and thinking, this guideline encourages people to be open to considering alternative ideas. Acting intentionally to introduce convincing social justice narratives will sometimes involve promoting unpopular, ignored, devalued, and new ideas.
- ▶ *Notice intent and impact.* Everyone has had the experience of having what they planned on doing (helping a neighbor carry grocery bags inside) and what happens (dropping a bag and breaking all the eggs). Regardless of the intention, the eggs are still broken, and we must help clean up the mess, compensate our neighbor for the cost of the eggs, or go to the store and buy another dozen eggs. Similarly, when in dialogue we must hold ourselves accountable to what happens, how people really live, and name who dominant narratives oppress.