Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission September 24, 2021 Meeting Public Comment

Date of Submission: Wednesday, September 22, 2021 3:41 PM **Method of Submission:** Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>

Name: Amara Vear

Subject: Public Comment – Please prioritize Fairness

Dear redistricting commission,

I am emailing in the hopes that the commission will ensure there are fair districts across our state, with as little partisan bias as possible. Please create the maps with partisan data in front of the commission so time can be saved by drafting plans that will easily meet this requirement.

Thank you for doing this redistricting work that I've waited more than a decade for, ever since learning about "gerrymandering" in high school and subsequently learning how horribly gerrymandered MI has been.

This is important work that will shape our state for the next decade - I truly hope we can ensure all people have a fair chance at running for office in their communities.

Sincerely,
Amara Vear
Ypsilanti, MI resident
Small business owner

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Date of Submission: Wednesday, September 22, 2021 12:33 PM **Method of Submission:** Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>

Name: Naomi Ludman

Subject: draft maps for Michigan

Good afternoon,

I want to comment on the draft maps that have been drawn so far. I am distressed that when drawing maps, the commission does not seem to be paying much attention to the comments already submitted about communities of interest. This input was widely solicited from the commission and should be uniformly considered when drawing maps. It appears that this has not been consistently the case in the commission's deliberations.

In addition, I would urge the commission to have partisan data in front of them when drawing maps. Partisan fairness was one of the biggest issues for those of us that voted to create this commission. We need competitive districts across the entire state. Maps should have ZERO politial bias.

Thank you for your work. I urge you to continue with these comments in mind.

Sincerely, Naomi Ludman, Dowagiac, MI

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Working towards the light--always,

Naomi

Naomi Ludman
Writing & Editing Services
Social Justice Advocate
Coordinator, St. Paul's Food Pantry
Chair, Cass County Democratic Party

Date of Submission: Tuesday, September 21, 2021 6:02 PM **Method of Submission:** Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>

Name: danielle Fergin Subject: Testimony

I was just greatly disturbed to hear the Midland is now being lumped in with rural surrounding areas vs. the Tri-Cities where it strongly belongs. Our community in Midland is strongly affiliated with and connected to Saginaw and Bay City. Our colleges are together, radio stations, news stations, airports and as a social worker I can confirm that our community resources are shared in the Tri-cities. It would do a great disservice to the Midland community to separate it from the other "Tri-Cities". Due to work conflicts I am unable to make it to the in person testimony sites, but please include this information as written testimony.

Danielle Fergin, LMSW

Date of Submission: Tuesday, September 21, 2021 10:40 AM **Method of Submission:** Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>

Name: Jacqueline Stewart Subject: Congressional maps

I suggest that you consider using the Senate maps you carefully drew as a starting point draw the Congressional maps. You considered racial data, COis, election data for the Senate districts. If you combine well thought out Senate districts you can create larger, equally well thought out, districts.

Jacqueline Stewart

Date of Submission: Monday, September 20, 2021 5:07 PM **Method of Submission:** Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>

Name: Julie Frontera Subject: Mapping

To the Michigan commission:

As a life long Michigan resident, voter and tax payer, I'm asking you to please prioritize non partisan mapping as you make changes and recommendations. There should be little if any political bias involved in this process and outcome, and the expectation is that you have the data in full view as you go through the process.

This is incredibly important for both sides.

Thank you, Julie Frontera

Rochester Hills MI 48309



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Date of Submission: Monday, September 20, 2021 4:34 PM **Method of Submission:** Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>

Name: Jessie Wood

Subject: REDISTRICTING – A Request from a Bay County Resident and Business Owner

Hello, and thank you for the work that the Commission is doing in drawing up the Congressional Maps.

As a life-long resident of the Great Lakes Bay Region/Mid Michigan/Tri-Cities, and a woman business owner, it is very important to me and my family that Bay County remain with Saginaw and Genesee Counties. Although all three counties are diverse, we should remain as one district.

When mapping, it is essential that the Commission prioritize partisan fairness. The people and business owners of Bay County ask the Commission to draw districts with as close to zero political bias as possible. We hope that Commissioners map with partisan data in front of them so that they can evaluate partisan fairness throughout this process. It is important that we have competitive districts across the state.

Thank you again for your time and effort with this most important project.
*All clients are required to follow the COVID-19 safety protocols of our office.

Jessie Scott Wood

Attorney at Law

Wood Law Firm, PLLC

Bay City, MI 48708 Phone:



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Date of Submission: Sunday, September 19, 2021 9:30 PM **Method of Submission:** Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>

Name: Heidi Kaufman

Subject: computer algorithm for creating redistricting solutions

Members of the MICRC,

I have been following your deliberations with interest. Please read my comments in the attached file. Thank you.

Hedi Kaufman

Monroe, MI 48162

Date of Submission: Friday, September 17, 2021 6:04 PM **Method of Submission:** Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>

Name: temp

Subject: Redistricting Priorities

I want to thank the committee for all their hard work, but also would like to remind them of what the voters wanted them to accomplish. The hope was to eliminate exaggerations to the voter bias by drawing districts that are more in line with overall voter preferences. Please keep in mind not only population counts but the voting results of recent statewide elections such as President, Governor, Attorney General, Secretary of State, US Senator, and others. These results reflect the overall preference of the voters of the state and should be reflected in those elections that are based on individual districts. It isn't reflective of a true democracy to have a state where the voters statewide prefer candidates of one party, but elect state representatives and state senators from another party by a wide majority. Again, thank you all for your hard work and efforts.

Lawrence Wagner

Warren, Mi. 48092

Date of Submission: Thursday, September 16, 2021 11:44 PM **Method of Submission:** Email To <Redistricting@Michigan.gov>

Name: Dan Wholihan Subject: Livingston County

Dear Commissioners:

I know the Congressional Map is a first draft, but I want to thank you for listening to the people of our county. Commissioner Eid's Congressional Map is a competitive, fair, map. It kept Livingston County whole (our community of interest) and not in Washtenaw County (specifically Ann Arbor) as most of our residents requested. Our draft district also can vote for any candidate and would force politicians to campaign here in Livingston County as 1000 votes here could swing an election. Our rural votes here matter just as much as the voters at my alma matter at Michigan State. When the margins are this slim for partisan fairness, nobody can be ignored.

I also want to thank you for keeping Livingston County whole in the State Senate map.

You have a tough job and you will face a lot of critics, including myself. I will also make sure to acknowledge when you all do the right thing.

Thank you:

Dan Wholihan

Brighton, MI

To: redistricting@michigan.gov <redistricting@michigan.gov>

Subject: Revisiting: Newly developed computer algorithm for creating redistricting solutions

From: Hedi Kaufman, Monroe County, Michigan

Date: September 19, 2021

Members of the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission:

At the Commission's six-and-a-half hours long August 31st meeting, Commissioner Rhonda Lange said, "We've got pieces here, pieces there, pieces everywhere...is this really the most productive way to do it?" (Detroit Free Press, Sept. 18) The antidote to this predicament is a well-designed computer algorithm that assigns weights to required criteria based on their ranking.

In May I wrote you about Dr. Matthew Petering's algorithm for forming voting districts. At your invitation, he made a presentation to you on July 22nd. At that meeting, at 2:16:55, Dr. Petering began an interesting discussion about how his algorithm handles the phrase, "in order of priority," in his opening statement on Michigan Mapping Requirements: "The Commission shall abide by the following criteria... in order of priority." At 02:21:45, in response to Petering's explanation of the algorithm's use of weighting of criteria to achieve order of priority, your counsel stated that the commission could "not deviate from the criteria...they are individually set." "Criteria are ranked in that order with that prioritization... I disagree strongly with the notion of 'wiggleroom'".

From listening online to some of your deliberations, it appears that counsel's comment may have dissuaded the commission from giving Petering's work any further consideration. Since then, commissioners have spent an inordinate amount of time on their assigned task.

As the process is playing out, Commissioners are moving back and forth between criteria. Thus, while they are assembling maps of equal population districts (criterion 1), the starting point for dividing up the state by population is a map of Michigan counties (criterion 6), contiguity is regularly considered (criterion 2), and references are being made to communities of interest (criterion 4). *If indeed no deviation from ranked priority of the criteria is permitted – and no other criterion can be considered as MICRC works from one to the next – MICRC is tasked with an impossible job. In the real world where we live, it is inevitable that the criteria will be weighted,* either consciously or unconsciously, especially when a number of conditions is required, in this case, at least seven. This is what is happening.

Dr. Petering's algorithm can produce results in minutes. The real work comes in assigning weights to the criteria. I think that is where the Commission would benefit from spending its time – finding common ground in assigning weights. Once the conditions are agreed upon, the algorithm can produce maps in a matter of minutes with clear district lines and compact, competitive districts. The algorithm will assure the maps are fair.

Which brings me back to Commissioner Lange's question: "Is this really the most productive way to do it?" In this case, I'd respond in the negative. Dr. Petering's algorithm can do the job very efficiently. Time is running out. Let's get it right for the next 10 years.

| https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NJnn7Xj3Gb8 |
|---|
| Petering's presentation starts at 1:12:00, ends at 3:49:00. |
| <u>D</u> iscussion of prioritization of criteria and criteria ranking starts at |
| 2:16:35, about 10 minutes long (lawyer's comment at 2:21:45) |
| WI map work begins at 2:45:59 |
| MI map discussion begins at 2:52:40 |
| |

15100 Northline Road Southgate, MI 48195 Phone: (734) 362-7070 T.T.Y. 1 (800) 649-3777

Fax: (734) 281-0265 www.dccwf.org



James S. Perry
Executive Director

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Downriver Community Conference & Downriver Mutual Aid Programs & Services

In 1967, Downriver communities formed the "Downriver Mutual Aid Pact". This organization was comprised of 16 communities who joined together to assist each other in the areas of police and fire protection during times of crisis when individual communities were not fully equipped to handle such situations. Sharing manpower so that no community had to enlarge police, fire and DPW departments in order to meet emergency responsibilities. Sharing equipment so that sixteen different communities did not have to each buy specialized equipment. Sharing training programs so that better programs could be offered, so that mutual training could aid mutual operations, so that specialized units could be trained to serve all. The DMA Board meets monthly to look for solutions to common problems.

It was this cooperative effort that led to the creation of Downriver Community Conference (DCC). The DCC was initially comprised of 14 communities whose main objective was to help locate funds to improve areas of mutual concern for all participating members. Each community agreed to the membership assessment fee of \$4,750.00. The Ford Foundation awarded the first grant for \$90,000 which enabled the DCC to continue its internal operation for the benefit of the member communities. As a public organization, DCC is able to apply for State and Federal Grants for the cooperative solution to local government problems. Each local unit retains its independent right to opt into or out of the various programs explored and implemented.

Using the total population of the member communities, our area is eligible for a host of federal dollars not offered to smaller populations. The DCC staff is equipped with the knowledge and experience to research and decipher the often mysterious and always confounding rules, regulations and procedures of the various bureaus and agencies which helps when applying for grants to support the residents in the member communities. DCC now has twenty member communities representing over 500,000 residents.

The staff of the Downriver Community Conference continue to work hard to meet the needs of our member communities – and face whatever challenges lie ahead "together", just as we have for the past 40 years.

MEMBER COMMUNITIES

DCC and DMA Program Details

WEATHERIZATION

Home Weatherization program that has income-eligibility guidelines, includes some repair of roof, furnace, windows, prime door, smoke detectors; sidewall and attic insulation; caulking and weather stripping.

TRANSPORTATION

The service provided is demand-driven, responsive to need, and focused on serving the most vulnerable populations.

In this Fiscal Year, DCC Transportation provided a **total of 1,853 one-way trips** to all DCC member communities (the system does not allow for an unduplicated count of customers, or for tracking by community). Types of trips included:

- Bringing DCC's Michigan Works customers to DCC building for service, and return trip home
- Taking DCC's Michigan Works customers on job-related trips, such as training, work experience, site visits, pre-employment physicals and other required trips
- Non-Emergency medical trips, such as kidney dialysis, for individuals with a disability
- Recreational trips for senior groups by the location of the "pick-up" or starting point for each trip, rather than by the community of residence of the rider, but in most cases, the pick-up point is the customer's residence.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

DCC operates four major Workforce Development Programs:

PARTNERSHIP ACCOUNTABILITY TRAINING HOPE (PATH, formerly Jobs, Education & **Training or JET)** – this is the State of Michigan's welfare reform program for recipients of TANF (formerly AFDC). Individuals are referred to DCC by area Department of Health and Human Services offices. Many of these individuals are placed in some type of employment (either full-time or part-time); while others continue to participate, attend training, and seek work through the program, on their way to becoming, self-sufficient, tax-paying citizens.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) — this is the federal employment training program that has been in place for several years. The program is divided into several "titles"; DCC provides services to Economically Disadvantaged Adults, Dislocated Workers, Displaced Homemakers and Youth (ages 14—24). For all of these populations combined, DCC enrolls and places residents in employment, generating tax revenue for our communities and reduces the amount of unemployment benefits and other public assistance received. The Wall Street Journal (2009) placed the value of Career Coaching and Employment Services such as those provided by the program, at \$3,589/person. Many residents received training, at a cost up to \$5,000 per person (most customers do utilize the full amount). Training must be directly linked to employment opportunities (in-demand) and is geared to help the individual obtain and retain employment.

Employment Service – this is the largest program, providing job search assistance to a universal population, and is funded under the federal Wagner-Peyser Act. Additionally, this program serves individuals filing for unemployment benefits who must first register through the Employment Service and develop and place their resume on the Pure Michigan MI Talent Connect website, the State's electronic labor exchange system. Employment Service clients receive unlimited resource room use, Unemployment Insurance (UI) validations, job search assistance, resume development, cover letter writing, career coaching, referral and information, job fairs and career events, referrals to programs and community resources, copy, fax, phone, printing, computer use., basic instruction in facilitating on-line job search and on-line applications, career research and labor market information. Average values for services are: Resume Writing \$100 to \$1,300; Cover Letter Writing \$50-\$100 per letter; and Career Coaching \$40 to \$130 per hour.

Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) – The Trade Adjustment Assistance Program provides a full array of reemployment services to individuals who lose their job as a result of foreign trade, allowing them to gain the skills, credentials and support necessary to re-enter today's labor market. Once a petition, filed on behalf of the group of affected workers, is approved by the United States Department of Labor, these workers may receive the following benefits and services to transition into new careers:

- Reemployment and Case Management: Career Guidance, pre-vocational services, job search support, labor market information, assessment, supportive services, information on financial aid, employment planning and information on training.
- Up to 130 weeks of training including classroom training, on-the-job training, customized training, and apprenticeships. Those eligible may also receive up to 130 weeks of income support through the Unemployment Agency while in training.
- A wage subsidy is available to workers who are 50 years of age or older and are reemployed at an annual wage of less than \$50,000.00
- Job Search Allowance provides reimbursement for job search costs outside of a worker's commuting area and Relocation Allowance is a reimbursement of costs associated with relocation to a job outside of the worker's local area.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

Veterans Small Business Assistance Program

The DCC began a pilot project, sponsored by Michigan Economic Development Corporation, in 2016 to assist Veterans with starting a business, improve an existing business or find new markets to expand their business. The project was very successful, and was again funded in 2017 and 2018 to continue small business assistance and expand the number of Veterans serviced. Special attention will be given to Service-Disabled Owned Businesses.

Brownfield Redevelopment

The Downriver Area Brownfield Coalition (DABC), coordinated by DCC, is recognized as one of the leading brownfield programs in the country. The DCC-administered Revolving Loan Fund is used to "jump start" some major clean-up and redevelopment projects. Over 100 sites in the region have already gone through or are in the process, and several sites have been redeveloped and are producing tax revenue for their communities. These projects have generated or retained jobs for the region. The program has leveraged over \$100 million in investment to the member communities. The DCC continues to serve the region through the use of the EPA Brownfield Redevelopment Program.

Business Creation

DCC's Small Business Development Technical Center (SBDTC) serves area residents who are interested in starting a business. DCC offers a free "Fundamentals of Starting a Business" class to answer questions about business start-up and ownership and to provide an opportunity for networking. Participants are also encouraged to meet with the counselor for further, personalized guidance.

DOWNRIVER MUTUAL AID

The DMA was created more than 50 years ago, in 1967, in order to formalize the cooperative relationships that already existed between and among police and fire departments throughout the region. For generations, communities had assisted each other when a neighbor called for help; providing backup when police officers were stretched thin during a crisis or sending additional firefighters to battle blazes that threatened a community But with the creation of the DMA, that help grew to include a number of more sophisticated services that no single department or city could offer, such as creating a regional SWAT Team, a Crisis Negotiation Team, an Underwater Search & Recovery Team, the Downriver Area Narcotics Organization (DRANO), the Downriver Auto Theft Team (DRATT) and a Uniformed Police Task Force.

Other efforts of DMA include:

DMA 911 and Radio Communication Services: The value of this service for 2017-18 was \$1,591,504.00. The estimated value per participating community is \$99,469.00. which is now being funded by the DMA 911 district (this includes all fiber connectivity to all PSAPs in the DMA 911 District and software maintenance and support for radio and 911 communications). DMA 911 communities also receive 911 software support valued at \$84,205.58; coverage was from May 2018 through May of 2019.

Preparation for Next Gen 911 services are underway Some agencies required additional electrical work and server racks. These items were funded by the DMA 911 account. Cost of the electrical work and hardware is approximately \$11,000.00 as of this date.

DMA DIVE TEAM TRAILER

Shared Funds from the DMA Fire and Police accounts were used to purchase a replacement trailer for the Dive Team. The total cost was \$84,987.00, split evenly between the two units.

The DMA fire teams currently have approximately \$3 million in equipment to maintain. DMA fire is working toward meeting the requirements for Type2 Hazmat. The standard requires additional funding for training. The DMA Fire approached the Board and assessments were increased in 2018 to help accommodate additional training to meet requirements.

OTHER EFFORTS

DCC hosts/facilitates many other efforts/programs, including:

- DCC partnered with Congresswoman Debbie Dingell's office and Veterans' organizations to implement a Veterans' Service Office in the DCC building. The office is currently open three days a week, offering assistance to local Veterans in obtaining needed benefits. Funds were also obtained to implement a Veterans Treatment Court. The first Veteran's Treatment Court graduation ceremony was held in July 2017. Several other related projects are in development to offer even more assistance to local Veterans.
- Public Works/Services DCC coordinates the activities of the Downriver Department of Public Works/Services Director's Collaborative. Group purchasing, shared information and training, and a formal mutual aid agreement are benefits the group brings to our member communities. Current group purchasing includes Bulk Road Salt, Cold Patch, and Steel Clamps. The DPS collaborative coordinates efforts by *providing a monthly forum for sharing*. Most of the directors in the area know each other, but the monthly meetings provide an opportunity to get together and talk about current issues. We have also brought in presenters on topics of interest to the group. We also have a representative from MDOT who attends the meetings to provide updates on area roadwork and other related issues, along with representatives from Wayne County Roads and Great Lakes Water Authority, who also share updates with the group monthly.
- Summer Youth Program DCC operated our fourth consecutive Summer Youth Program this year with funding from the Detroit Wayne Mental Health Authority (DWMHA). The program provides meaningful summer employment to youth ages 14 to 24 who suffer from behavioral health issues, or who might otherwise be exposed to situations which could lead to the development of behavioral health issues. In addition to the work experience, the youth attend a one-day workshop on a variety of job and career-related topics. Over 100 youth throughout out-Wayne County are served every summer, with many of them gaining their work experience by working for our member communities.
- Mental Health First Aid The Detroit Wayne Mental Health Authority (DWMHA) also granted DCC a contract to provide free Mental Health First Aid training to first responders, teachers, school personnel, (and other community partners as appropriate). The overall goal of the program is educating the community about mental health and how to access treatment; decreasing stigma; preventing suicide; and improving the safety of persons with behavioral health challenges and those in the community. Two types of training were available: Mental Health First Aid, and QPR Question, Persuade, Refer (suicide prevention).

The <u>quantifiable</u> dollar value of specific services to our Downriver residents does not begin to address the issue of savings to the taxpayers of our member communities through the reduction in unemployed individuals and individuals no longer receiving public assistance through the work of DCC. These residents who gain employment through our programs and services also add to the area's economy by paying taxes and supporting area businesses with their income.

We work hard to ensure that our member communities are informed of all opportunities to meet and discuss any issue or program DCC might be able to provide or facilitate.

If you ever require any further information on DCC's mission, programs and services, please feel free to contact me directly at 734-362-3469 or jim.perry@dccwf.org.

DCC's guiding principles are cooperation, collaboration and partnership. We continue to strive to adhere to these principles for the benefit of Downriver residents.

JOINT RESOLUTION

of the Downriver Community Conference Board of Directors and the Southern Wayne County Regional Chamber June 24, 2021

WORKING IN UNIFICATION TO SUPPORT LEGISLATIVE REDISTRICTING

- WHEREAS, the Downriver Community Conference (DCC), a consortium of twenty Downriver communities in Wayne County whose total population exceeds 500,000, has joined in an effort to improve local government and enhance the quality of life for area residents through municipal cooperation; and
- WHEREAS, the Southern Wayne County Regional Chamber (SWCRC), representing 21 communities in most of the same DCC area, works in cooperation with DCC on legislation that affects this entire region; and
- WHEREAS, DCC & SWCRC have been working together as a united voice to get our regional economy restarted and on track while protecting the health and safety of our citizens. In addition to our representatives in Lansing and Washington working to provide critical resources for our region, we will need to focus on strong and effective initiatives to encompass the 'whole' of our area; and
- WHEREAS, we share common bonds linked to public policy issues or identities that may be affected by legislation; likely to result in a desire to share a united regional congressional district, and equally established state legislative districts within the region in order to secure more effective representation; and
- WHEREAS, the Downriver Mutual Aid (DMA) was created more than 50 years ago, in 1967, in order to formalize the cooperative relationships that already existed between and among police and fire departments throughout the region, for Public Safety. DCC serves as the Administrator for DMA.

For generations, communities had assisted each other when a neighbor called for help; providing backup when police officers were stretched thin during a crisis or sending additional firefighters to battle blazes that threatened a community. But with the creation of the DMA, that help grew to include a number of more sophisticated services that no single department or city could offer, such as creating a regional SWAT Team, a Crisis Negotiations Team, an Underwater Search & Recovery Team (Dive Team), Drug Enforcement Team, the Downriver Auto Theft Team (DRATT) and a Uniformed Police Task Force. Other efforts of DMA include DMA 911 and Radio Communication Services; and

WHEREAS, DCC and SWCRC share historical economic interests associated with a contiguous area on a map, together representing communities along the Detroit River from River Rouge and along the southeastern border to Rockwood, and westerly from Dearborn, Huron Township, Van Buren Township, and Belleville down to the Wayne/Monroe County line; and

- WHEREAS, Congressional and state legislative district boundaries must be drawn according to existing municipal boundaries, and shall not divide municipalities and their constituents into separate districts of representation; and
- WHEREAS, it is our priority, along with the unification of Downriver and the 21 Southern Wayne County communities into one congressional district, to support efforts to realign/redistrict our area to the strength of bringing all these communities together to benefit the region as a whole.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the DCC Board of Directors, working in unification with the SWCRC, supports the Congressional Redistricting to encompass this region with the same representation.

CERTIFICATION

The undersigned duly qualified Board Secretary of the Downriver Community Conference certifies that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution legally adopted via e-mail vote of the Board of the Downriver Community Conference on <u>June 24, 2021</u>, and that said resolution has not been rescinded.

Mayor Dan Guzzi, Board Secretary: <u>Jamie</u>