

**Written Testimony to the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission
Related to May 27 Public hearing in Lansing
May 24, 2021**

Thank you for doing this important work to support free and fair elections in Michigan. I want to encourage you to treat the Lansing region counties of Ingham, Eaton and Clinton as the Community of Interest they are by including them in the same Congressional District. For decades, the Lansing region has been the victim of gerrymandering, diminishing our influence and access to resources.

How we see ourselves: No matter where we live in this tri-county region, if we are traveling to, say Florida, we will likely tell people we are from Lansing. We read the local newspaper, the Lansing State Journal, or perhaps the Lansing City Pulse. Every two years, the Lansing League of Women Voters puts out voter guides for residents of Ingham, Eaton and Clinton. Delta Township in Eaton County is so much a part of Lansing that its mailing address is Lansing MI 48917.

Economy: Tri-county leaders have long recognized that our economy and prosperity depend on regional cooperation. Our crowning economic development achievement of the past 30 years was “keeping General Motors in Lansing.” In actuality, we kept GM in the Lansing region. Many if not most of the jobs are in new plants in Eaton County that replaced older ones in Ingham. GM calls its newest plant the Lansing Delta Township Assembly Plant. The Lansing Economic Area Partnership, our regional economic development team, attracts and retains businesses in the three counties. Capital Area Michigan Works! provides employment services for workers and businesses through centers in each county.

The state of Michigan is a dominant employer. Many, many state workers commute from Eaton and Clinton County to state jobs, and many Ingham and Clinton residents travel to Eaton County, home to the State Secondary Complex of government offices.

Education: Michigan State University is a major employer and educational and cultural institution. Many faculty and staff live in Eaton and Clinton as well as Ingham. Students from all three counties also attend Lansing Community College; in fact, LCC has an expansive West Campus in Eaton County providing education and training for tri-county workers. One of the area’s largest school districts, Waverly, is split between Ingham and Eaton counties, and many Lansing students choose to attend school there through school of choice programs.

Health: Sparrow and McLaren are the major health systems for residents in all three counties. When the Ingham County Health Department counts Covid cases, it notes that its numbers include Eaton and Clinton residents. The main hospital campuses are located in Ingham County, and residents from all three counties use them. In addition, there are Sparrow hospitals in St. Johns (Clinton County) and Charlotte (Eaton County). McLaren has facilities in all three counties as well.

Culture: Tri-county residents come to the Wharton Center at MSU for plays and concerts. They cheer on MSU at Spartan Stadium and the Breslin Center. The Lansing Lugnuts minor league baseball team is supported by sports fans in all three counties. Youth sports cross county borders all the time. The Capital Area Soccer League includes teams from communities in each county. The high school Capital Area Activities Conference does the same.

People of color: Delta Township in Eaton County is one of the most diverse communities within our Community of Interest. About 12% of the population is Black, trailing only Lansing and Lansing Township. Putting Delta Township in a different district than Lansing divides the Black community and diminishes its representation in Washington.

Geographical mish-mash: Most of Lansing is in Ingham County, but portions are in Eaton and Clinton. Most of East Lansing is in Ingham, but some is in Clinton. Most of Grand Ledge is in Eaton, but some is in Clinton. When Eaton, Clinton and Ingham are separated, families that live in the same city and attend the same schools can end up with different members of Congress.



Congressional district history: If you look at the Congressional maps of the past, the Lansing region has been victims of gerrymandering for at least 20 years. The 8th District currently includes northern and even *eastern* Oakland County (Detroit suburbs) but none of Eaton or Clinton County just across the road. Today, our residents are at the *far corners* of the 4th, 7th and 8th Districts. It would be hard to further divide our Community of Interest or diminish our influence if you tried.

There is no doubt in my mind that you will be presented with a fair map that recognizes the Ingham-Eaton-Clinton Community of Interest. I hope you will adopt one that makes these long-overdue corrections.

Sincerely,

Chris Andrews

The map provided shows my proposed configuration. Three townships: Blackman, Leoni and Summit plus the City of Jackson make one district. The remaining 16 rural townships form the second district in the County.

This configuration would allow for representation of metro and urban issues such as regional water and sewer infrastructure planning, road maintenance, education funding. planning and zoning, and transit.

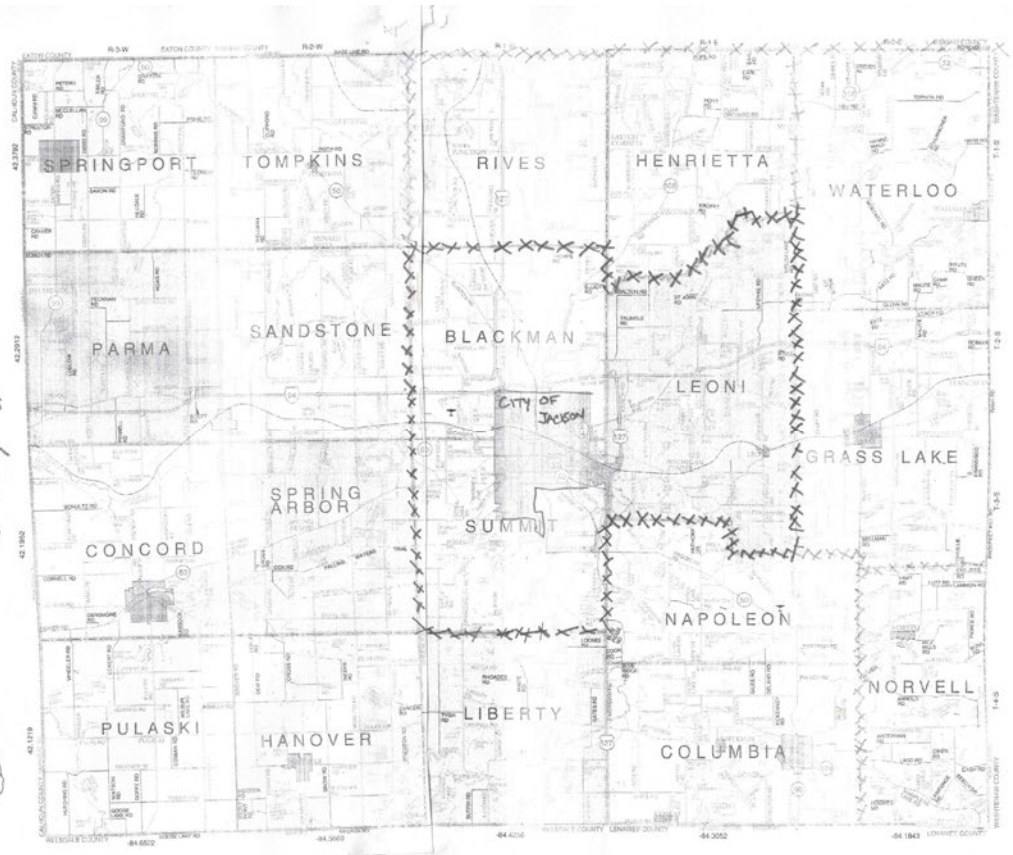
I live within this urbanized area AND we have a home in the country: Tompkins Township. I am honestly more of a country girl. Buying in the city where I did, near the Cascades Falls Park, turned out to be an extremely smart move. We are less than a block from two city bus stops, a major non-urbanized trail network, and 1.5 miles to downtown with the Carnegie Library. My grocery store that I visit every other day is just a mile and a half away. We have a choice of three public elementary schools within 2 miles of home, are just blocks from the Junior High and less than a mile to the High School. In Tompkins we relied on fuel oil and wood to heat the home. Because of my location in the city I enjoy access to natural gas and high speed internet.

Despite fulfilling a lifelong dream to own a home and wooded property in Tompkins in 2010, in 2017 I moved us into the City of Jackson to better accommodate life as a working mom. I was looking for a chance to be less reliant on driving. Thank you for listening to our comments. Sincerely, Monica Day

JACKSON COUNTY, MICHIGAN COUNTY ROAD MAP


2 State house districts
Urbanized area
Blackman, Leoni & Summit townships
& City of Jackson
40,000 voters


Rural Townships:
other 16 Twps.
40,000 voters

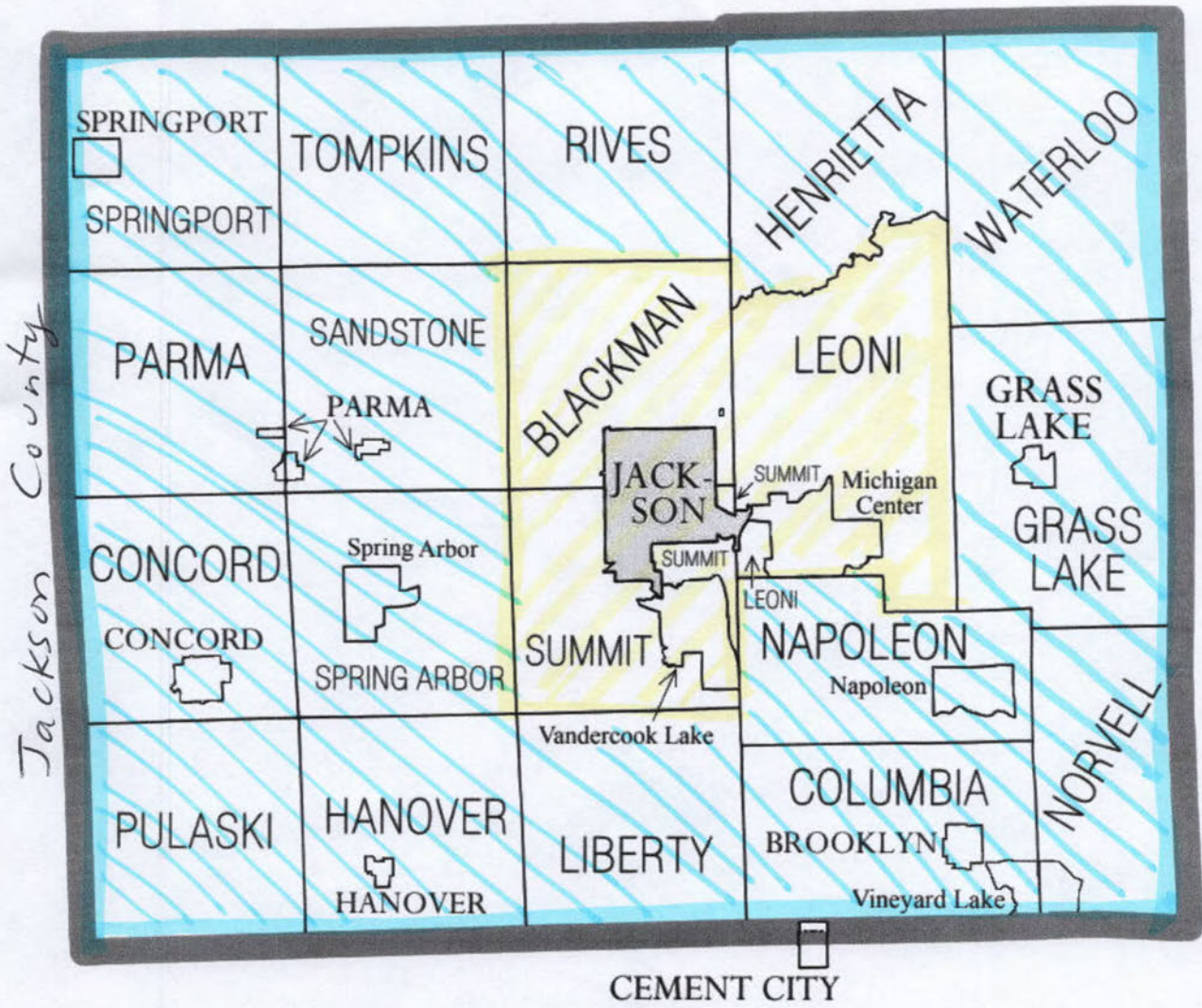


5/11/21

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

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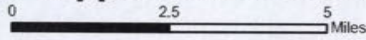
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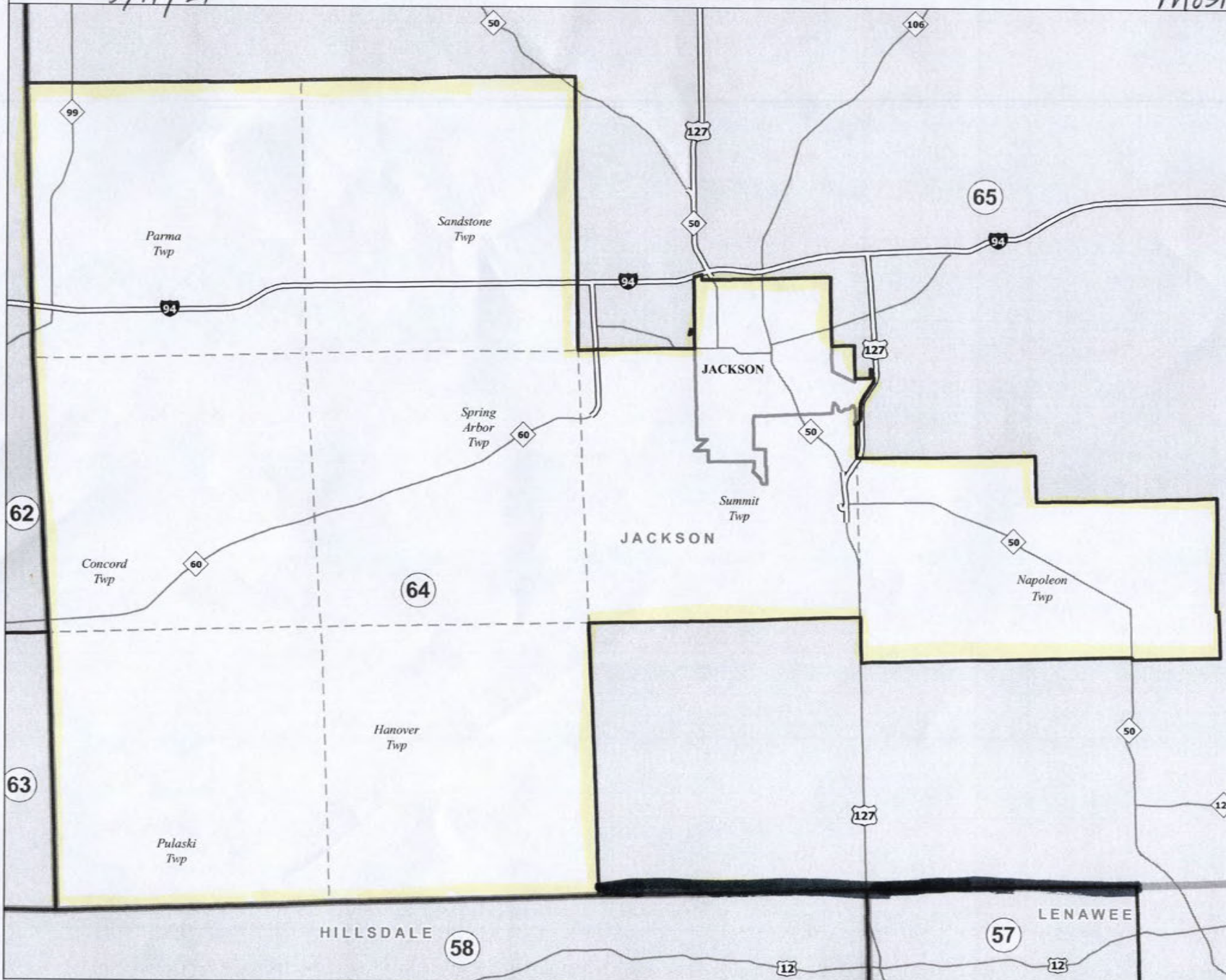
This map shows fairer and more compact district lines if Jackson Co. is to be divided into 2 new State House Districts.

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)

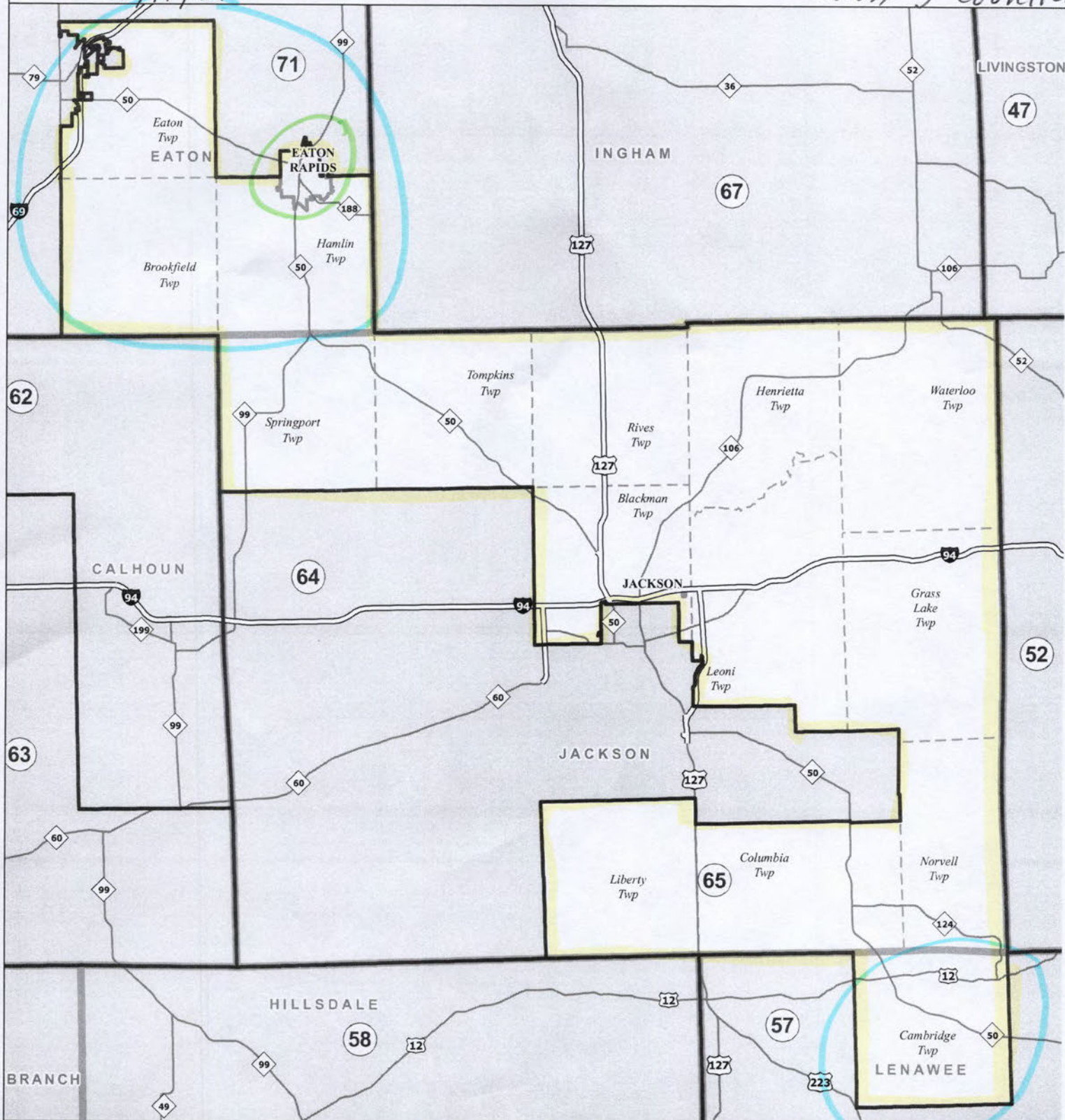
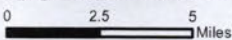


COI Testimony
from Nancy A. Smith
5/11/21

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



Testimony for the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission Public Hearing of May 27, 2021

Submitted by:

Jeffrey D Padden

Resident of Okemos, Michigan

May 10, 2021

Members of the Commission:

I ask that as you draw maps for congressional districts, you consider the Lansing Tri-County region, comprising Ingham, Clinton, and Eaton Counties, as a community of interest and place it within one district. The current map divides our region into three congressional districts, with Ingham bundled with Shiawassee and Oakland counties. The Lansing region certainly has some commonalities with Shiawassee, but I have never heard a resident speak of Oakland County as part of an affinity group with us, nor are we part of a community of interest with Wexford or Lenawee.

I believe residents of Ingham, Clinton, and Eaton Counties do see themselves as a community of interest, but my assertion alone does not make it so. You should rely on empirical evidence whenever possible, and I know you are attempting to do so. With that in mind, I conducted a simple scan of public agencies, nonprofits, and commercial business listings on the Internet to learn about their regional identity. A cursory Google search showed many entities that identify as part of this community. I am certain that a more extensive effort would reveal hundreds more that identify similarly. By contrast, I conducted the same scan looking for entities that identify their service area to include both Ingham and Oakland, and I found none. Not one.

The following, then, is a partial list of entities that provide public services, social assistance, and commercial work in this self-defined tri-county region.. Through them, one can obtain health care, adopt a stray pet, start a small business, and get your drains cleaned, along with many other functions. They tell their customers that their service area is Ingham, Clinton, and Eaton County (and in some instances as noted, Shiawassee), and to their customers, the residents of this region, that makes sense. Together, they are in fact a multi-faceted community of interest.

Public Agencies

- Community Mental Health Authority of Clinton, Eaton, Ingham Counties
- State of Michigan Prosperity Region [Health and Human Services, Economic Development, Education, Agriculture and Rural Development, Natural Resources, etc.]
- Tri County Office on Aging
- Tri-County Metro Narcotics Squad

- Tri-County Regional Planning Commission [Planning; environmental quality; transportation; community and economic development; data and mapping]
- US Census: Metropolitan Statistical Area

Nonprofits

- Capital Area Community Services [Clinton, Eaton, Ingham, and Shiawassee]
- Capital Area Health Alliance
- Capital Area Humane Society
- Capital Area Michigan Works
- Capital Area United Way
- Capital Region Community Foundation
- Capital Region Small Business Development Center
- Disability Network Capital Area [Clinton, Eaton, Ingham, and Shiawassee]
- Lansing Capital Area Salvation Army
- Lansing Economic Area Partnership [LEAP]
- RSVP of Ingham, Eaton, & Clinton Counties [Volunteer service program]
- Tri-County Alliance for Public Education
- Tri-County Bicycle Association
- Tri-County Crisis Intervention Team
- Tri-County TRIAD [Promotes older adult safety and reduces the fear of crime]

Businesses

- Ace Cleaning and Restoration: Serving the Lansing and the Tri-County Area
- Ramsey Civil Process Service, Inc.
- Tri County Community Advocates
- Tri County Home Improvements
- Tri- County Maintenance
- Tri-County Emergency Medical Control Authority
- Tri-County Guardianship Services
- Tri-County Mobile Veterinary Clinic
- Tri-County Plumbing and Drain Cleaning Inc
- Tri-County Realty

There are many considerations involved in defining a community of interest, but taken together, these data are compelling. I urge you to take seriously the voices of the public agencies, nonprofits, and businesses that are so important to our region, the Ingham, Eaton, Clinton community of interest.

Sincerely,


Jeffrey D Padden

The Lansing Region as a Community of Interest

Laurence S. Rosen, Ph.D.

East Lansing, Michigan

1. Introduction

Purpose of this Statement

- To recognize the Lansing Region consisting of Clinton, Eaton, and Ingham Counties--the main components of the Lansing-East Lansing Metropolitan Statistical Area as of 2018¹--as a Community of Interest; and
- To propose that the Lansing Region Community of Interest should be incorporated within a single Congressional District in Michigan's plans for redistricting following the 2020 Census.

Qualifications

I am a demographer, researcher, and expert witness for litigation involving demographic issues and statistical issues. During the years 1980 to 1990 I served as Michigan's first State Demographer and liaison to the U.S. Bureau of the Census. Among other activities, I was involved with redistricting issues at that time. In 1980, I was responsible for the preparation of base maps that were used for Congressional and State Legislative redistricting in 1982; in 1990 I served as chair of a bipartisan committee responsible for providing both political parties in each house of the Michigan Legislature with access to materials needed to develop redistricting proposals.

As an expert witness, I have testified or prepared analysis for several federal and state legal cases: Benton Harbor School desegregation; the Poletown Plant case--General Motors versus the City of Detroit; the geographic distribution of automobile insurance rates in southeastern Michigan for AAA of Michigan; straight-ticket voting and its impact on

¹ In 2019, population estimates from the Census Bureau's American Community Survey added Shiawassee County to the Lansing-East Lansing Metropolitan Statistical Area, most likely due to increased commuting from Shiawassee County to employment in Lansing, East Lansing, and nearby areas. Historically, Shiawassee County has been more closely associated with the City of Flint and Genesee County rather than the Lansing Area. For purposes of this proposal, the Lansing Region Community of Interest excludes Shiawassee County.

minority voters as part of the Voting Rights Act; and two lawsuits regarding labor issues within the Michigan Department of Corrections.

I have a Ph.D. in Sociology with a focus on Demography from the Pennsylvania State University.

2. Metropolitan Statistical Areas Defined.

The proposed Lansing Region Community of Interest consists of the three counties that have historically comprised the Lansing-East Lansing Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). Metropolitan areas have been formally recognized since the 1940s when

It became clear that the value of metropolitan data produced by Federal agencies would be greatly enhanced if agencies used a single set of geographic definitions for the Nation's largest center of population and activity. Prior to that time, Federal agencies defined a variety of statistical geographic areas at the metropolitan level (including "metropolitan districts," "industrial areas," "labor market areas," and metropolitan counties") using different criteria applied to different geographic units. Because of variation in methodologies and the resulting inconsistencies in area definitions, one agency's statistics were not directly comparable with another agency's statistics for any given area. OMB (Office of Management and Budget)'s predecessor, the Bureau of the Budget, led the effort to develop what were then called "Standard Metropolitan Areas" in time for their use in the 1950 census reports.²

Since 1950, Metropolitan Statistical Areas have been universally recognized by economists, demographers, the business community, and government as cohesive economic and population areas. Metropolitan Statistical Areas (or MSAs) are defined as geographic areas that have a core city or adjacent cities of at least 50,000 residents, the county or counties where those core cities are located, and any adjacent counties in which at least 25 percent of the labor force commutes to work in the county or counties where the central city or central cities are located.³ The commuting criterion documents how the geographic components of the metropolitan area are

² Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget. "Standards for Defining Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Areas." *Federal Register*. 65 FR 82227, pages 82227-82238, December 27, 2000.

³ *Ibid.*

integrated into a larger, more economically interrelated community. This is further evidenced by the fact that employment in the core city or county of an MSA typically has two to three times the economic impact that would be produced by the same workforce in non-metropolitan areas.⁴ In more common terms, the MSA represents a social and economic entity that is clearly greater than the sum of its parts.

MSAs are recognized and used throughout the American business sector for purposes such as business planning, marketing, site selection, labor recruitment, communications (radio and TV), advertising, and other purposes. Service areas for retail merchants and service providers, health care organizations, and for many public and private community services are typically designed to serve the populations within MSAs. MSAs are also used by almost all federal agencies regarding the location of public programs and services as well as serving as the geographic basis for planning, and policy decisions, and, frequently, for the allocation of federal funds. Even individual local governments frequently organize along regional lines in order to address cross-boundary issues and concerns through the establishment of regional councils of government, regional economic development organizations, regional educational facilities, and regional planning agencies.

MSAs also provide a regional identity for their residents through shared institutions, electronic and print media, sports teams, educational institutions, and entertainment and recreational facilities. Similarly, MSAs also provide regional identity for residents through their familiarity with, social interactions within, and shared experiences of the area defined by the individual MSA.

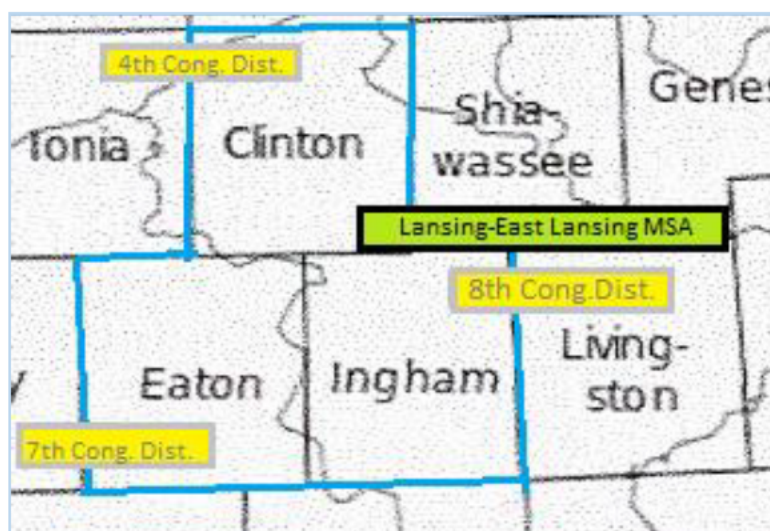
Metropolitan Statistical Areas, therefore, clearly exhibit many of the social and economic features of a “community of interest” and, as such, should be considered for recognition within any redistricting plans for the State of Michigan following release of local-area data from the 2020 Census.

⁴ Ibid.

3. Lansing-East Lansing Metropolitan Statistical Area as a Community of Interest

The Lansing Region has been officially recognized as a Metropolitan Statistical Area for decades. The 2018 update to the official list of Metropolitan Statistical Areas published in the *Federal Register* defines the Lansing-East Lansing Metropolitan Area as consisting of the core cities of Lansing and East Lansing, with Ingham County as its core county, and two adjacent counties: Clinton County and Eaton County.⁵ A map of the MSA as of 2018 is below.⁶

Figure 1. Lansing-East Lansing Metropolitan Statistical Area.



Employment by the region's major employers—General Motors, Michigan State Government, and Michigan State University—is drawn from localities throughout the region and, thus, illustrates the economic integration that underlies the Lansing-East Lansing MSA. As an example, tabulation of the

⁵ Office of Management and Budget. Revised Delineations of Metropolitan Statistical Areas, Micropolitan Statistical Areas, and Combined Statistical Areas, and Guidance on Uses of the Delineations of These Areas. OMB Bulletin No. 18-03. April 10, 2018.

⁶ In 2019, Shiawassee County was added to the Lansing-East Lansing MSA. Office of Management and Budget. Revised Delineations of Metropolitan Statistical Areas, Micropolitan Statistical Areas, and Combined Statistical Areas, and Guidance on Uses of the Delineations of These Areas. OMB Bulletin No.20-01. March 6, 2020. It is unknown at this time if this change will be reflected when detailed data from the 2020 Census are released later this year.

main communities in which full-time, professional and technical employees at Michigan State University reside illustrates that the overwhelming majority of employees reside in Clinton, Eaton, and Ingham Counties. See Table 1, below.

Table 1: MSU Professional and Technical Employees By Place of Residence, 2019*		
Community of Residence	County	Employees
Meridian Township	Ingham	2,457
City of Lansing	Ingham	1,812
City of East Lansing	Ingham	1,684
Delhi Township	Ingham	568
Delta Township	Eaton	426
Bath Township	Clinton	382
Dewitt Township	Clinton	285
Williamstown Township	Ingham	200
Lansing Township	Ingham,	145
City of Mason	Ingham	136
City of Williamston	Ingham	109
Watertown Township	Clinton	101
City of Dewitt	Clinton	93
Aurelius Township	Ingham	89
Woodhull Township	Shiawassee	86
Alaiedon Township	Ingham	82
Windsor Township	Eaton	81
Vevay Township	Ingham	79
Victor Township	Clinton	78
City of St. Johns	Clinton	72
City of Grand Ledge	Eaton	62
Perry Township	Shiawassee	54
*Includes only communities with at least 50 MSU employees. Excludes part-time and student employees.		
Source: MSU Office of Government Relations		

In addition to employment, the Lansing-East Lansing MSA shares most of the characteristics that define this region as a community of interest. As evidenced by simple observation, there are numerous businesses,

organizations, and institutions that identify themselves as serving “the Lansing Area,” the “Great Lansing Area,” the “Tri-County Area,” or the “Mid-Michigan Area,” all of which are defined by the three counties that have historically comprised the Lansing-East Lansing MSA. The region has its own radio, television, and print media that principally serve and report on the region’s three counties. Even the region’s two core cities are regional as their borders both cross county lines within the region. The City of Lansing includes territory and population in both Eaton County and Clinton County in addition to its principal territory in Ingham County. The City of East Lansing also includes territory and population in Clinton County, north of the majority of its territory in Ingham County.

Despite the general recognition that the Lansing Region includes all of the characteristics of a Community of Interest, this particular Community of Interest is not reflected in the current boundaries of Congressional districts in this region. As noted in Figure 1, above, the region is split among three Congressional Districts:

- The 4th Congressional District includes all of Clinton County, including portions of both the Cities of Lansing and East Lansing, and excludes both Ingham and Eaton Counties; the 4th District stretches northward from Lansing and East Lansing almost to Traverse City, incorporating mainly rural territory throughout;
- The 7th Congressional District includes all of Eaton County, including a portion of the City of Lansing’s southwestern neighborhood, and excludes both Ingham and Clinton Counties; Eaton County is almost completely detached from the remainder of the 7th district which is mainly located in southcentral Michigan and along Michigan’s southern border to Lake Erie in the east;
- The 8th Congressional District includes all of Ingham County, including the major portions of both Lansing and East Lansing and Michigan State University, and excludes Clinton and Eaton Counties; the 8th district stretches eastward to include Livingston County and the northern portion of Oakland County, both of which are the outer reaches of the Detroit-Warren-Dearborn Metropolitan Statistical Area.

4. Conclusion and Recommendation


It is evident that the Lansing Region is recognized an economically and socially integrated Community of Interest by virtue of its status as an MSA. This is reflected both economically and socially by widespread identification with this region as a distinct entity by its residents, its business community, and its institutions. Despite this, the region has been subdivided among three Congressional districts, each of which only represents a small portion of the Lansing Region, its social and economic characteristics, and the specific issues and concerns that characterize the region as a Community of Interest.


As a result this Congressional subdivision, it may be credibly argued that the particular issues and concerns within the Lansing Region are diminished by greater attention being paid to the other, larger portions of the region's three Congressional districts. This lack of attention reduces the Lansing Community of Interest's influence in Congress, and is likely to have made it more difficult for the specific needs and interests of this Community of Interest to be addressed through its divided Congressional representation.

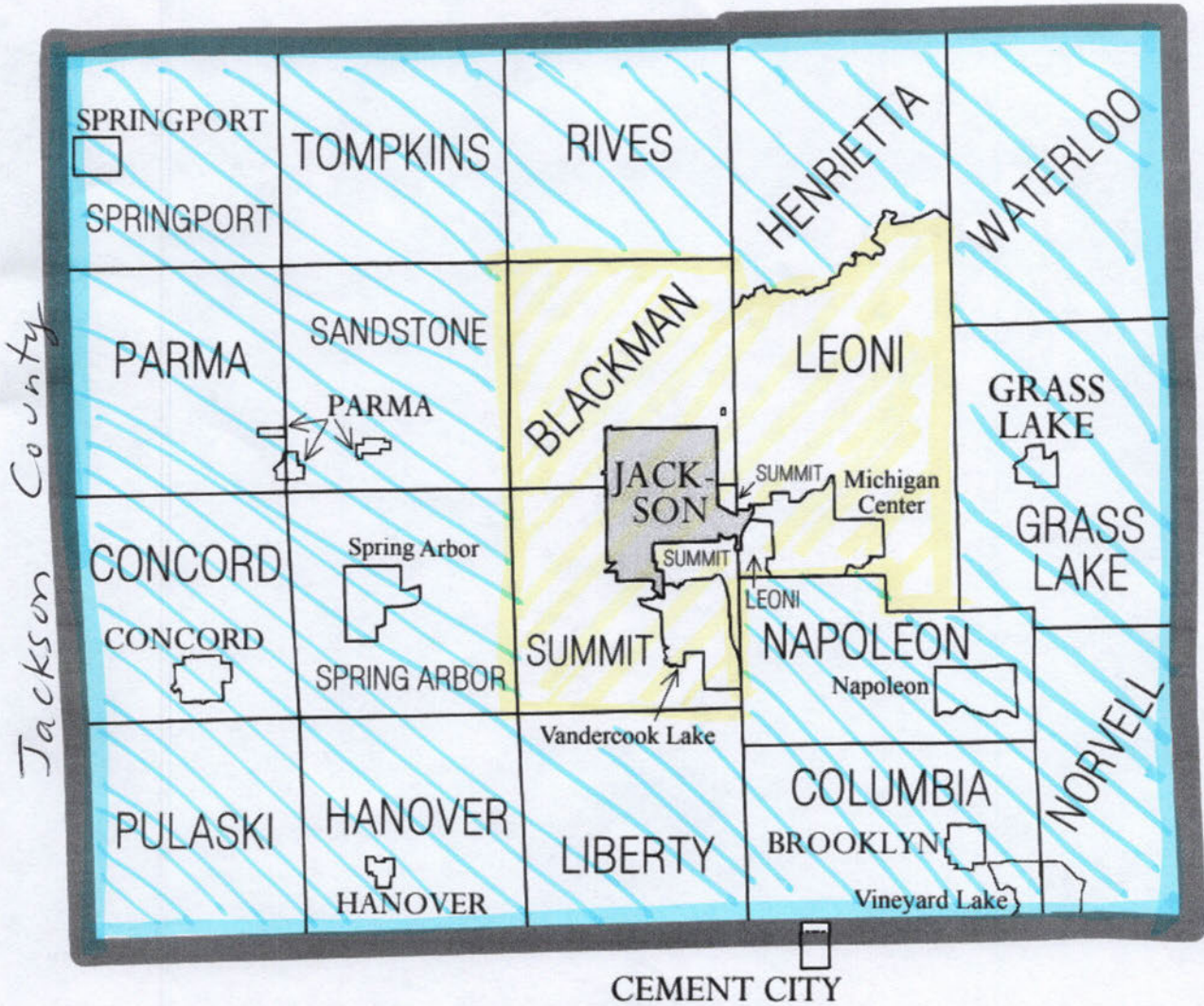
For purposes of any future decisions regarding the redistricting of Michigan's 13 Congressional Districts, I strongly recommend that the three-county Lansing Region—as a Community of Interest--be fully incorporated (i.e. not subdivided) into a single Congressional district. This will allow the full voice of voters in this Community of Interest be heard in future elections, and that this area's interests be fully known and understood by whomever represents this district in the future.

5/11/21

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

 = Jackson County Rural

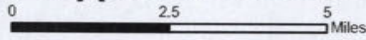
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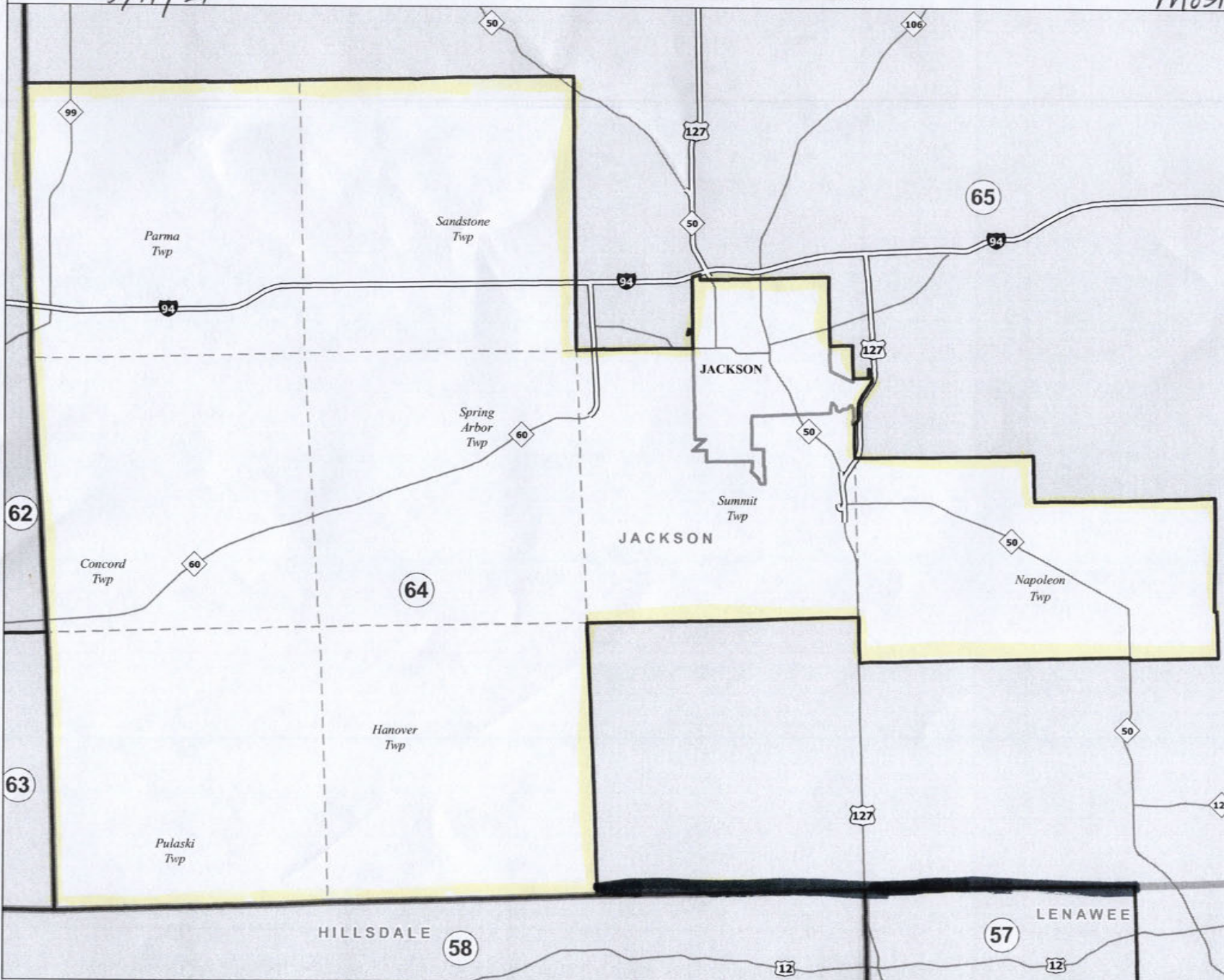
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Legend

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



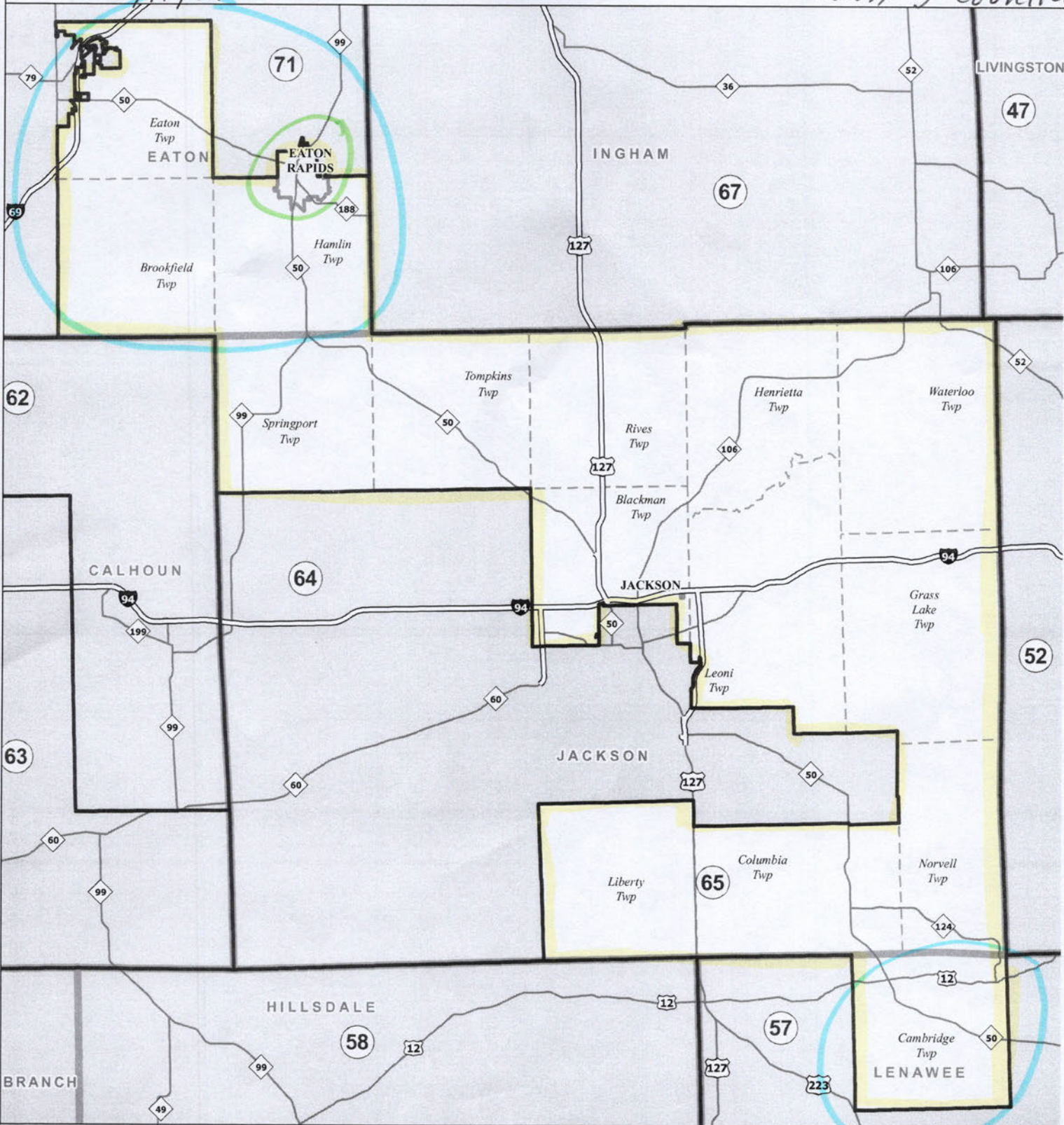
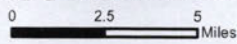
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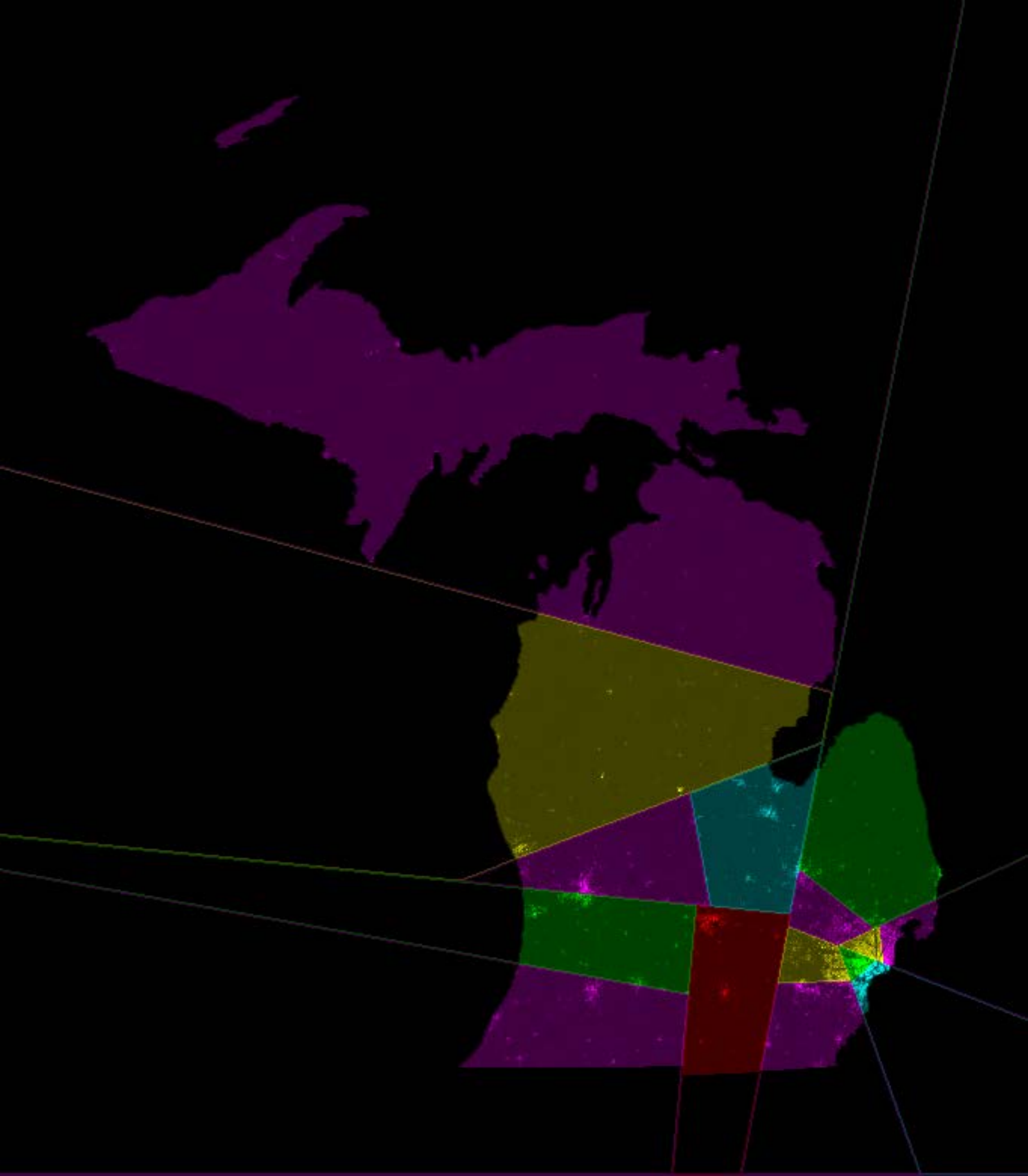
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There are many considerations involved in defining a community of interest, but taken together, these data are compelling. I urge you to take seriously the voices of the public agencies, nonprofits, and businesses that are so important to our region, the Ingham, Eaton, Clinton community of interest.

Sincerely,


Jeffrey D Padden





To the members serving Michigan's Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission (MICRC),

From the inception of Proposal 18-2 (aptly named "Voters Not Politicians"), the Branch County Democrats (BCD) have been in full support of the creation of this commission of citizens to redraw and adopt district boundaries for the Michigan Senate, Michigan House of Representatives and U.S. Congress.

The BCD strongly urges the commission to fulfill their duties in good faith to meet the ultimate goal of determining fair districting for the state legislature and U.S congressional districts. Free and fair elections are the cornerstone of a healthy democracy, and redistricting a heavily gerrymandered Michigan to accurately represent its constituents and communities, will allow our great state to truly represent the will of its people.

There is an increasing and disturbing trend of Republican leadership on the state and federal level who are willing to take any advantage to ensure their party's victory, even if it is in direct opposition to ethics, norms, laws and even the will of their constituents. These individuals and groups are sowing distrust in our electoral process and are setting a dangerous precedent for our democracy. The BCD urges the MICRC to perform its constitutional mandate while safeguarding the process from these political intentions.

Chairperson Jeff Raymond
Branch County Democrats



May 18, 2021

Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission:

Michigan Farm Bureau (MFB) thanks you for your service on the independent redistricting commission and we recognize the difficult task ahead of you as you work to balance legal requirements, public input and more.

With roots in our member-driven policy development process, our organization encourages you to place a strong emphasis on keeping townships and counties together when possible. We believe that the inside of a governmental boundary is a community of interest. Furthermore, keeping townships and counties together also helps keep districts compact, as most townships and counties are square in shape. Our membership supports compact, contiguous districts while keeping an entire township and or county together in one district when possible.

Michigan Farm Bureau is the state's largest general farm organization, representing more than 40,000 members with farms of all commodities and sizes.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to other opportunities for our members to communicate how this important process impacts our rural communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Matthew Kapp'.

Matthew D. Kapp
Government Relations Specialist

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 ether 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, Chocolate 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



To the members serving Michigan's Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission (MICRC),

From the inception of Proposal 18-2 (aptly named "Voters Not Politicians"), the Branch County Democrats (BCD) have been in full support of the creation of this commission of citizens to redraw and adopt district boundaries for the Michigan Senate, Michigan House of Representatives and U.S. Congress.

The BCD strongly urges the commission to fulfill their duties in good faith to meet the ultimate goal of determining fair districting for the state legislature and U.S congressional districts. Free and fair elections are the cornerstone of a healthy democracy, and redistricting a heavily gerrymandered Michigan to accurately represent its constituents and communities, will allow our great state to truly represent the will of its people.

There is an increasing and disturbing trend of Republican leadership on the state and federal level who are willing to take any advantage to ensure their party's victory, even if it is in direct opposition to ethics, norms, laws and even the will of their constituents. These individuals and groups are sowing distrust in our electoral process and are setting a dangerous precedent for our democracy. The BCD urges the MICRC to perform its constitutional mandate while safeguarding the process from these political intentions.

Chairperson Jeff Raymond
Branch County Democrats



Michigan Citizens Redistricting Commission. June 2021 Midland

Good evening, I'm Barb Handley-Miller, a retired professor from Delta College. I live in Bay County Michigan, where I raised a family.

I am a part of a Bay County Community of Interest, and our focus is to see Bay County aligned with Saginaw, Midland, and Genesee Counties in a Congressional district.

I will speak to higher education. Over 40 percent of college students start at a community college. Our communities are tightly connected. At Delta College, 81 percent of students come from Saginaw, Bay and Midland Counties.

At Delta College and Mott Community College in Flint, over thirty percent of students transfer to universities. We need representation to work for fair Federal loan and Pell Grant policies, for fair access for lower income students.

In addition, the students who transfer from Delta College are most likely to go to four-year universities that are in proximity. SVSU, Northwood University in Midland, and University of Michigan-Flint are in the top ten of universities they transfer to. The Bay Area Community Foundation has awarded almost 2.7 million dollars in scholarships since 2008 to Bay Area High school graduates who are the first in their family to attend college, and who enroll at either Delta or SVSU.

These colleges carefully select programs based on the needs of this part of Michigan, with an emphasis on medical, business, education, and science/engineering. Veterans using GI benefits would be supported by a consolidated district encompassing all of these colleges.

The colleges also play a key role in revitalization of downtowns. Delta College has a downtown Bay City campus, and new buildings in downtown Saginaw and Midland. University of Michigan-Flint is key to downtown Flint development. SVSU has classrooms in downtown Saginaw as well, as does CMU for medical students.

In short, the strengths of our higher education system and the Michigan economy would be helped by representation in a consolidated urban congressional district.

Please consider the effectiveness of aligning Midland, Bay, Saginaw and Genesee Counties in a congressional district. Thank you.

Barb Handley-Miller



Bay City, Michigan. 48706

May 17, 2021

Members of the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission,

I am an independent voter, and am writing to suggest an approach the Commission might use to draw district maps.

Obviously, any map drawn needs to comply with the Commission's charter and the law. It should also go without saying that any district map should be perceived as fair by as many Michiganders as possible.

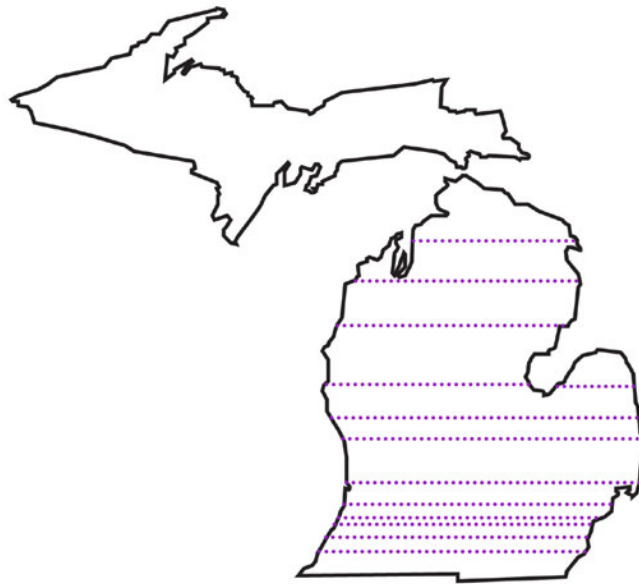
What sorts of districting maps are likely to be judged as fair? I suspect that simple, straightforward maps are more likely to be viewed as equitable than maps that look complicated. A map that looks complicated invites suspicion about the motives of its creators -- suspicion that could lead to recrimination and low acceptance.

I recommend to the commission a "going-in" (initial) approach to redistricting that is very simple, obviously principle-based, and neutral-looking. Michiganders will understand that this proposal is a starting place for discussion, not the final recommendation.

The initial map can be adjusted as needed to reflect communities of interest, which is a requirement of the Commission's charter. It can also be adjusted so that it doesn't divide existing polling places, which is something the Commission may choose to do for expediency.

I will illustrate how to create a simple initial map for Michigan's 13 federal congressional districts, but the sample principal can be applied to creation of a map for more numerous state districts.

First: Start by dividing the state into evenly-populated districts that look like rows, using only straight horizontal lines. Here is a map that divides Michigan into 13 evenly populated rows. The upper peninsula and upper portion of the lower peninsula are grouped together in one row.



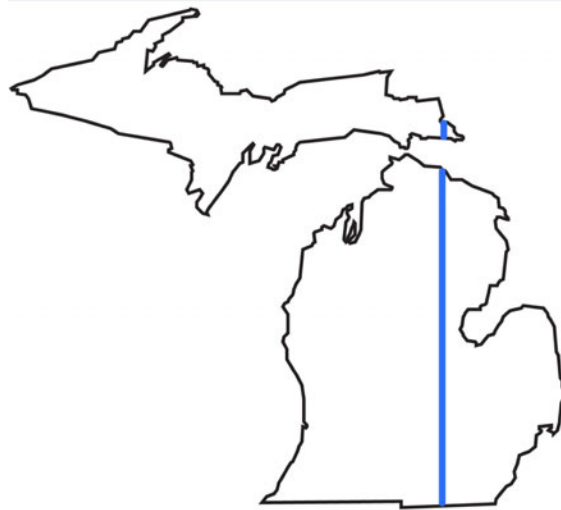
This map is clearly drawn using a non-partisan principle. I have no idea whether the end result would be better or worse for any one political party; the point is to design something that doesn't look like it was created with a partisan objective in mind.

This particular map has the advantage of being very simple, and forcing accommodation of east and west attitudes within each district to select representatives that are acceptable to both coasts of the state. It could work as a starting point for drawing a map of federal districts, to be adjusted after communities of interest are taken into account.

Unfortunately, the districts created using this process are rather wide, and it could take time to physically traverse a district from east to west. For the many state districts that need to be created, this approach would result in very wide and thin districts -- too narrow to make sense.

To maintain simplicity, but make the districts less narrow, a variation should be considered:

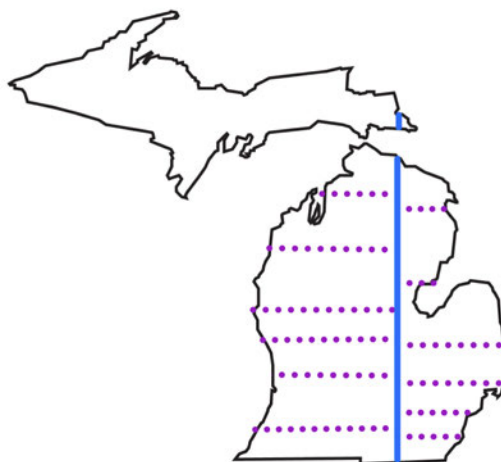
First: draw one (or more) vertical lines that divide the state into two (or more) columns that each contain the same population. I have illustrated this by creating a map with one vertical line.



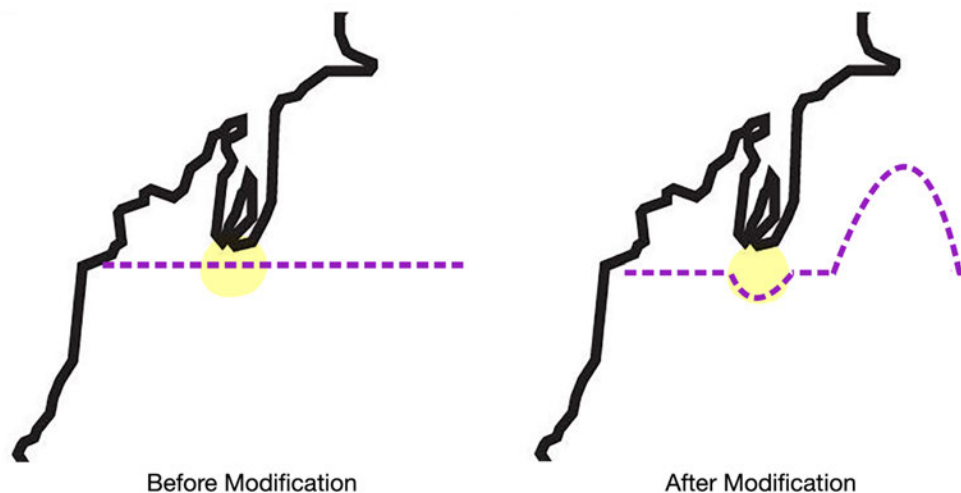
Then divide each vertical column with horizontal lines that create equal sized districts.

If an odd number of districts need to be created, the demographer who helps the commission can show how to shift a vertical line to the left or right, so that one of the columns can have more horizontal lines than the others, and still keep the population in each district equal.

Here is an illustration that creates 14 districts, using one vertical line.



If a community of interest emerges that is uncomfortable with a straight line, because the community is divided between two districts, and the Commission believes the community's desires should be accommodated, the map can be modified by "appropriating" some territory to include the community of interest in one district, and "donating" another territory with an equal population to the district that lost territory during the appropriation process. I illustrate what this would look like here with a modification to a map, where the yellow region represents a community of interest that the Commission desires to keep in one district.



My thinking is that the territory exchange would not be so common as to obscure the essential principle behind the map. It would still look simple -- not gerrymandered.

The same accommodation process could be used to adjust lines to conform to existing polling sites. I am not sure whether consideration of territory covered by existing polling sites is required, but making minor adjustments to the lines to avoid dividing the territory included in each polling site may make voting easier to administer, since every voter who votes in a polling place would be in the same district and could receive the same ballot.

I hope this suggestion is helpful.

Paul Valenstein



The map provided shows my proposed configuration. Three townships: Blackman, Leoni and Summit plus the City of Jackson make one district. The remaining 16 rural townships form the second district in the County.

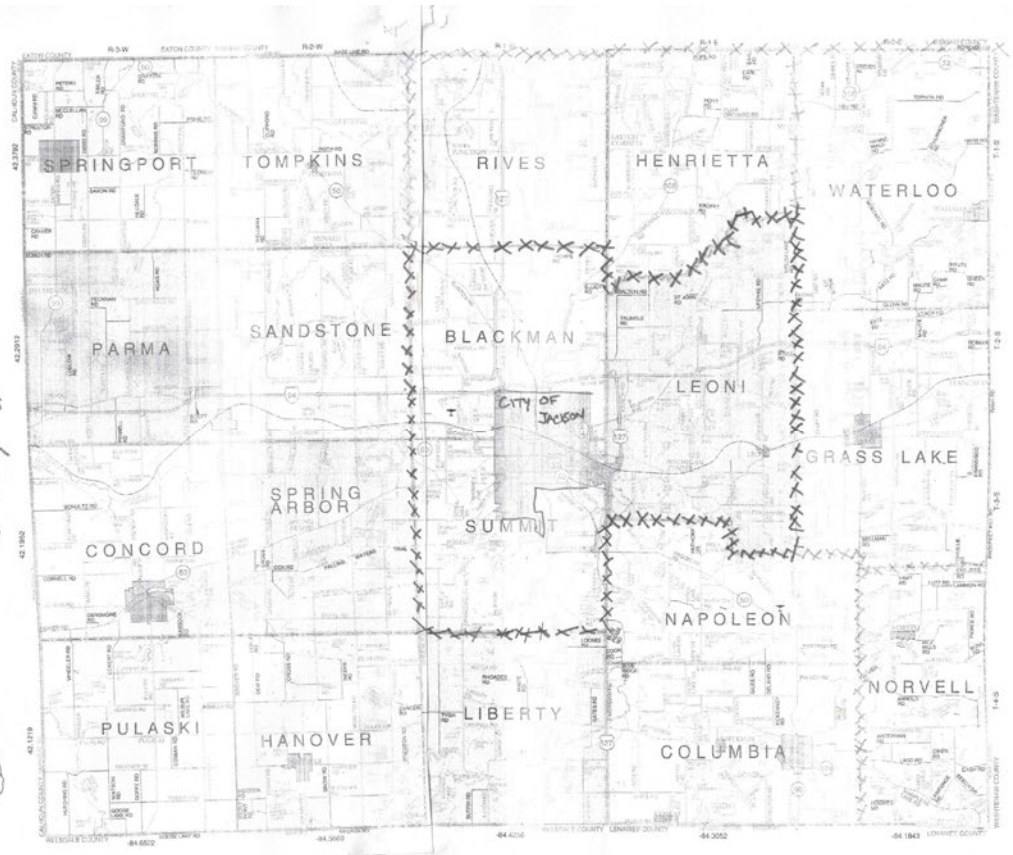
This configuration would allow for representation of metro and urban issues such as regional water and sewer infrastructure planning, road maintenance, education funding. planning and zoning, and transit.

I live within this urbanized area AND we have a home in the country: Tompkins Township. I am honestly more of a country girl. Buying in the city where I did, near the Cascades Falls Park, turned out to be an extremely smart move. We are less than a block from two city bus stops, a major non-urbanized trail network, and 1.5 miles to downtown with the Carnegie Library. My grocery store that I visit every other day is just a mile and a half away. We have a choice of three public elementary schools within 2 miles of home, are just blocks from the Junior High and less than a mile to the High School. In Tompkins we relied on fuel oil and wood to heat the home. Because of my location in the city I enjoy access to natural gas and high speed internet.

Despite fulfilling a lifelong dream to own a home and wooded property in Tompkins in 2010, in 2017 I moved us into the City of Jackson to better accommodate life as a working mom. I was looking for a chance to be less reliant on driving. Thank you for listening to our comments. Sincerely, Monica Day


JACKSON COUNTY, MICHIGAN COUNTY ROAD MAP


2 State house districts
Urbanized area
Blackman, Leoni & Summit townships
& City of Jackson
40,000 voters
Rural townships:
other 16 Twps.
40,000 voters

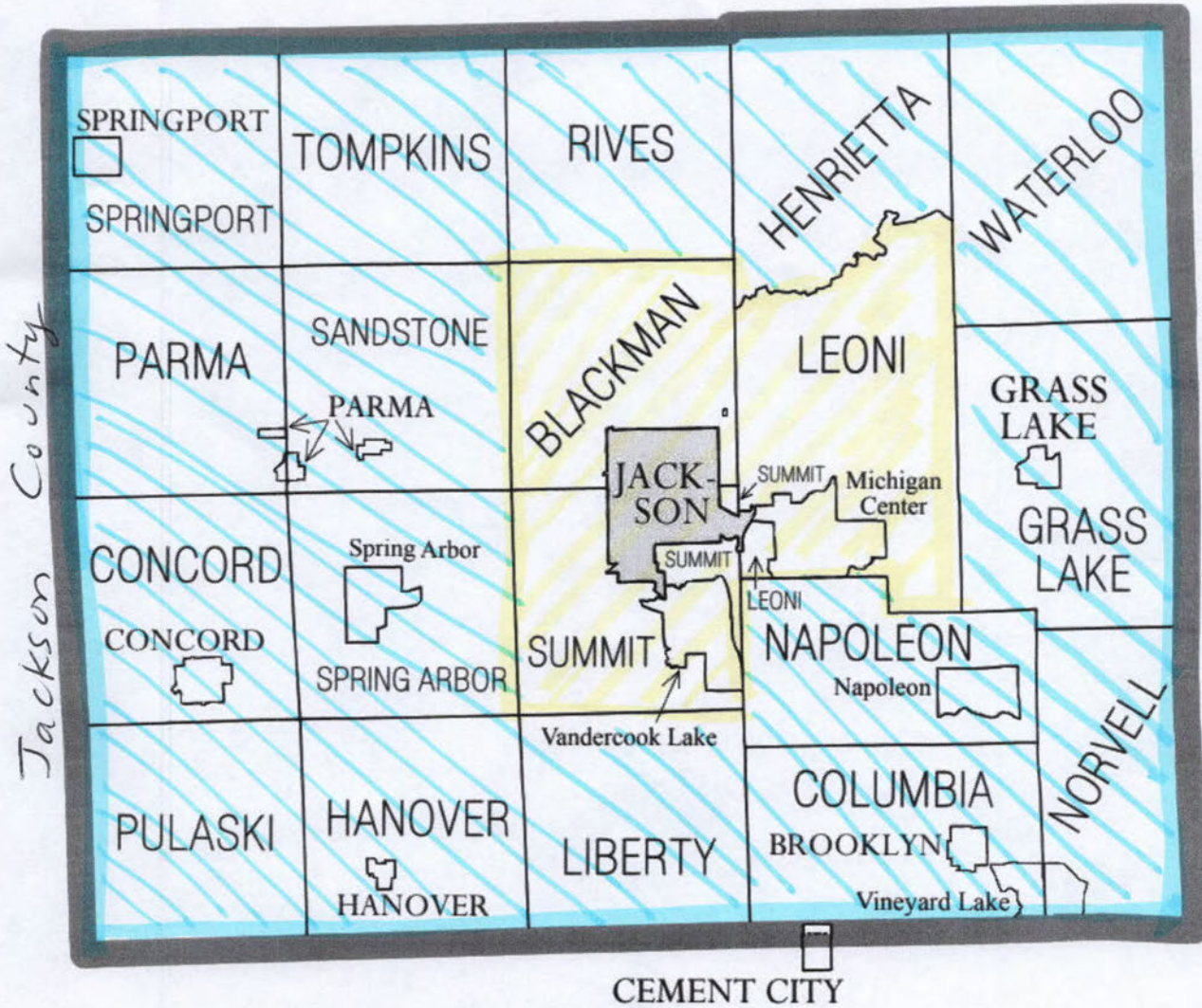


5/11/21

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

 = Jackson County Rural

 = Jackson Co. Urban / Suburban

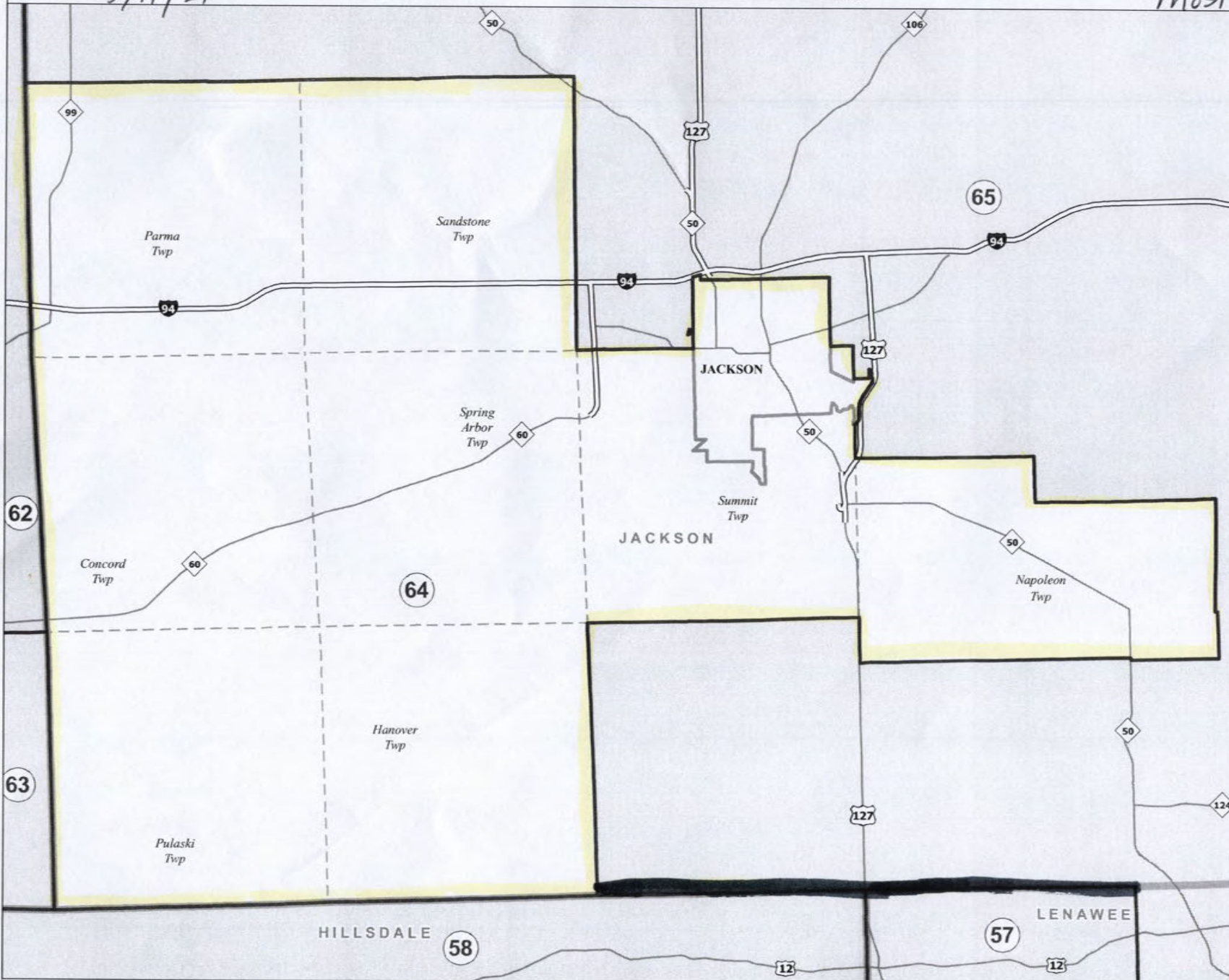
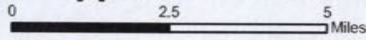


This map shows fairer and more compact district lines if Jackson Co. is to be divided into 2 new State House Districts.

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



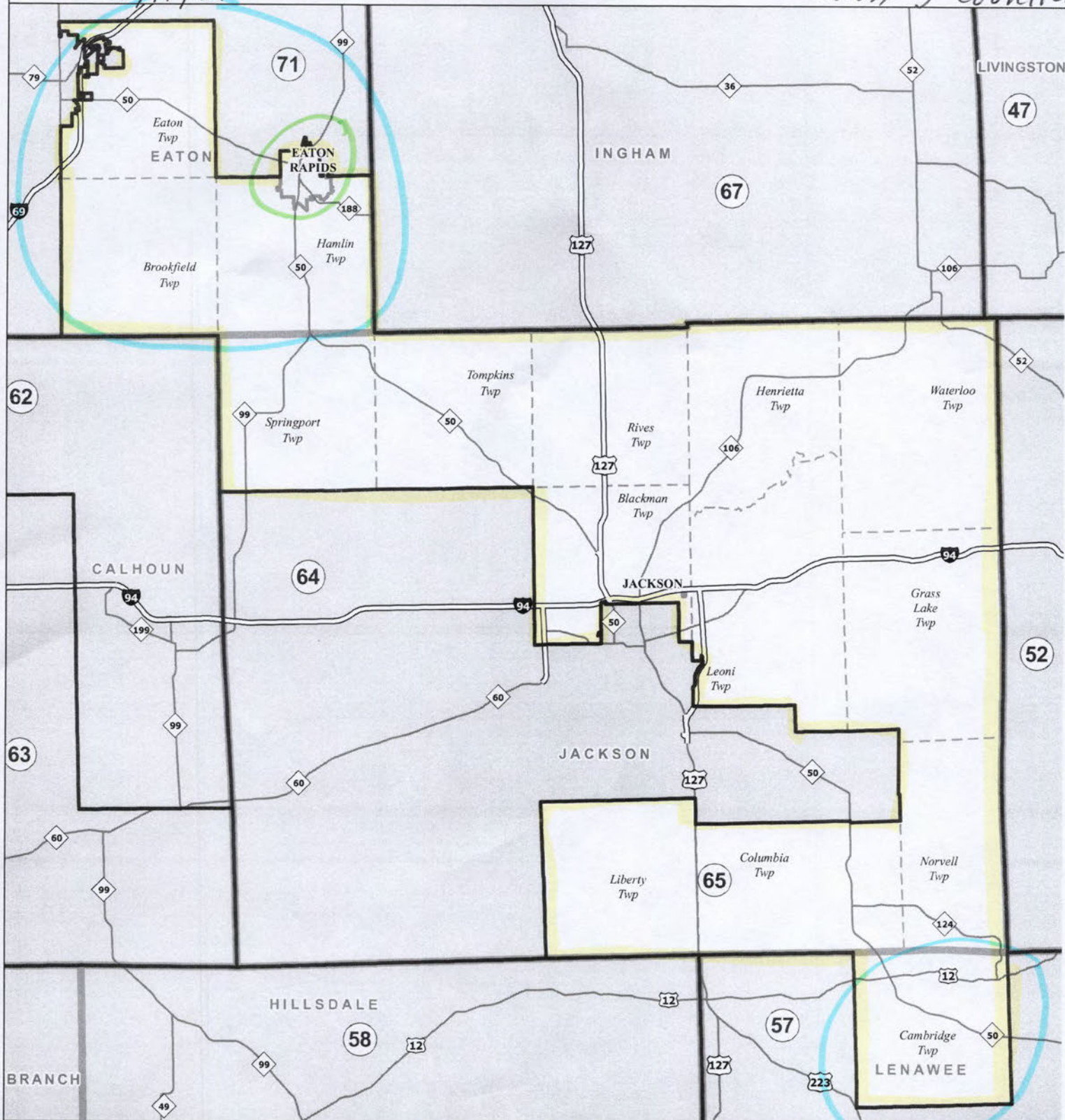
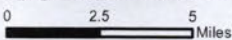
Source:
Base Map:
Michigan Geographic Framework v11a
Legislative District Boundaries:
2011 Apportionment Plan
(as enacted by PA 129 of 2011)



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

