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MICRC

06/24/21 5:00 pm Public Hearing

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>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Good evening. As Chair of the Commission, I call this meeting of the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission to order at 5:04 p.m.

This meeting is being live streamed on YouTube, www.YouTube.com/MICHOS office/videos.

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

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

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

This meeting is being recorded and will be available at www.Michigan.gov/MICRC for Viewing at a later date.

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

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

Members of the media who may have questions before, during or after the meeting should direct those questions to Edward Woods III, who is our Communications and Outreach Director for the Commission at WoodsE3@Michigan.gov. 517-331-6309.

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

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

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

I'll start with Doug Clark.

- >> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Juanita Curry.
- >> COMMISSIONER CURRY: present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Anthony Eid?
- >> COMMISSIONER EID: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Brittini Kellom?
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Rhonda Lange?
- >> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Present; attending remotely from Reed City, Michigan.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT:

Steve Lett?

- >> COMMISSIONER LETT: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Cynthia Orton?
- >> COMMISSIONER ORTON: Present; attending remotely from

Battle Creek, Michigan.

- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: MC Rothhorn?
- >> COMMISSIONER ROTHORN: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Rebecca Szetela?
- >> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Janice Vallette.
- >> COMMISSIONER VALLETTE: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Erin Wagner?
- >> COMMISSIONER WAGNER: Present; attending remotely from Charlotte,

Michigan.

- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Richard Weiss?
- >> COMMISSIONER WEISS: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Dustin Witjes?
- >> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Present.

12 Commissioners present and there is a quorum.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: I will make a presentation. And, hearing no objection, I will proceed with my presentation. I'm the Vice Chair of the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting. Welcome to the MICRC in Warren, Michigan. We are happy to have you here to learn about Michigan's new redistricting process and how you can engage throughout the process to ensure that your voice is heard.

In looking at the agenda, please note that the vast majority of our time this evening is spent listening to you. We are eager to hear your ideas, either in person or remotely, about drawing Michigan's Congressional, House and Senate districts.

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

At this time I would like to take a moment to allow my colleagues in-person to address themselves and where they live in Michigan the Great Lakes state. We will start all the way to my right with Juanita Curry.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: It's good to see a full house. And my name is Juanita Curry as was stated, and I'm a resident after Detroit, Michigan. I hope you put all your comments in

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Good evening, welcome. I'm very pleased to see such a huge crowd this evening.

My name is Doug Clark. And I live in Rochester Hills, Michigan.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: And I live in Canton, Michigan.

>> COMMISSIONER EID: Hello there, everybody. It really is nice to see not only a large crowd but such a diverse crowd looking around the room as well, that is something I particularly appreciate. My name is Anthony Eid and I'm from Orchard Lake, Michigan.

>> COMMISSIONER ROTHORN: Good evening. I'm MC Rothhorn. I'm from Lansing, Michigan. Thanks for being here.

>> COMMISSIONER VALLETTE: Welcome, everyone. My name is Janice Vallette and I'm from Highland, Michigan.

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Good evening and welcome to the Warren public hearing. We are glad you are here. My name is Steve Lett. And I'm the far north Commissioner from Traverse City.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Good evening. Likewise, this is probably the most I've seen in one location, so I'm really happy to do that. My name is Dustin Witjes and I'm from either Howell or Ypsilanti depending what day of the week it is.

>> COMMISSIONER WEISS: Good evening. Thank you for coming. Nice to see a nice, such a big crowd. My name is Richard H. Weiss. And I live in Saginaw Township in Saginaw, Michigan.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you, everyone for the introductions. As you also know, we have three members who are remotely attending this meeting tonight. Commissioner Orton and Commissioner Lange and Commissioner Wagner. But they have already gone through and identified where they live, so I'm not going to make them repeat that a second time for everybody.

All right. So let's talk a little bit about the history of the MICRC. In 2018 more than 61% of Michigan voters intentionally and deliberately passed proposal two, a ballot initiative for voters and not legislatures to take responsibility for map fairness and public feedback in the redistricting process.

And this created the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission, which is also known as the MICRC.

For the first time in Michigan's history, the MICRC will lead the redistricting process to draw independent maps.

Comprised of 13 randomly selected Michigan residents that includes four who affiliate as democrats, four who affiliate as republicans and five who affiliate as independents that, I'm sorry, as were selected through a lottery run by the Michigan Department of State.

The MICRC has the exclusive authority in this new redistricting process to draw the maps for the Michigan Congressional House and Senate districts.

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

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

Once again, we are glad you're here. And we look forward to hearing from you tonight.

So, without objection, at this time, Executive Director, Sue Hammersmith, will now provide her presentation.

Hearing no objection, please proceed, Executive Director Hammersmith.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Good evening. It's just like Zoom. You forget to unmute your microphone, right? Now you have the real thing and I can't do it.

So good evening. Thank you for being here this evening.

We appreciate everybody coming out and sharing your thoughts with this Commission.

I want to tell you a little bit about the purpose for this public hearing.

First of all, our Constitution says that before the first line can be drawn on a map, this Commission has to host at least ten public hearings throughout the State of Michigan. You're looking at a bunch of over achievers. They signed up to do 16 public hearings. This is their 14th over seven weeks, so they have been working really hard to get out into communities and listen to people.

That's why they are here.

The Constitution states there are three purposes for the public hearings.

First to inform the public about the redistricting process,

To share the purpose and the responsibilities of the Commission.

And, lastly, and I think most importantly, to solicit information from the public about potential redistricting plans.

What is redistricting? Every ten years following the U.S. census, the District lines have to be redrawn in states across America to accurately reflect the population changes.

The process of drawing these lines is known as redistricting.

In 2020 the U.S. census reported Michigan's population as 10,777,331 people. So there are three sets of districts that will need to be drawn.

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Those include the 13 Congressional districts with an average size of 775,200 people per District.

The 38 Michigan Senate districts with an average of 265,200 people per District. And 110 Michigan House Districts, which average 91,600 people per District.

So these Commissioners are going to draw 161 districts.

The Commission's purpose and responsibilities include exercising the Constitutional powers granted solely to them to redistrict Michigan.

To operate in an impartial and transparent manner that reinforces public confidence in the integrity of the redistricting process.

To conduct statewide public outreach and invite meaningful public participation.

That's why you're here.

To adopt the maps, one for each District, complying with Federal and Michigan constitutional mandates.

Ensure integrity, public availability and accountability for the data, the public comments and Commission information. And, lastly, assure compliance with the redistricting criteria.

There are seven redistricting criteria. These are laid out in the Constitution. And they are laid out in rank order. So the number one criteria, first, equal population in the districts and adherence to the Voting Rights Act.

Secondly, the districts have to be geographically contiguous. They can't be separate islands somehow in the same districts.

Third, we have to consider communities of interest.

Fourth and fifth are about not giving any advantage or disadvantage to a political party or an elected official or a candidate for office.

Six, the lines must reflect consideration of County, City and Township boundaries.

And, lastly, they must be reasonably compact.

It's a pretty tall order, but the Commission is up for the challenge.

You might want to know what communities of interest are.

The Constitution defines them, saying they shall include, but not be limited, to populations that share cultural or historical characteristics or economic interests.

They do not include relationships with political parties, incumbents or political candidates.

So what do we want to know about your community of interest? First, what name would you give your community? What is the common bond that creates your shared identity? What's the geographic area covered by your community? That is really important.

The District lines need to be created on maps, so we need to know where the community of interest is.

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What governmental policies are important to your community? And how would keeping your community intact enhance the quality of your representation in Congress or in the Michigan legislature?

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

So why are we here? To hear directly from you about your ideas to redistrict Michigan's Congressional, House and Senate districts. And to listen and learn about your community of interest.

We are truly on a listening tour to hear from the people of the State of Michigan.

Thank you.

You are looking at a Commission of people committed to the task at hand. And I can't say enough about this group of 13 Commissioners.

They know the goal at hand and they are working hard. And they are going to do what the Constitution has asked them to do, and that is create fair maps for the State of Michigan.

So it's going to happen.

It's going to take a little bit of time yet, but thank you.

Thank you for your support.

[Applause]

So this is a historic process.

For the first time ever in the history of the State of Michigan, citizens have input into the process. Citizens are serving on your Commission to draw the lines on the map.

They model openness and transparency. Every line that is drawn is going to be drawn in an open meeting, out in front of the public, recorded meetings that you can go back and watch later.

And, lastly, we invite communities of interest to share their voices, so how they can best be represented.

So, again, thank you for being here.

Thank you for your involvement in this process.

Thank you for getting involved in this democracy and making our state the best it can be.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you so much, Executive Director Hammersmith. Without objection, our General Counsel is now going to provide her presentation. Hearing no objection, please proceed, General Counsel Pastula.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Good evening, Macomb County. And thank you for the warm welcome, Warren.

I will be sharing our public comment guidelines with the group this evening. First, our in-person public comments will occur, followed by our remote participants. The time limit for each public comment speaker is two minutes.

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Please conclude your remarks when you hear the timer. And there will also be a visual count down timer on the screens.

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

Please provide your comments and submit proposed maps in our public comment portal located at www.Michigan.gov/MICRC.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you.

Without objection, we will now begin the public comment portion of our meeting.

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

Individuals who have signed up and indicated that they would like to provide in-person public commentary to the Commission, will now be allowed to do so. Please step to the nearest microphone when I call your number. You will have two minutes to address the Commission. Please conclude your remarks when the two-minute timer ended.

Please go to the public comment tool and share your comments in writing including any specific area of the map about which you are speaking. The public comment tool is available at www.Michigan.gov/MICRC.

I'm going to call you up four numbers at a time. So at this time I would invite numbers one, two, three and four to come up to the mics.

We do have two mics on either side of the room, so you can approach whichever one is closest to you or most convenient. And we are going to start with number one.

Number one, when you reach the mic, you can go ahead and begin your comment.

>> Good evening, Commissioners. It's wonderful to see you once again. My name is Chip Warner. I'm the community relations director for Disability Network Oakland and Macomb, also known as DNOM.

I would first like to commend the Commission and the Secretary of State's office for providing a variety of options to ensure equitable accessibility.

Ultimately, allowing every resident to share their voice through in-person, virtual or written testimony.

Unfortunately, many folks only assume visible barriers when discussing disabilities. I wish our job was as easy making sure that always free obstruction and there were push buttons on the door for entry and egress.

The reality of a crowded hall, video presentations, camera crews, a bright light and a two-minute time limit pose a significant barrier for many.

On behalf of the disabilities community and DNOM, we would like to thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony.

We thank you for the attentive listening when reviewing written testimony.

And we encourage you to consider the barriers some face when taking time to share their story.

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Some letters may take longer to read than others and we appreciate your patience and understanding.

Thank you for this incredible and historic opportunity.

Thank you for your dedication and thank you for acknowledging both the visible and nonvisible disability.

Have a good evening.

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

Number two.

>> Hello. My name is Ronald.

Thank you for volunteering to do the redistricting for Michigan in a fair and unbiased way.

It is important.

As you well know, redistricting can be a very difficult political process.

Fortunately, making fair and unbiased districts is a simple mathematical process. It really is.

I'll explain.

I think one of you is actually a mathematician, so I really like this.

Accept redistricting plans from any Michiganders political parties and newspapers and your own mathematical support staff check to be sure the districts and proposed plan have equal populations, contiguous borders and meet Federal laws do this for each redistricting plan you get.

Finally, use the plan with a total perimeter distance is bunches the smallest. You calculate perimeter for each District and you get in that case apparently 13 districts. And put them together, pick the one with the minimum.

And you're done.

Since this is all just mathematical calculating, a computer program can be written to find the plan with the minimum total perimeter distance.

And the process is done quickly and without fuss. When done carefully there is only one answer, this process works for State House and State Senate districts as well.

I have some copies here to give you that explains a little bit more fully than I can in two minutes, just a single page.

So please accept these copies.

Read them, give one to your mathematical support staff, have them make a redistricting plan based on my comments, then take and have them take a state map, draw the lines on the map and show it to you physically. And you will be impressed with how eloquently simple the plans are.

If you have some additional goals, which you do, tweak the map as you need; but at least use the idea of minimum total perimeter distance as a starting point.

Can I give you these? Thank you.

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>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Yes, you can bring them up here. Thank you very much for addressing the Commission.

Number three, you can start your public comment.

>> Thank you.

Hi, thank you so much for giving me this opportunity and for all of your dedication.

My name is Jenny. And I'm a member of the voting access for all coalition.

The United States has 5% of the world's population, but 20% of the world's prison population.

The number of people in prison are disproportionately Black.

46% of incarcerated people are Black, even though Black people make up only 14% of our population.

28% of people incarcerated in Michigan lived in Wayne County prior to incarceration, but less than 1% of the prison population is incarcerated in Wayne County.

Under Michigan's present prison gerrymandering system, people are counted as residents of their prison for the purpose of redistricting.

They are represented by officials who have no ties to them, their communities or their interests and who they cannot vote for.

It does not need to be this way.

11 other states count incarcerated people in the location of their last address prior to confinement.

Ending prison gerrymandering will be low cost and easy for the Commission.

As I understand it, the Commissioner's retained redistricting technical consultants have stated that they have the ability to aid the Commission in correcting for the prison distortions in the U.S. Census Bureau, census data.

Today the Commission has an opportunity to interrupt the cycle of disempowerment that has been ongoing and ensure that our whole communities, including our incarcerated friends, families and neighbors, are represented in Michigan's democracy moving forward.

Please correct this injustice now so that the skewed population currents are not in place for the next ten years.

May I also give you some maps?

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Yes, absolutely. Thank you for addressing the Commission.

Number four, you can address the Commission.

>> Good evening. My name is Mary.

I live in East Point. And as a political activist, as a community advocate, I stand here to attest to the fact that in the interest of having every resident of Michigan represented fairly and equitably in state legislative and U.S. Congress, the MICRC must have good faith efforts in redistricting on the state based on the interests of the electorates and not

the politicians. While at the same time, retaining focus on the constitutional directive for fairness in elections.

To ensure free and fair elections, which the voters are choosing their politicians and not the other way, I encourage this Commission to fulfill its duty to redistrict accordingly so that there is proportional representation of all residents and their common interests and success of the State of Michigan.

The electorate should be able to choose their politicians based upon the politicians proven interest and abilities in achieving what the electorate wants to see achieve, not the politicians.

Considering how Congressional districts have been drawn in the past, it is imperative that residents speak up when they have an opportunity to influence voting equity in Michigan.

I'm speaking of not just for myself, but for all who live in East Point and Southeast Macomb county.

We must have representation on every level that reflects who we are, our values and interests.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my thoughts. And I pray that wisdom will guide every decision you make so that everyone will indeed be represented in the redistricting mapping.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.

[Applause]

Numbers five, six, seven and eight can now approach the microphone. And, number five, once you arrive there, you are free to start speaking.

>> I'm Nancy.

I live in Clinton Township.

I've been a lifelong resident of Macomb County.

My area of interest is Clinton Township and also Mt. Clemens. And I would just hope what transpired in the current mapping does not occur again.

The City of Mt. Clemens is grouped with our Township for both the State Representative and the current Congressional District.

But not for the State Senate.

Even though the City is surrounded on three sides, north, south and west by Clinton Township, it basically looks like a mouth of the middle of the Township.

And it is now grouped for the State Senate race with communities to the north and west of it that aren't contiguous.

It has one tenuous tie through Harrison Township.

Mt. Clemens is one quarter African/American residents.

The communities north of Clinton Township do not come close to that.

Clinton Township itself has 17% more or less African/American population.

So we, by virtue of also being on the Gratiot corridor, and not just being contiguous, but surrounding three sides of the City, we share a lot of similar interests. There are people who live in Mt. Clemens whose children attend Chippewa Valley Schools in the Township. And conversely, there are parts of the Township that are actually in the Mt. Clemens School District. And for a lot of us who live in the township, we go to the Mt. Clemens Post Office because it's closer and it's been there much longer than the satellite they established in Clinton Township.

Thank you for your time.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.

Number six.

Do we have number six? Okay, number six is being shy.

Number seven, you can go ahead.

>> My name is Mike Jacobs and I'm a resident of Shiawassee County. And some of us are here today because we could not attend the two meetings closer to our hometown.

Within my two minutes I'd like to discuss the need for the communities of interest to have the smallest amount of representatives possible.

Communities of interest, like Shiawassee County or northern Macomb County, have very similar needs and interests.

We need one state rep, one Senator and one member of Congress that looks out for our specific needs.

And when a community of interest is cracked, then we will not have a strong voice as we currently do.

If we have multiple elected officials represent each of us and a legislative body, it will be a nightmare for those of us who interact with the elected officials on a regular basis.

If we need funding for a local project, if we have one state rep and one state Senator to contact, if our communities of interest is cracked, we will have to coordinate with multiple legislative officials.

This issue of cracking communities of interest can be remedied by working to make rural or suburban rural districts as compact as possible.

It is very important for the criteria of communities of interest.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.

Number eight.

>> Hello, everyone.

Hello neighbors and hello to the Commission.

If my name is Spencer Calhoun. And I'm a resident of Mt. Clemens, so we are the mouth of Clinton Township, right?

I'd like to begin with we started talking about the state Constitution where it says all political power is inherent in people and that the Government's instituted for our equal benefit, security and protection.

It's been a long time coming that we wanted to be able to choose who represents us and a fair process. And so I'm very happy to see this. And I would hope that Section C started governing this body are followed, that the districts will reflect the diverse populations that we have.

These communities of interest that are held together by different connections that are very important.

They can be economic.

They can be historical, cultural. But that they, that are these things are taken into consideration to draw a fair map that is equal for everyone and where we all will have great representation and we can be -- we can use the political power that is inherent within us.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.

Numbers nine, ten, 11 and 12 can now approach the mic. And, number nine, you can begin speaking when you arrive.

>> Hi. Name is Ned. And I'm from Dearborn Heights, Michigan.

I don't represent any particular group, but I am a former politician and running for office now.

I've run before and I've lost.

I like winning better. But one of the craziest things that I've seen is the districts.

The average voter could not tell you if you asked them what is state, Senatorial or a representative District is. Most of them can hardly tell you who their congressman is, but if I didn't know any better, I would have thought I wrote those goals.

So I'm going to be a little repetitive.

Please follow County lines.

Michigan should look like the Upper Peninsula, District One where the top of the mitten and the Upper Peninsula is one District.

We need to have Lake Michigan, the historical, economic interest as we see should be one District.

Southern tier, the counties that are on borders of Indiana and Ohio.

My biggest concern is this idea that you have to be 100%, get 775,000. In the 18th century nobody moved 50 miles, so we need to look at getting as close as 2%.

You can't count everybody.

If you get as close to 2%. And by all means keep a City whole no matter what you can do.

If you're going to divide Detroit, divide it down Woodward Avenue so the average person knows I live on the west side, I live on the east side.

And I'm glad to hear these goals because they are exactly mine.

The 2% keep that in mind.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.

Number ten.

>> Thank you so much, Honorable Commission and counsel and audience.

I am the editor and publisher of a Bangladesh paper.

I'm also the owner of Hamtramck based business and accountant service.

So basically, I came to address, to show that Bangladeshi community is growing from Hamtramck to Detroit and Sterling Heights all the way to Troy.

We share same culture, same community interest and same values.

So when we vote, we are divided. And as a community newspaper editor I edit so many events. And I experience that our minority voice is not heard properly.

And I would like to request this Commission that please draw in maps that House District and Congress District and all Bangladeshi in the same maps. Thanks so much.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.

Number 11.

>> Bill Cruz at Van Buren Township, lived for 52 years and have seen a lot packed, stacked gerrymandered districts during that time.

I have been in districts that have been mangled and tangled by political manipulation.

I'm a retired auto worker and still represent retired auto workers.

We, along with many others, made this happen in 2018, the petition drive, the work that we did, getting out the vote.

I was impressed how many different independents, republicans, democrats, people that were sick and tired of having politicians pick their voters.

That needs to end.

I thank the Commission for their dedication to this.

This time of late census and COVID turmoil, it doesn't represent the interest of Michigan citizens to have back room deals cut on who gets to vote and what, where they get to vote and how they get represented.

Had to be here. Sorry I couldn't get to the Wayne County meetings.

This has got to fly.

And it will be better than anything we've had previous.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.

Number 12.

>> Good evening Michigan independents Citizens redistricting Commission. I'm Joel, a 15-year resident of Warren, Michigan. And would like to welcome you to Macomb County and the City of Warren.

I know the task you have is daunting. And I applaud for making the commitment to give the residents of Michigan new, fair maps that will provide competitive districts throughout the State of Michigan.

Since the word fair can be interpreted different by different people, let me give you my perspective when it comes to redistricting. Warren is the third largest City in Michigan, yet it has no City elected officials, that are Black indigenous, or other people of color. Now, I understand your task is at the State and Congressional level, not the granular work of a municipality. But your work will make a difference in fair representation of all residents of Macomb County.

They are strong communities of interest between cities in Macomb that tend to run on the north south line such as Warren and Sterling Heights and other municipalities. With a certain matter in State House and Senate seats of representation.

When it comes to Congressional seats, the communities of interest are there. But I would ask the Commission to please keep in mind that if 8 Mile road dividing line is broken, please do not subjugate the people in the Southern part of Macomb County to dominate by Detroit voters that will limit the voice of Macomb residents living south of 696.

Of course, in Macomb County there is only one Congressional District. Please start at 8 Mile Road and work north until the number of residents has reached as needed to keep communities of interest that have so much in common together to again ensure fair representation for all.

This is not to ignore my brothers or sisters north of M59, but to ensure fair and equitable representation for most communities of color.

I thank you for your time.

Good night.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.

I'd like to remind everybody that in addition to giving public comment here we would love it if you used our public comment tool and share in writing including specific areas where you think map lines can be drawn. You can reach the public comment tool at www.Michigan.gov/MICRC.

I'd now like to call numbers 13, 14, 15 and 16 up to the mic. And number 13 you can start as soon as you reach the microphone.

>> Good evening. My name is Ken Hyatt. With my two minutes I would like to talk about communities and Townships of interest.

I live in a County that is one community of interest.

That's Shiawassee County.

It's population is about 70,000 people.

For a single community of interest in that whole county with many small towns and agricultural communities there.

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We have very similar needs and our focus is more in line with the villages and towns in west Clinton Township County and southern Saginaw County.

In drawing maps that include Shiawassee County, my hope is you would not divide the County at all.

Our voice needs to be heard as one senator and one representative.

Our County is different than Macomb County, which has very different communities of interest in the county lines. The townships of Bruce, Armada, Richmond, Washington, Ray, and Lennox are much more rural and Suburban than say Sterling Heights and Warren. And I strongly encourage that you keep these townships together in the District and fair community of interest with similar leads just like Shiawassee County.

If you have to include these Townships with other larger communities in Macomb County, I would suggest including them with Shelby Township or Macomb Township, including the northern Townships and Macomb County with Sterling Heights and Warren would squeeze two or three communities of interest together thereby limiting their ability to have their voice heard. Communities of interest should have their own voice, not shared with another community of interest, that should have their own. It also follows a very important constitutional criteria of compactness among others. Thanks for your time.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.
Number 14.

>> Good evening, Commission. Thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak and thank you for your time in doing this.

We really appreciate it.

My name is Mike P.

I'm also from Shiawassee County. And as a resident I am worried, I'm concerned that my community of interest will not be kept together.

In Shiawassee and Saginaw Counties we have many small towns, rural communities, farming areas that depend upon each other a lot.

So as you draw the maps for 2021, apportionment for Congressional districts, state, Senate districts and State House districts I hope you will use this criteria.

Number one, County Township City town or village boundaries.

Some units of local Government will have to be divided in some cases such as Macomb county.

It's too big.

It's got to be divided, I assume, so the top six Townships of that are one community of interest.

Conversely the southern six are another community of interest.

And they should be represented for each one accordingly.

So we ask that you please keep the Townships together.

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The elected official in each District should be representing the entire community, County City, Village as possible. State reps state Senators and members of Congress who work with local elected officials, a lot of splitting units of Government forces those who serve in local to interact with multiple representatives who serve completely different communities of interest.

Compactness is the second thing I would say.
We need to have compactness and the REAKER score is the best way to have compactness. And I will end with that. Thank you for your time.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. I'm sorry was that 14, 14, number 15.

>> Hello, everyone. My name is Veronica. I come to represent both Sterling Heights and Warren as a community activist and a 2019 graduate of Warren consolidated schools.

I live right in the middle of both cities, so on the border at 15 Mile on the Sterling Heights side, so attending the Warren consolidated school District. I've got a different perspective of both the Sterling Heights community and the Warren community, how they were similar and how they may differ.

One thing that has remained consistent among both of these communities is the fact that they are both diverse, right? So a lot throughout our education we would always get into our little political debates at least, you know, the prelaw kids and a lot of different things would come to rise, right? Everybody would come with a different perspective in a way.

However, we were all able to agree on a consensus.

We were able to come to an agreement in a sense of this is what our family thinks but this is what we think as a student body.

So I personally think that we should take into factor the school District the Warren Consolidated School District in drawing the District for house representatives, so we still voice the minority voices and the immigrant voices in our communities. Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.
Number 16.

>> Good evening, Commission. First of all, I would like to thank you for the hard work that you're doing.

And I was happy to be here.

This is a historic moment.

As we all know.

A lot of us in this room has fought hard to pass proposal two and to get this Commission in place and to eliminate gerrymandering.

And I thank each and every one here along with me in this fight.

My name is Larry Winn.

I'm from Royal Oak. Unfortunately I was unable to attend the meeting in Pontiac so I'm here today. I got out of work and ran straight over.

My concern is to keep cities whole.

I hear people talking of roads as dividing lines.

As you know, Woodward Avenue runs straight through Royal Oak.

If we would have used that as a divider, it would cut my city in half as well as the surrounding Cities of Berkeley, Birmingham and stuff like that.

So what I ask you to throw out the old maps. Do everything brand new and to try to keep the cities whole.

And I thank you guys so much again and good luck.

Going to be a hard job.

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

Number 17, 18, 19 and 20.

And 17, you can go ahead and start as soon as you reach the microphone.

>> Good evening, everybody.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: You can lift the mic up, yes.

>> I'm loud, so thanks for the opportunity to be here and talk about my community of interest, which is the lake St. Clair community of interest.

It's the town cities and Townships that surround the shoreline of lake St. Clair. We have important historic and economic ties. We are the far east suburbs of Detroit.

We care about the stewardship of our lake.

I don't know necessarily what stewardship means.

I'm not an expert in policy, but what I do know is that our lots are tied to that lake.

Our property values, our biggest investment in the world is tied to that lake and proper stewardship of it.

We have been cracked historically.

Part of it is that we do exist in three different counties.

But the communities that this would include, go from Harson's Island all the way around to Grosse Pointe Park.

It's a group of about 200,000, a little over 200,000 people.

You know, I know that stewardship is important to us. And that the only way it will even be on the agenda is if we have unified representation.

We are very similar.

We could be incorporated into a single State Senate District, a single U.S. House District and across three State House districts.

I appreciate the opportunity to speak tonight.

And for you to listen.

Thank you very much.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.

Number 18.

>> My name is Paula.

I'm currently a resident of Clinton Township, which is the 9th Congressional District in the United States for Michigan.

It goes kind of like a fork with different spokes.

I'm a former board member of the Southwest Michigan Census Council and understand the limitations of current census reporting.

Good luck with the deadlines since I know they are late this year in getting their results out.

My first awareness of redistricting was during September 1964, the results coming in over the car radio for my father's funeral process from the census of 1960 and took four years to figure it out. And a newspaper strike that year and I'm very happy the Commission existed.

I did think about volunteering, but I had family responsibilities.

I'm very, very happy to see you thank you.

I grew up in Detroit near Lucky Park, then we moved to East Detroit, which was very disappointing.

My father had a lot in Detroit, but it was going to cost so much money to connect to utilities that he bought a lot in East Detroit instead.

I could see 8 Mile from my bedroom window.

That lot in Detroit is still empty.

After I finished school, I went to Ann Arbor. I went to Boston. I lived in Hamtramck for two years. I went to Detroit. I went to Temperance, back to Detroit and lived in Hamtramck from 1989 to 2015 because it was only four miles away from work.

Of my auto shop is in Warren. My doctor in Roseville. My dentist is in Centerline but retired now. I go to Warren doggie daycare in Frazier and familiar with this part of Warren. And I remember when the Meijer's opened here on 12 Mile and mound and didn't have to go to Madison Heights. Am I done already? Oh, my goodness.

Well, so I just want to say two more things. We do have an African/American community in Clinton Township that was there before Metro Beach was build. And that borders on Gratiot and Twin Road. And want to recognize my Bangladesh neighbors and the need to consider how to have a District for them, I'm thinking 94 to I-59.

The Supreme Court years ago knocked down the idea of following County lines and we have not been following County lines or City lines for years and years and years. It's a good idea, but only when it works. Thank you very much.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you.

Thank you for addressing the Commission.

Number 19.

>> Hi.

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My name is Carol Chee. I've lived in Sterling Heights, Michigan since 1981, for the past 40 years; but I'm originally from Detroit, the west side.

I'm a retired public school teacher, mostly middle school and taught in Detroit and Clinton Township at Clinton Dale community schools and retired about 11 years ago. I collected a few signatures for BMP and give a few dollars each month. And thank you very much signing up and getting chosen to do this gargantuan, badly needed job. I commend you for doing so and appreciate the commitment.

It's complicated, difficult, but so very worth it.

Gerrymandering across Michigan for the past 30 years has created a situation where four votes of one party are needed to overcome one vote of the other major party. And that has negatively impacted me, my family, friends and neighbors and all my colleagues, and my student, my former students, and my -- now they are all adults.

For no matter how hard we work to get our candidate elected, it rarely happens, that is supremely unfair and so we need completely new maps.

My community of interest is Sterling Heights and Warren, Michigan.

In both cities I grocery shop, eat at restaurants, attend various events, fish fries, cultural center events. I visit friends in both cities, walk in parks in both cities, et cetera.

I'm in the Warren Con School District, Warren Consolidated School District, though I live in Sterling Heights.

Our Two Cities share a major industrial corridor on VanDyke and Mound Roads where workers' comp from both cities and beyond.

We all take the I-696 freeway on occasion, sometimes daily. We share roads, religions, ethnicities, cultural centers, restaurants, stores, schools, et cetera. My state house map will provide a very balanced, I'm sorry, chance for elections.

Whereas now the seat share is 91% for one party,
This must be rectified.

Again, thank you very much for working to make significant changes and improvements and good luck.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.
Number 20.

>> Good evening. My name is Jonathan Matthews. Thanks to the Commission for your time and thank you our interpreters Toi Bogan and Bethany James. I hope I'm pronouncing that correctly, making this accessible to everybody.

In summer of 2017 I moved to Sterling Heights from Chesterfield Township, same county, different direction. It's been four years since and I have seen what makes much of this area a unique community.

One of the noteworthy attributes I would like to highlight tonight with regards to how redistricting is going to work is that the community does not stop here at the City limits but rather it's organically interdependent with its neighbors, especially Warren.

One thing I quickly learned after moved here is the Mound and VanDyke corridors where we are right now are home to not just industrial traffic but also commercial interaction. In fact, many of my friends' favorite places being on the weekends are on the very streets. And the exact city establishment it has gone to is not really a factor for them.

My husband also works in Warren as do many people living in Sterling Heights. Further, Warren residents from Sterling Heights, for a variety of reasons, and not the least of which is the community center's use. People don't simply turn around once they get to the 14 Mile line as the transition is seamless. Instead, the communities are connected both for work and in play and also with culture. This unity between Sterling Heights and Warren should be taken into consideration when redistricting.

Another way to look at the interconnectedness of the two places is the School District. As a teacher in Troy schools, I'm pretty aware of the nature of these districts. Warren consolidated school, despite its name, services the large portion of the students residing in Sterling Heights. I haven't heard of students, parents or teachers simply splitting into different teams based on which side of the street they live.

You have a gargantuan job in front of you. And I thank you for being willing to take it on for all of us. Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Numbers 21, 22, 23, 24. And, number 21, you can start as soon as you reach the microphone.

>> Hello, Commission. My name is Benjamin. I'm a lifelong resident of Sterling Heights and would like to talk to you today about the interconnectedness between my City and that of Warren, specifically with the Polish and Ukraine communities. I'm ethnically Polish and Ukraine. We have Ukrainian culture in Warren though on Ryan Road, just south of 696. There is the Immaculate Inception Ukrainian School that is located in Warren just east of Equinder and north of 12 Mile. It's the only school within the Metropolitan area that is teaching Uranian actively though in the community. And it's a central hub for us to maintain our Ukrainian culture.

We have the Polish community centers as well that are also in that local area. We have the St. Joseph Church just down the road from there that gives services in Ukrainian.

In fact, with so much of us living in Sterling Heights, we are regularly commuting weekly down to Warren. And I would beg of you that you would let us be within the same Congressional District of our community hubs.

I really can't think of a better thing that you could do for us to make sure that we see that our proper representation by keeping our communities intact and not cracking us along some arbitrary city boundary.

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Please, please, please have us have a Congressional District and a Senate and house representations starting like at the 8 Mile marker and working upward from there. I think that would be the best way to preserve our community as much as possible. And have a full intact representation.

Thank you for your time and thank you for your hard work and consideration.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.

Number 22.

>> Yeah, good evening, respected Commissioners.

I reside in Sterling Heights, Michigan.

I'm from Bangla community.

Most of our community people are from Bangladesh and West India.

Currently I am little bit involved in Bangladesh affairs community.

And we have a very beautiful Bangla Town which is in Hamtramck.

Our cultural and religious tie make a good bonding on ourselves.

Detroit is the second largest Metropolitan area where Bangladesh American population are in USA.

But I think Detroit will be the top of in light of concentration of Bangladesh and American USA, which reflects that the community are more compact in Detroit rather than the top one that is the newer.

So, Commissioners, please keep us together as we are now.

Our urge to you, if possible, put Detroit, Hamtramck, Warren and Sterling Heights in same District for Congressional districts and also for Senate as well as State House of representative.

If we get a map like this, it will definitely raise our voice in Lansing and also in Washington D.C.

Moreover, we have some common religious issues with Arab communities, so by doing this they will also get benefits out of this.

Commissioners, let me take this opportunity, by any means, if you have any say regarding some infrastructure facilities that can be built for our community like Bangla Community Center, please extend your cooperation.

Invariably having those it will help us to get together even tighter Commissioners.

Thank you for your hard work, for the maps, and patient hearing from us.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.

Number 23.

>> Good evening, everyone.

I'm from Warren, Michigan.

And I'm representing Bangladeshi American population in this area.

From Sterling Heights like M-59 to I-94 area, there is a huge number of Bangladeshi Americans, people present here like more than 100,000 people living in this area. So

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we would like to, it's our humble request to Commission to keep our community in the same District for House of representative, State Senate and the Congressional districts. And we are -- actually the Bangladeshi Americans are like supplying a good number of manpower to our manufacturing industry from engineer to assembly line.

So we need help.

We need help for the ESL.

We need help our assembly line workers to their problem in at the work so and other things too.

So we are requesting the Commission to keep our community in the same District from M-59 to like I-94 and discover Hamtramck part of the Detroit area, Warren and the Sterling Heights.

Thank you so much.

Thank you so much again to give us an opportunity to speak.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.
Number 24.

>> Good evening. My name is Car Mason. I'm from Warren Michigan, lifelong Macomb County resident.

I do not represent any particular community of interest.

I'm here representing Michigan voters in general.

And, first of all, I'd like to thank you for your willingness to take on this task.

And I wish you all the best luck in the world in accomplishing it.

All I would like to say is I worked for proposition two. Of course, I voted for it, because all of our votes must count.

And historically they haven't.

And I am hopeful, clinging to the hope that when you redraw these maps, that will be the result, that every Michigander's vote will count just as much as everyone of their neighbors.

Thank you very much.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.

Again, I'd like to remind everybody to please also visit our public comment tool and share in writing including any specific areas of the map you are talking about.

Again, the public comment tool is available at www.Michigan.gov/MICRC.

At this time I would like to call numbers 25, 26, 27 and 28.

And, 25, as soon as you reach the microphone, you are welcome to begin speaking.

>> Good evening, Commission and Michigan State.

My name is Mr. Amed.

I am the Commissioner of the City of Warren as well as I'm the trustee.

I am from Bangladesh and I've been in USA over 32 years.

I've been living in Michigan, in Warren for 23 years.

I am from very diverse community where over 100,000 Bangladeshi American living in the whole State of Michigan, among them I believe, around 75,000 people living in Detroit, Hamtramck, Warren, Sterling and Troy.

So today I believe Michigan, the constituents and the Bill of Rights and the people are the power.

So, unfortunately, we are over 100,000 people living in State of Michigan, 75,000 people living in the same area. But, unfortunately, we do not have any representation to the State, to the Congressional District.

So I just came here to hear the Bangladeshi voice to your table, to consider us especially for Bangladeshi culture and value.

And put us together.

We do not want to be used by someone, some group.

We elected many officials. After the election over we didn't see them. So we want to be fair and transparent democracy by the Honorable Commission.

So it is our humble request on behalf of me, on behalf of Bangladeshi community, the huge number of Bangladeshi put together in drawing a map from Hamtramck, Detroit, Warren, Sterling and Troy.

This is our humble request to Honorable Commission.

Thank you and good evening.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.
Number 26.

>> Hello. Thank you, Commissioners, for giving me an opportunity even though I think two minutes is not enough as moderated.

We need more time to talk.

All right.

I'm from Bangladeshi community.

I went to Detroit hearing.

I live in Warren.

And I'm representing the Bangladeshi community. So already my previous person here already mentioned a few of those things.

Our geographic map starting from I-94 to all the way to 59, our main road Equinder, Ryan, Mound, VanDyke, Hoover, in this area we live around 75,000 Bangladeshi people.

But, unfortunately, when comes to voting, like a State Senator, or Congressional, we are out four, five, six Districts, and this way we are losing our voting power.

Our voting power is being diluted and it is against Voting Rights Acts.

Voting Right Act, Section Two of the voting right 1965 mandates that electoral district lines cannot be drawn in such a manner as to improperly dilute minorities' voting power.

So we believe we are not being treated equally.

When the vote power is coming, we spread out, so please requesting, being all of us from Hamtramck to all the way to Troy, through a district. So please bring all of us under one District, that way as we are sharing same community of interest, same culture, so we will have the same voting power too.

Thank you so much for giving me the opportunity.

Thanks a lot.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.

I believe were you 27 or 26.

26, 27.

Thank you.

>> I'm 27.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: 27.

>> Good evening, Commissioners.

Thank you very much. As I said at the last hearing, I was there, if you remember me, or not. But I cannot thank you enough for all of you what you are doing for us. And I think this time around it's a historical year I would say for Michiganders.

We have a shot to put our voice into this process.

Thank you very much for doing that.

I work with a nonprofit Bangladesh community-based organization, Bangladesh Association of Michigan.

So I live in Warren, as a lot of my previous speakers from Bangladeshi community mentioned.

Between Hamtramck, Sterling Height and Troy, we are around 100,000 people.

100,000 Bangladeshi people live around that area. So I am here to ask, put all of us in one particular map.

I know being a Commissioner is a tough task. I can only imagine. So I'm not sure if we are make your job easier, or not, but we are trying. And put us in one particular map. Thank you very much. Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.

Number 28.

>> Good evening Redistricting Commission members.

I'm a Bangladeshi community activist since 1998 in Hamtramck and Warren areas and Bangladesh communities. And also, I'm the secretary of a non-profit organization, association of Michigan since 2018.

And as the secretary we just registered with the State of Michigan and is authorized.

Thank you.

Give us a chance to express comments about redistricting boundaries.

Bangladeshi community growing up in the sense of 1930 and 1990 and between 2001 was messy. Bangladeshi American have moved from New York City and then we came from Bangladesh.

Requesting is when you are designing the redistricting maps, please add Hamtramck and Sterling Heights and Warren and Troy together with best of Detroit. And please consider and keep in mind as a minority community of Bangladeshi American. We just call this Bengali. Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Numbers 29, 30, 31 and 32. And, 29, as soon as you reach the microphone, you are welcome to begin.

>> Hello.

My name is Michael S.

I'm a lifelong resident of Warren and Sterling Heights.

I was born and grew up in Warren and moved a few miles up the road to Sterling.

I understand how important the task of this Commission is and how it will significantly impact the people and the representation.

I also understand that there are many people who are only interested in partisan decisions and how much more difficult that makes your task.

As I said, I grew up in Warren and I moved to Sterling Heights where I worked as an attorney and as a social worker in both communities.

I can tell you that the most fair drawing of the District, the one that best reflects a community of interest is a District that includes both Warren and Sterling Heights.

Last year, for example, I worked as a social worker, placing refugees that have been escaping violence and war.

We specifically placed these individuals belonging in several demographic groups in both Warren and Sterling Heights because of the strong overlapping population of these groups.

For example, the Arab and Chaldean community, they have a strong population in Warren and Sterling Heights. And we place members of those community almost exclusively between these two zones.

And to -- for minorities and for vulnerable populations, for them to have adequate representation, they need to remain in the same District.

I appreciate the hard work of this Commission. And I appreciate you listening to my input and the input of the community, so thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.

Number 30.

>> Good evening, everyone.

My name is MD.

I'm speaking on behalf of the University, Association of Michigan.

I'm a member.

I would like to say our Bangladeshi community historically, culturally, geographically and economically, we stay together.

As an example, Detroit, Hamtramck, Warren, Sterling Height, Troy. If you see last 20 years a story our Bengali community is moving from Detroit to Hamtramck, all the way goes to Warren and Sterling Heights and Troy.

Because of we are community, our community is historically stay together.

Our community, our business, like a grocery store, we are told, so the realistic business, but we see much more.

As economically it's a growing business, is our community contributing our economy, Like the American economy.

Please, it is possible, we want Hamtramck to Warren, Sterling Height, Troy, our Commissioner make it one District, please, please try to for us.

Thank you so much.

Thank you everyone.

Have a nice evening.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.

Number 31.

>> Hello, okay. You guys can hear me.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Yes.

>> My name is Taroon. And I just wanted to make one point about Warren and Sterling Heights.

They share very similar and very common communities of interest. And I really do appreciate keeping them together.

And just another thing is just like if there was a gentleman mentioned earlier, throwing out the old maps and just starting fresh where everything is -- redistricting is fair.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.

Number 32.

>> Good evening. My name is Daniel Jones.

And I am a representative of the Michigan collaborative to MS incarceration and also the voting abscess for all coalition.

Our community of interest are people that are currently incarcerated and the communities in which they come from.

In the year 2000, I was incarcerated as a Michigan reformatory in Ionia, Michigan. And I'm originally from Detroit.

And while I was there an officer passed out a census form to everybody on the cell block.

As I began to fill out the form, I heard someone yell out from inside their cell, don't fill that out. They are trying to count us as residents here in Ionia to receive benefits and opportunities and privileges.

And when I heard that, I tore the census form up and threw it in the toilet, that is a prison gerrymandering, that is a practice that conflates population counts and distorts this entire redistricting process.

It is the responsibility of this Commission to ensure that fair and equal maps are drawn, but that's impossible for you to do when you do not have accurate count of populations of people where they will be returning to once they leave prison and where they originally come from.

There are currently two bills. House bill 4276 and Senate bill 151 that seek to end prison gerrymandering by counting people at their preincarceration addresses. I encourage this Commission to do what is in your authority to create these fair maps by counting people currently incarcerated at their pre-incarceration address and do what you can to put an end to prison gerrymandering, which eats away at democracy and the fair and equal practice of people having representation in the communities in which they are counted in. Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Numbers 33, 34, 35, 36. And, 33, when you reach the microphone, you are welcome to begin speaking.

>> Hello, Commissioners. First of all, please consider the gentleman that just spoke heavily. That's a very good point that he is making.

My name is Hardy. I'm from East Point City Council. And I wanted to discuss my community of interest. You, improving democracy as the Commission here, you will be making a more perfect union. The founders of our country never foreseen this exact scenario, hoping that this would happen essentially.

One political party or another should not be drawing districts in our County or State. The people of the state should be drawing the districts and finally will be.

Drawing districts that make sense will not only make figuring out who your elected representatives are, easier but also make for a better democracy. When it's easier for the people to understand their Government, it makes them more likely to get involved themselves. And the more people involved in their own democracy the better. And when neighbors are represented by the same people, the more likely they are to get together and speak up.

When those representatives speak up and listen to others, we solve problems and we make this country a better place to live.

So I'm sure you received hundreds if not thousands of comments tonight. I think you are probably receiving a hundred tonight alone. One specific suggestion for me for communities of interest is to take Government authorities into account.

So I said I'm from East Point. We share dispatch services with East Point, Frazier, Roseville and St. Clair Shores. And then we do recreational authority with Roseville.

Then there is more exciting things like sewage authorities to consider and fiscal authorities and other things like that.

But where I'm going is consider these as communities as they are already legally communities of interest, being in these authorities.

Some authorities will be more important than others for considering districts. But I believe more important than arbitrary boundaries between two communities. Please consider this when drawing all the districts. And at a minimum it will make a difference for ten years, but a maximum for the rest of the country's future.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.

Number 34.

>> Hi. Good afternoon. And I appreciate everyone's input as it reflects so many important aspects to our racial and cultural importance's to all of us.

I am from Harper Woods.

It's a very small city. So you understand of 47 or 52000 population, what aspects that affects to me. Being very involved with St. Clair Shores and the City of East Point, Warren. History to myself, I'd like to let you know that it's very important to me because I have been mostly impacted by redistricting in my life.

Born in Hamtramck, my Bangladesh friends, I was raised in Sterling Heights from three years old.

On a farm with the cows, I might add, and watched the community grow from a subdivision in the 70s. I actually played in the basements hide and seek.

So I understand the Commission.

I'd like you to acknowledge the impact of the communities, of course, keeping the cities together.

But the most important thing to me is simply that I had to move three schools. And I need you to consider the fact of the increased population throughout your data collection.

Another aspect that I'd like to make note to is this is too fast.

My healthy neighbors got a lot of information and my current community doesn't even know about this meeting as I've learned about it two days ago.

I'm sorry if my verbiage is not relevant to your technical dialog, but this is not enough time.

And I do oppose the acceleration of your acceptance, the acceleration correlation, whatever it's called.

That has to be due in by August 1st.

Knowing that you're only to be getting collection data in the end of July of your technical terms.

So it is too soon.

The community doesn't know how this is going to affect them.

There needs to be more education.

And there needs to be more backdoor IP keyboarding so that people can make their voice known.

14 comments from your last three or four meetings is not sufficient for redistricting for our state impact for the next ten years.

Thank you for your efforts.

Please, this is very important to us and it's too fast.

Our state is upside down.

We need more time.

How will it affect the school District.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Ma'am, your two minutes are over. Thank you.

>> I appreciate you.

We are all Americans with each individual.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Ma'am, your two minutes are over. Please conclude your comments. And sit down.

Could you please have her sit down, please? Thank you.

Thank you, ma'am.

Number 35, you may approach the microphone.

Thank you, number 35. Go ahead.

>> My name is Eric Jones. I am going to touch on just a few bullet points from your opening presentation. And I would like to remind this lady that all of these procedures you have were spelled out in the petition drive.

We were just following what has been voted on by the people. And as the executive assistant said, that petition only called for ten meetings. You scheduled 16. So they are going above and beyond to try to get the voice of the people.

First, I'd like to touch on compactness.

Communities of interest and then the points four and five about avoiding the political influence.

I'm a Warren resident.

I moved back to Warren 13 years ago.

I work in Warren.

I frequent, I shop, and eat in Warren.

My Congressional District goes from Pontiac to Grosse Pointe.

I don't shop and eat there.

I may go there on a special occasion, that's the exception to the rule.

As, in general, I shop and eat in the compact area.

I moved back to Warren.

I graduated from Mont High School in 1972.

We didn't have a football field.

We had to play our football games at Warren High, which is now the community center. In '72 or '73, right around there, they built Sterling Heights High School.

Some of my friends' friends from Warren and Mont High School ended up getting moved over to Sterling Heights, that was the community of interest.

And then on the political points, you know, well, I'd also like to just make that you should probably consider County lines too because a lot of infrastructure, you know, roads, sewers, garbage pickup and stuff are compact in that way.

And then this is the first step. What you are doing is going to be better than anything we ever had before as another gentleman said. And the next time we go around you will correct the missteps and it will be even better.

Thank you very much.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you.

Number 36.

>> Commission Chair, respected Commissioner and such a beautiful crowd today after this pandemic. I'm very glad to be here.

So real quick I just do not want too long, my conversations regarding that.

I wish you could arrange a meeting in Hamtramck so that we can raise our more voice over there.

We can show you the crowd and who are...need to be introduced to this redistricting process.

Actually, I'll not go through the details and everything. So, sorry, I forget to introduce myself. My name is Mohammed.

I'm here for seven years in the United State and work for City of Detroit, Office of Financial Officer. So my concern is today when, you know, we start in Hamtramck, okay. When we need to move out, we go to Warren or Sterling Height, okay? But I know when I'm going to move from Hamtramck or Warren or Sterling Height, I'm going to lose my community. I am going to lose my political attachment to my community. So when you get a chance and we get a chance to, you know, express our concern about it, my concern is going to be if you could, guys, make a line, a District especially for Hamtramck Warren, Sterling Height, to make a District for us especially is going to be, you know, is going to be easier for our future,

Future generation to involve in all the matter political and geopolitically and everything.

I appreciate your guys' hard work and all you guys who joined with us remotely. Thank you very much.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.

I'd like to remind everybody again, and I'm going to say this over and over again, you're all going to have it probably memorized by the end of the meeting, but please go to the public comment tool and share your comment in writing including any specific area of

the map of which you are speaking. The public comment tool is available at www.Michigan.gov/MICRC.

So we have been going for about an hour and a half now, so I think we are going to take a little recess, so, without objection, we will now recess for ten minutes.

Hearing no objections it is --

[Laughter]

So the current time is 6:33 p.m., and we will recess until 6:43.

Thank you, everyone.

[Recess]

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: I call this meeting of the Michigan citizens Redistricting Commission back to order at 6:45 p.m. Will the secretary please call the roll?

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

I'll start with Doug Clark.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Juanita Curry.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Anthony Eid?

>> COMMISSIONER EID: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Brittini Kellom?

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Rhonda Lange?

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

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Steve Lett?

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Cynthia Orton?

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: Present; attending remotely from Battle Creek, Michigan.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: MC Rothhorn?

>> COMMISSIONER ROTHORN: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Rebecca Szetela?

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Janice Vallette.

>> COMMISSIONER VALLETTE: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Erin Wagner?

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

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Richard Weiss?

>> COMMISSIONER WEISS: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Dustin Witjes?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: 12 Commissioners are present and there is a quorum.

>> REBECCA SZETELA: Thank you. Without objection, we will resume the public comment portion of this meeting.

Hearing no objection, we now resume public comment.

Numbers 37, 38 and 39, you may approach the microphone. And, 37, you can begin as soon as you reach the microphone.

>> Hi. Good evening, everyone. My name is Abdullah. I'm a proud Bangladeshi American citizen living in Warren, Michigan.

And I'm from the University of Michigan as well.

We Bangladeshi people moved all the way from Hamtramck to Sterling Heights and many cities nearby.

We share same culture, ethnicity and have some common interests as well.

But we are scattered into multiple, different districts.

All I want to request you to consider our request when drawing the map, and include all of four Bangladeshi population in one same District, so that we can practice our rights and contribute to the local Government as well as the Congress.

Please take it into consideration that if we are together our contribution will impact the Government, but if we are scattered it might not happen.

Last but not the least, I just want to finish a quote by Jesse Jackson, in politics an organized minority is a political matter. Please consider this and thank you so much.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you so much for addressing the Commission. Number 38.

>> Hi. I'm a resident of Chesterfield Township, or as some of the locals call it Chester Tuckey. Regardless, there are a number of community of interests in Macomb. You could argue the entirety of Macomb County is a community of interest. But a few I want to point out, as some already pointed out, is Sterling Heights and Warren and also Frazier, Mt. Clemens, Roseville, East Point, as well as Northern Macomb. Because there are significant differences between them and share identities between them that allow them to be represented and should be represented together.

I voted for proposition two back in 2018 like many Michiganders did. And ironically it got more votes than weed. And if that tells you something that Michiganders care more about gerrymandering than weed, I think that is pretty frightening. But regardless, 80 of 83 Michigan counties voted for this proposition in the majority vote.

That being said, as the founding fathers always intended, the people are the legitimate founding resource of authority. So you have to carry that will of the people

and the mission and creed with fair, fresh, new District lines. Thank you so much for your time.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 39.

>> Hi. My name is Rosharon. I'm a City Council member from the City of Wyandotte. We are located just south of Detroit.

We are on the Detroit River.

We are currently part of the 12th Congressional District, which spreads all the way across Dearborn Heights to Ann Arbor, which is in a totally separate County. The community of interest I represent is the Down River community.

We just ask that you keep the Down River cities together.

Wyandotte, Wood Haven, and those local cities there. Because if you look at the districts in the Metro Detroit area and Wayne County, they are just stretched across. You know, it's literally like where they got the name gerrymandering from. It's just ridiculous.

So please consider keeping those Down River communities together.

We share the same infrastructure.

We, you know, the same trains, bridges, social economic status and, you know, our comments are altogether there.

Thank you for your time and considering this. And thank you for allowing me to speak.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 40.

>> Hello. I'm now a resident of Sterling Heights.

I heard many residents come up tonight, introduce themselves as lifelong residents, which is great.

I am not a lifelong resident. I moved here in 2019. And I bring that up because I bring a fresh eye to these communities. Let me say when I first moved here one of the first things I noticed is car subculture. You all take your cars really seriously.

Besides that driving up and down Mound Road between M-59 and 8 Mile, on Mound and VanDyke, there are a lot of similarities. And as far as representation goes, Ford, GM, Chrysler and the other industrial centers in that corridor are going to have similar interest and needs and will benefit from combined representation. Many of my friends as well work in those factories and they live in both Sterling Heights and Warren. And they have similar interests as it relates to their work there.

I also think that, someone mentioned it earlier tonight, that the borderline dividing Warren and Sterling Heights is on 15 Mile. But after two years almost of living here, I really couldn't tell you where Sterling Heights ends and Warren begins.

I know where Ferndale is compared to Royal Oak and Utica compared to Shelby. And I definitely know where West Bloomfield is. But I'm not sure where the dividing line is between Warren and Sterling Heights. And that really is a testament to how

interconnected these two communities are. And I think it is in their best interest they remain connected in the redistricting.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Numbers 41, 42, 43 and 44 may approach the microphone. And, 41, you may begin as soon as you reach the microphone.

>> Good evening, Commission. My name is Fred. I'm from Clinton Township. I've spent most of my life in Macomb County.

I work in Warren.

I work in manufacturing.

I'm a skilled tradesman.

I learned my trade from men who worked in Macomb County who lived in Warren.

Warren is the heart of manufacturing for Macomb County.

Most people who work and live in Macomb County know that the suburban communities north of Clinton Township is where most people would commute to work.

From north to south.

So Macomb County is currently divided with its Congressional District. And parts of southern Macomb County suffer because they don't get the same representation with the people that live and work all in Macomb county.

So this sprawling 9th District should be considered to be redrawn so that more of Macomb County encompasses the 9th, or whichever number it, will attain.

So the communities of interest is sort of a term that's not well defined maybe. But the gerrymandering is certainly self-interest.

So that's what it is not.

How many can we represent in one County? It's a diverse County. There are many communities. But the manufacturing in Macomb County is the base.

It's the growth and in the southern part we see some of the aging now.

So to separate Warren out of the District would be a major problem for Warren.

We are making great strides in supporting all of our County, with the County Commissioners, and I hope that the tax base will support all of Macomb County during the next ten years.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: .

Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 42.

>> Hello.

My name is Susan.

I live in Clinton Township.

And my comment is actually I really want to emphasize the importance of considering the prison population as was already brought up by two members today.

When we think of the prison population, I definitely want you to consider that they be recognized from their communities of origin and reallocated there.

They do not have a right to vote, so including them as their prison address kind of puts them in that same realm of three fifths of a person that was counted in the south to augment their power and representation.

I know it isn't the intention of the community to probably -- to do that, to give them more power.

But it certainly takes away the power from the people that are incarcerated.

Some day they are going to be able to vote.

And I am all for that.

But I welcome your consideration in that area.

Since I still have a little bit of time, and I am from Clinton Township, I do want to back up the other person who said that to combine Mt. Clemens and Clinton Township to me seems something to really consider just because of the boundary shape of Clinton Township and how it splits naturally, a corridor that is very important economically. So that is all I have to say and I appreciate your work.

Thank you so much.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.

Number 43.

>> Hello.

My name is Mark.

I live in Chesterfield Township, Macomb County, along with one other individual in here. Anyway, my community of interest is, like most people, where we live.

It's where we pay taxes.

It's our local communities.

We pay for our police.

Our fire.

We join local churches or clubs or 4H or Eagle, you name it.

Our local communities is where we spend most of our time, our taxes, our effort. And we need representation in that area for roads or whatever your local community does.

Now, I'm a strong believer that we have to keep, as much as possible, our county lines, community lines, city lines, that type of thing.

Now, the people of the State of Michigan voted over 60% for this Commission, right?

Now, why did they vote? They voted because of this District and others.

The ninth Congressional District is the southern half of Macomb and it snakes through part of Oakland County. The people wanted it out of the hands of politicians who create that kind of spidery district and they want more normal districts.

They did not vote to redefine what our community of interest is.

They voted to get neater and nicer districts.

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We don't need spidery districts based on other criteria other than the political criteria that we are trying to get away from.

Thank you very much.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.

Number 44.

>> I guess good evening. My name is Kris with a K.

And I'd like to echo the thanks of Speaker 35 for scheduling more than ten of these hearings because I would not have been able to go to Pontiac's.

I was born and raised in Southwest Detroit and I have lived in Ferndale, in Oakland County for almost 21 years. And the work that you are undertaking to make the representation of major political parties more equal in these districts I think will have a great benefit for future campaigns.

I cannot remember a time when ballot measures or candidates for office could be voted on based solely on their merits.

Politics has become so polarized that it's the party name or how conservative or liberal a candidate or ballot measure is perceived to be that determines how different populations within a given District will vote.

And it's been like pulling teeth to get a large number of citizens to vote at all.

By redrawing the boundaries of each District so each political party, at least the two major ones, is represented more equally, each party will have to work harder to win votes.

Candidates for office will be forced to develop platforms which benefit the greatest number of average citizens, not just those who are members of their own party.

And, if elected, they will be under pressure to keep their campaign promises because if they don't someone else of either party can more easily beat them in the next election.

Ballot measures likewise will have to be crafted with greater good in mind because of cross sections of citizens within a given District will be affected by the outcome of the vote.

It will no longer be appealing to vote against one's own interest in order to keep those one considers to be adversaries from benefitting.

So I'd like to thank the members of the Commission very much for the hard work you are doing and I look forward to seeing the results.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.

Number 45, 46, 47 and 48.

And, number 45, please begin speaking once you reach the microphone.

>> Distinguished Commissioners, my name is Vivian Johnson and I'm honored to speak to you today.

I've will lived in Oakland County for 30 years and come to know many cities in Macomb County as well.

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In April of 2014, I came to work at Macomb at Salantas, Warren truck assembly plant for my electrical apprenticeship. The classes for that apprenticeship were at Macomb Community College.

During that time and now I've come to know the City of Warren and its neighboring communities as well.

In 2018 I was happy to be amongst the many Michigan voters who sought change in our elections. We amended the state Constitution to give you the authority to redraw District lines for our State Senate, House of Representatives and our Congressional representatives.

I'm here today to talk about the sister cities Warren and Sterling Heights. If you look at a current map of the districts, you will note the 9th and 10 districts are split cleanly between the two cities. I propose the two cities should be the same District.

They have similar economic interests and opportunities.

They also a share school district and recreational services.

I am proud to see the Michigan citizens who makeup this group and it's my sincerest hope that you will produce fresh and competitive maps that will reflect the will of all Michiganders.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 46.

Do we have number 46? All right. We will move on to 47.

>> Hi. Thank you, members of the Commission, for letting me speak this evening. My name is Kristin Carson.

I'm a resident of Shelby Township, which is in Macomb County. I'm also Co-Chair to the Macomb County Chapter of Moms For Liberty and represent and advocate for families of all Macomb County.

I would like to express my ideas for redistricting and explain what community of interest means to me.

I live, raise my children and spend much of my time within the City of Shelby Township in Macomb County as a whole.

My children attend Utica Community Schools, which is the second largest District in the state.

I shop and I play locally.

Northern Macomb County is my community of interest.

And I believe families that send their children to school together should be districted together.

I would like you to consider keeping the redistricting lines as square and compact as possible.

Thank you very much.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 48.

>> Hello. My name is Paul. And I'm a resident of Royal Oak. And I want to thank the Commission for having me, giving the opportunity to speak tonight.

I commend all of you on the Commission.

You have an extremely, very, very, very important job.

Your job is helping to protect and maintain democracy here in Michigan on a nonpartisan basis. And I commend all of you for doing that.

The problem we have in Michigan, okay, the right to vote has been a very important right that people have actually died for, many people died over the years. But the right to have each vote cast, be equally weighted is also extremely important.

And gerrymandering undermines that fundamental right.

We've had a situation here in Michigan recently, for example, where 45% of the people in a recent election have elected two thirds the State Senate, two thirds Congressional delegation, that is not democracy.

No one party, no matter what party that is, should have more weight than another party or the vote should be equal. Whether you live in the smallest village in Michigan or the largest City in Michigan, your vote should be equal and has not been always, unfortunately.

The answer to all of this is to have, once again, the favorite word is compact, geographically compact districts, districts that follow County or go within County lines, go within Township lines, go within Village lines as much as possible. You shouldn't have a small village with two or three different Districts in that small village. If that is true, then that is wrong.

The 11th Congressional District is an example of currently of what you don't do. It snakes around from the eastern part of Oakland County all the way through to the far reaches of Wayne County.

Something is very wrong here.

We should not have snake-like districts, so that is wrong.

Have geographically compact districts.

The last point I want to make is that we have at least two majority, minority districts congressionally in Michigan. We have two right now. I think we can justify and support under our principles. We had listed earlier today, have two majority minority, districts as well.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Numbers 49, 50, 51, 52. And, 49, feel free to start speaking when you reach the microphone.

>> Good evening, everyone.

My name is Mohammed. I live in Warren, Michigan.

And I'm working at as a Muslim group.

Thank you, all of my table Commissioners, to give me a chance to raise my voice.

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According to the census, more than 100,000 Bengali people live around Michigan. But 95% of people live in Hamtramck, Detroit, Sterling Height, Troy, and central lines. My community is interested in one map for the Hamtramck, Detroit, Warren, Sterling Height and Troy City.

Please make it one map under one umbrella.

I believe if we are united, yes, we can make America great.

Thank you very much.

Have a good night.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.

Number 50.

We have number 50? All right number 51.

>> Good evening. Thank you, Commission, for bringing us altogether here. It's my pleasure to stand up in front of you.

As usual you can see my color.

I'm representing Bangladeshi community here.

I'm a software engineer and I'm a proud U.S. citizen.

I have been living in this community for a long time.

I've been involved with the local community service and charity work since 2010.

In this area, especially in Warren, Madison Heights, Sterling Height and Troy cities, there are more than 100,000 not only Bangladeshi community, also Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lanka and other groups especially from Asia lives here. In my workplace there are a lot of India and Pakistan people. We all live in this same area.

I request to all of you please consider to draw a map which will include all of us in one District from I-94 to I-59 or maybe somewhere or some of this area.

As I understood the -- our Constitution which mentioned that Voting Rights Act, which mentioned the Voting Rights Act of 1965, district lines cannot be drawn in such a manner as to improperly dilute minorities' voting area. We are all Asian, living in this area, carries similar culture and values.

Our language and our color are similar.

Our children who are grown and growing up and brought up here, they are growing up and they are involving with the communities. And they are trying to make this community a safe place for living for everyone.

I request the Commission, please put all of us in one place so then our community can grow and our voice can be heard.

Thank you so much.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.

Number 52.

>> Yes. Good evening. Thank you for listening to citizen input on the required redistricting.

I have lived in Grosse Pointe Park for 40 years.

In the 2010 redistricting, since the 2010 redistricting, I have not felt my representative knew the concerns of the area I live because the footprint of the new District covers many communities of interest.

For example, a person in Pontiac does not have shoreline erosion as a main concern. Flooding or falling lake levels means little to their lives. I district composed of lakeshore and adjoining cities with a representative that lives in the area, that would know the local issues and help solve them would be a plus.

A local representative would also be available for town hall-type meetings for better citizen contact.

The current redistricting, current District resembles an oddly shaped creature and serves none of the inhabitant as well. A new District should be more compact in line with the occupants of the District.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Numbers 53, 54, 55 and 56. And, 53, you can begin when you reach the microphone.

>> Good evening. My name is DJ and I live in Sterling Heights. I want to begin by saying that Michigan has lost a lot of its prestige in the Congress and the electoral college over the past 50 years.

During the 1970s. Michigan had 19 Congressional districts and 21 electors. In 2021 Michigan is now down to 13 Congressional districts and 15 electors. This means our state has lost 31% of its Congressional representation over the past half century.

As for the new tenth Congressional District, I believe it should be exclusive to Macomb County.

I realize that I'm in the minority on this opinion, but Macomb County must be united in this regard.

As for the City of Detroit, I believe this great City should have only one Congressional District.

I realize that current Federal law may prohibit Detroit from having only one District, but that is the way I feel.

As for the state legislature, I think there should be -- that there are too many House and State Senate districts in Wayne County.

Currently there are 220,000 people for State Senate District in Wayne County.

There should be 260,000 people per District in Wayne County.

I believe we should spread out these districts so that the rest of the state will have more representation.

Thank you for allowing me to give you my opinions on redistricting.

I shall submit to you my detailed plans for redrawing the Congressional districts.

You want this?

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Yes, you can turn it in.

Thank you for addressing the Commission. And, just as a reminder, that public comment tool is available at www.Michigan.gov/MICRC.
Number 54.

Do we have a number 54? All right, number 55.

>> Good evening. Thank you to the Commission to give me the opportunity to share my comment on behalf of my community here.

I'm the father of two brilliant girls.

I'm a Bangladeshi American living in Warren City, in Macomb County.

I'm very glad to be here in a historical moment where the City can participate to comment and share their views and propose to draw a map for redistricting.

You know, the United States is great for independent diversity,

Diverse culture and diverse community that makes United States great.

Like I mentioned, I'm the father of two girls because I wish my daughters would speak as a local and Congressional representatives or similar in the future.

But as a minority we couldn't send our voice to the local or Federal Congress or Senate just for the different redistricting.

Approximately we are 100,000 Bangladeshi community, live here in Michigan.

And approximately 90% of Bangladesh are living in Hamtramck, part of Detroit, Warren, Sterling Heights and the Troy area.

So I'd like to propose to the Commission if we all Bangladeshi under the Congressional District that reflect from south to north, from Hamtramck to Troy and Sterling Heights and east to west from Hoover, that is the way we can send our voice to the top level. That is the way we can see a lot of diverse community representatives in the local or Congressional power.

Thank you again for your time to listen to my voice.

I hope it's going to be a fruitful hearing at least into the voice of minority.

Stay safe.

Stay healthy.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.

Do we have number 56?

>> Hi. My name is Jim Winn,

Been in Macomb County just about all my life. Since I was about five, we moved out of the projects in Detroit.

Been a political activist for a long time since the time I skipped school and hitchhiked to Mt. Clemens to hear Senator John Kennedy speak.

He got me into this.

Blame him.

But one of the things that really caught my eye was in a recent election when we still had 14 Congress people.

I added up all the votes that the democrats got.

And the democrats had about a million and a half more votes than the republicans did. But our Congressional delegation was 9-5 republican.

That certainly does not reflect the view of the people.

And the way some of the districts were shaped I understand why they called it gerrymandered because they looked like salamanders. And I would suggest that whatever you put together try to keep about six sides at the maximum to a District so that it looks like a District and the people as others have brought up here today are of similar culture and background and needs.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Numbers 57, 58, 59 and 60. And, 57, if you are ready, you can go ahead.

>> I will just hold it. Thank you, Commissioner, for your hard work and dedication to getting the process right. My name is Sheila.

I'm a very proud lifelong resident from Macomb County.

My community of interest is Macomb County and I truly want the lines of the District to be square, straight line and compact.

I've been a resident of Macomb County my entire life, 50 years.

I grew up in East Detroit, now called East Point.

From childhood I've enjoyed the close knit community that is Macomb County. And even living in apartments during my younger years, I never left Macomb County and neither did my husband because we love Macomb County so much. My husband and I truly moved a half-a-mile from our previous home in Clinton Township.

I have loved living in Macomb County because the residents such as myself are hardworking individuals and so willing to help you in any way possible.

We love visiting Metro beach and riding down the bike path.

We have so many amazing small businesses around us no matter what City you are in within Macomb County.

These small businesses are just part of the character that makes Macomb County so amazing.

Again, my name is Sheila and a real estate agent, mom, wife, and lifelong resident currently living and working in Macomb County.

Please keep the District lines compact and straight.

Thank you for your time. And thank you to all who spoke tonight and who have passion for this process.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 58. Do we have another number 58? 59? All right, 59, go ahead.

>> I'm actually number 60.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thanks for letting me know.

>> Thank you for taking your time to meet with us tonight. My name is Rachel and live in Macomb County. I'm a past public school teacher, now I run two businesses and I'm a county delegate.

When one looked at proposal two in 2018, it sounded good on surface; but in my opinion, the way it was presented, was very misleading, given especially pushing very hard partisanly to make sure it was passed. But here we are and now you have this job. And I hope you do well with it because all of you have the power to do what is right. So in order to make this redistricting truly fair, these lines need to be drawn as square as possible.

And not a bunch of jagged edges to represent partisan groups.

Because if they are not drawn this way, you will violate number four of the criteria you presented us to tonight, which means no disproportionate advantage given to any political party. My community of interest should not be represented by a more densely populated area around me. Thank you for your time.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. 60, 61, 62, 63 and 64.

>> I'm 61, should I start?

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Go ahead.

>> Good evening. Thank you, Commissioners.

I live in Hamtramck.

I have actually two community of interests.

One is small.

One is big.

So the small City of Hamtramck, two square miles where I live, I work as a community activist and social worker.

So I know the Hamtramck City is surrounded by Detroit.

And next to the Hamtramck, part of Detroit called Bangla Town where the Bangladeshi live, thousands of people and Yemeni and Polish community. So Hamtramck and Bangla Town is too packed together.

We share same business.

Same streets.

Same schools.

Same mosques church and park and everything.

So we can imagine that we should be split.

So the Hamtramck and Bangla Town is a community of interest. And we will submit some maps. And already submitted from AIP and global Detroit. So I strongly address the Commissioners, don't split Hamtramck and Bangla Town to be in I District.

This is my first small community of interest as my City.

Then I will go with my community, the other member from my community, they are asking for a larger community of interest, which includes all the Bangladeshi communities from 94 to 96.

So it would be a good idea to put all Bangladeshi community members together so we can have our political power and we can get our benefit from the State and the Federal. So thank you for giving me the chance to talk in front of you.

And I humbly request you to consider my proposal.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.

Number 62.

>> Good evening.

Thank you for all you're doing for this Commission.

I know it's a great amount of work and time and having sat through quite a few meetings in other areas of my life, thank you because I know this is taking a lot of your time and effort. So I appreciate it.

My name is Lisa.

I am a public school teacher.

I've lived in Michigan and the greater Metro Detroit area my whole life. And for the last 20 years I've been living on the east side in the City of Grosse Pointe.

I also am an elected school board member there and also ran for State Senate in District two.

So I know up close and personal how different the District of State Senate two is and how diverse the population is and how the different -- there are a lot of different things, too much really for one Representative or Senator to cover.

From my local area, I raised -- my husband and I raised our six children in the points and they have graduated, most of them, now from Grosse Pointe South High School. We have a lot in common in the points and we share a lot in common with Harper Woods. As a school board member, we have part of Harper Woods that is Grosse Pointe Schools. And so we share a community of interest with our school District to begin with.

We have a library system in the points that is united.

We have mutual aid agreements covering our six municipalities. And we have six cities, there are six -- we have five different Grosse Pointes plus Harper Woods, but we have two of our points that share the same Judge in one of our courts, a couple of our courts. We have hospitals in common.

We have a lot of community organizations.

We have the Grosse Pointe symphony orchestra and Grosse Pointe theatre. And we also have a community swim team that also each of the points have a youth swim team that competes with St. Clair Shores.

With the waterfront is our biggest, biggest issue.

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We have a lot in common with St. Clair Shores and the points and the waterfront unites us. We have a lot of interest. So that is our community of interest. Thank you so much for your time.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.

Number 63.

>> Good afternoon. I'm Dr. Lam, a Bangladeshi born and Bangladeshi American, Hamtramck is hometown.

A veteran, proudly served and represented my community.

I know gerrymandering is bad, a crime.

But in this case, we are taking the opportunity for the distinct purpose and we are asking almost 40 people that spoke from my community and the interest in a global situation, in a community we are taking this opportunity and requesting draw a line that the interest could be compiled in one segment.

I know that it will be redundant to speaking, but I am getting to the point.

We have doctors, engineers, professors, business owners, we have mankind.

We have many, many talented people in our community.

And our purpose here to join and gather in this congregation, in this gathering has the idea that when it's time for us to take action in the political forefront, yes, we do not have that much power.

But we are asking if it is possible because of the people, because of the power of our community and the time is of the essence. We are asking that we would like to put ourselves in a one District. We know there are numbers. We understand X numbers of people within a District.

Because of that fact from the state to the Senate to the U.S. Congress, we are empowered community. We pull our resources in that community, but where do we dissect ourselves? We really don't have a voice. So we are hoping that this special Council, this Commission will take a consideration from this gathering. Yes, we deserve a combined and compiled District.

Thank you so much.

God bless you.

God bless you, United States of America. Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.

Number 64.

64, go ahead.

>> Good evening, Michigan Redistricting Commissions.

My name is Nian.

I am serving as a Council member of City of Hamtramck.

I'm a Bangladeshi born, minority American.

Our Bangladeshi community here in Michigan especially in 14 and 9th District.

Being in the United States and seeing that voting is a privilege.

We are scattered.

It is many Bangladeshi. We call it Bangla Town.

We know that coming together as a group of Bangladeshi Americans in this region, it is good reason to gather our votes in a Congressional District.

Own behalf of Bangla Town request and we hope that in the same Congressional District.

I appreciate your time for being here and listening.

Thank you so much.

God bless you.

God bless the United States of America.

Have a good night.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.

Numbers 65, 66, 67, and 68. And, 65, you may begin speaking when you reach the microphone.

>> Thank you for much for the opportunity to speak tonight and thank you very much for your service.

My name is Brianna.

I live in Madison Heights in Oakland County.

I value my community.

I live, work, worship, volunteer, and am an election inspector in Oakland County.

One of the most important things I do in my county is vote.

I hope to not see Oakland County divided into four Congressional districts again.

I would like to see square Congressional districts and not see cities split apart.

It dilutes our votes, which diminishes our voice as a county.

Thank you again very much.

And I hope you all have a good evening.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.

Number 66.

>> Hello. Can you guys hear me? Hi.

I'm 18 years old.

I live in Sterling Heights, Michigan.

I'm sorry I didn't show up last time you guys were drawing the lines. I was eight years

old, so it was kind of hard. But my community of interest is Bengali Community. And

I'm first generation Bengali American. I was born in Detroit and live in Hamtramck and

moved to Sterling heights in 2012. And Bengali representation is critical to our

community. We have common interests. And going to school in Hamtramck School

District and Consolidated School District, representation is critical. Beyond school

districts it's also important in our Senate and our Congress. And on behalf of the

Bengali community, I would like you guys to consider to have us together, going from

Hamtramck to Warren to Sterling Heights. It's critical for our community and the years to come.

In the last ten years, it was significant but in the next ten years, for generations after me is critical.

I just want to say thank you guys for taking on this responsibility.

It's critical to our democracy and it's critical for us to have a fair District lines.

And, yeah, so thank you for listening and have a good day.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.
Number 67.

>> First of all, I would like to congratulate and give a special thanks to our Commissioners to give us an opportunity to put our voice to the policymakers for minority rights.

Living in Warren City.

Today I'm representing on behalf of Bangladesh community deeply engaged for last 26 years. Also I'm engaged with Asian community at the same time for a community development.

Today we gather in this hall, Bangladesh community, and Asian community, staying in the same page, urging to our Commissioners, our prayers to keep City of Hamtramck and east of Detroit, which is adjacent to Hamtramck, Warren City, which is constituent one, two and three, and all the way up to the part of Sterling Heights, border of Warren to make one District, which is one Congressional District, as well as House and Senate boundaries the same.

These constituencies are and sent to each other and constituents also living in the same nearby each other's.

Their economic interest and cultural and political interests also the same.

I hope and strongly believe by putting these constituents together in our District, minority citizens can enjoy their rights fully and contribute to the society more positively. Thank you for listening to me.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.
Number 68.

>> Thank you very much for giving me a chance to speak about redistricting and the reason behind it.

My name is Shamine. I work for the State of Michigan as an inspector and environmental engineer and work for my community as a volunteer. So today I'm here to speak about the redistricting and the reason behind it.

So number one reason is for unbiased treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, ability or income.

So we ask all Bangladeshi people in one District.

Number two reason, as all of you know around 100,000 Bangladeshi people live in this area in Hamtramck, Detroit, Troy, Central Line and Sterling Height.

And we are hardworking people.

We pay tax.

We share same culture. So we want to request to all Bangladeshi people, all Bangladeshi in one District.

We believe redistricting is a critical to the development and application of laws and regulations and policy that affect the place we live, work, play and worship and learn. So we get to have all our votes in one District.

Lastly, but not least, on our on behalf of our Warren community, we highly request you to make it one District for all of our people, to promote our active involvement in the community and to ensure our rights.

Thank you so much. Thank you everyone for listening to us.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Numbers 69, 70, 71 and 72 may now approach the microphone. And, 69, you are free to start when you reach the microphone.

>> Thank you, Madam Vice Chair, Commissioners. Thank you for coming to Warren and for joining us from a long distance.

My name is Sarah. And I grew up in Warren, but I live in the neighboring City of St. Clair Shores, which is also in Macomb County.

And I just have two requests as you prepare to redraw the lines.

So if this 4X6 card was my City, I would ask you please don't flip the City. I don't want it to look like this, split the cities or Townships.

And please don't make snaking districts.

Please make them compact.

For instance, St. Clair Shores is a lake community. And so, you know, lake communities are communities of interest and they shouldn't be split.

So my two requests are to -- when you redraw, that they may be compact and not split.

Thank you so much.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.

Number 70.

>> Hello.

My name is Ron Singer.

I grew up in Detroit, lived most of my adult life here in Warren.

I will try to make this as simple as possible.

I understand that you have to balance the population in each of the districts.

But my request or suggestion would be to make preserving County lines your first priority.

People choose where to live for many different reasons, some of those reasons include deciding to live in a high tech or low tech or rural or urban. It would be possible to take a high density, urban area and connect it with a large, rural area and make a single District. But I would suggest the City folk who live there would like to representation by

a City dweller while the rural residents would prefer representation by one of their neighbors.

Any single representative would be unable to best represent those two different population groups.

As your second priority I would suggest that you try not to cross any City or Township boundaries.

Again, this is for much the same reason.

People choose what community they want to live in. And, given the option, they will normally choose representation by like-minded individuals.

To the degree that you can keep communities together, you can allow the citizens to have the best opportunity for representation by individuals that share their values and preferences and neighborhoods.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.
Number 71.

>> Forgive me in advance. I'm very nervous and I talk fast when I'm nervous. Hello, my name is Debbie, 59 year resident of Macomb County and have resided in Shelby Township and lived there my whole life. Each of my great grandfathers were original settlers in this areas, farmers of crop and dairy. They have bought plats and worked and contributed and raised families there. Much like Richmond, Bruce Township, our communities have built much while maintaining much of the smaller community feel and activities. We have longstanding traditions and organizations such as 4H, Boy Scouts, M-Crest, community bible study, parks and rec activities. We have an active community just in supporting our Veterans, those in need and those who can contribute. Please consider that people move or stay in locations based on job opportunities, education district, and municipalities.

Established communities are easily researched.

One can find out just about everything desired regarding any established community. Because those who have and do live there have worked together to build welcoming and diverse consistencies of community interest.

Every citizen within them has the duty, right and opportunity to express and vote their wants, needs, concerns, or desires for change within that community.

Mixing rural, suburbs and cities that are very different and needs and infrastructures is counterintuitive.

I believe that change within communities have do and should change naturally, not be imposed.

I believe change would actually deter for ability for Americans to find common community interests across county, town and city lines. And imposed changes would be disruptive. Changes based on anything other than that of community interest would be unfair.

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Change should not be based on race, ethnicity, country of origin or politics.

We are all Americans.

We are one culture.

American, all pursuing the American dream.

We all choose where we wish to work, play, and raise our families.

Please don't fix what's not broken.

Compact communities of interest, if they are broken, fix those.

I feel it would be totally unfair to assume that I know, understand or would support other communities wants, needs, from a completely different environment and infrastructure any more than they would mine.

Thank you for your time.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.

Number 72.

>> Hi. My name is Christine.

My community of interest is Grosse Pointe Park.

And it is located in Northern Wayne County.

Thank you very much for your attention to everyone and your thoughtful discernment with these issues.

One point I'd like to make, in Grosse Pointe I was born in St. Clair Shores, which is a neighboring City of Grosse Pointe and I have lived in Grosse Pointe and I moved back to Grosse Pointe.

There are five gross points.

We share in common libraries, schools, churches, and, of course, the water.

But right now it's divided with in two. We have three Grosse Pointes with one representative and the others with another.

And I just want to emphasize that the aspects of our community that bring us together I think should be the focus. And so, you know, this idea of the snaking, I think to keep our communities compact with the simple lines just emphasizes that the community aspects are what is our most important.

So I just ask that you consider that in your decisions. Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.

Numbers 73, 74, 75 and 76. And, 73, you can begin speaking when you reach the microphone.

>> Hello.

My name is Jeremy Fisher. Thank you for coming to Warren, the heart of Macomb County and thank you for doing the work you are doing.

As a community activist here in Macomb, I would like to speak a bit about the unique nature of Macomb County.

As you know, we have a unique culture that makes state and national news.

We are a middle-class community.

We have a strong auto industry,
Strong defense industry, and a lot of building traits, union members that live right here.
Most of Macomb is very similar in nature and diverse with very many different diverse groups.
Many auto workers and building trade workers live in Warren, Sterling Heights, and then they retire in Shelby Township and Macomb Township.

We have strong Asian, Middle Eastern, and African/American communities in Warren, East Point, Clinton Township, Mt. Clemens and beyond.

We share a lakeshore.

We are too big for one Congressional seat. However, I am advocating that you draw a Macomb only seat.

Despite being the fourth largest county, there was a period of time where Macomb County had no Congressional members living here in Macomb.

That's unacceptable.

So we are asking that there be a Macomb only District that starts at 8 Mile and goes north.

The north end of the county is a little different.

When you get to the far north, it's mostly farm country,

Doesn't have a lot in common with the rest of the County.

But, as we've indicated, Shelby Township and Macomb Township, Warren, Sterling Heights, East Point, we are all very similar. We have similar people. We have similar needs, and we need similar representation.

We work together. We play together. We should be represented together.

We don't trust politicians to do this work, that is why we passed this proposition. We trust you.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.
Number 74.

>> Hi. Thank you for your service today.

And I appreciate all your patience to listen to all of us. So my name is Lynn and I'm a citizen of Royal Oak, Michigan. And I'm talking today as a volunteer of BNP but as a citizen.

So first I will speak for these interests.

I live in District Nine.

It's been kind of fun to see the other people in District Nine.

Hello there Warren and Sterling Heights.

I did not really come and see you guys. But it's been nice to meet you tonight. And so I hope that you will work on making the districts compact and reflect where people live, work and play.

That simple, where people live work and play.

The other area of interest that I wanted to communicate is I work as a volunteer for Michigan liberation, which focuses on criminal justice reform. So as others shared, and I was also a census worker too, so I oppose prison gerrymandering.

There are 64,000 people in prison. Today and about 165,000 in City and County jails. And many of these are for short periods of time.

And I hope you can consider where they come from versus where they are incarcerated.

These lines will be drawn for ten years, and that's not going to reflect where these people are actually from. So thank you again for your service and good luck.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Number 75.

>> My name is Roy Wilson. I live in Sterling Heights.

My wife and I moved into the area 50 years ago.

We chose the location because of Ford Motor Company.

That's where I worked and retired from.

There are several manufacturing facilities within Sterling and Warren.

And I would think that made this area a huge community of interest.

Not only for the manufacturing plants but the supplier workers.

We have enjoyed the neighborhood, the security and safety of good police and fire departments in these areas.

We enjoy our neighbors.

We developed a family church.

We support the local businesses within Sterling and Warren particularly.

This is my area of my community of interest.

And I would like to see Warren and Sterling remain within a District. Voting districts I think as several people have mentioned, tight and compact, straight as lines as you can draw.

None of the spiderwebs that we have now.

I think it's the area we live, work and play in.

And we would like to see concise and compact zones. And I thank you.

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

Number 76.

>> Hi. My name is Linda Wilson.

And my husband and I have moved into Sterling Heights, next month it will be 50 years.

We raised our children there and went to Warren Con Schools. We enjoyed their education.

And thought they learned a lot.

We attended church in our community.

And I have always felt very safe in our area and certainly enjoy our neighbors.

Thank you.

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

I would now call numbers 77, 78, 79 and 80 up to the microphone. And, 77, when you reach the microphone, you are free to begin speaking.

>> Hello.

I'm a current resident of Warren in the 9th District. My family immigrated from Queens, New York from Bangladesh. And my father heard about factory jobs here in Michigan and the idea of a large house attracted him to Detroit where a few of his friends had already come.

I have been living in Michigan for 20 years, and the past seven years have been in Warren.

We had our second child and decided it was time we purchase a house.

In 2013 we were coming up from one of the worst recessions, house prices plummeted and many of them were foreclosed. Bangladeshis took that as an opportunity to move out of Detroit and Hamtramck to find bigger homes and better neighborhoods particular along the lines of Equinder and Ryan, and we also followed suit.

They started off on 9 Mile and moved on further.

The growing shopping plazas with Bengali grocery stores, clothing stores, pharmacies, restaurants, and doctors' office and temples can be a testament themselves.

We might have moved to different areas, but we still need representation just the same.

The diverse community is easily noticeable when I look at the classroom pictures and my kids elementary school yearbook in the Warren Consolidated School District.

The Asian community comprises of 35% far exceeding this average percentage for the rest of the states.

However, this diversity isn't reflected in the school staff, the school curriculum or the statewide education standards. While local school boards have a lot of discretion, we know the standards and appropriations are set in Lansing.

I know for me and all the other Bangladeshi moms and BIPOC residents in Warren, we are education voters and we care about the education our kids are receiving. We need competitive and fair maps with the District lines are drawn and acknowledged and include our communities of interest so that we can have a reflective representation in Lansing and Washington D.C. that is accountable to our communities. Thank you so much for your time tonight and you have a wonderful and good evening.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for taking the time to address the Commission.
Number 78.

>> Good evening, Commissioners. Thank you for volunteering to do this work and listening to my comments. My name is Bernadette. And I live in Grosse Pointe City, which is Wayne County. There are five Grosse Pointes that you have heard. There is

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Grosse Pointe Park, Grosse Pointe City, Grosse Pointe Woods, Grosse Pointe Farms and Grosse Pointe Shores plus Harper Woods.

Six communities connected by adjacent borders and a shared school system.

Not all of the cities are in Wayne County.

But all of them, except Harper Woods, are situated along Lake St. Clair.

They are all walkable communities for shopping, church worship, library services, Post Office, et cetera.

And residents participate in many outdoor activities including water sports.

I enjoy biking, walking and kayaking, some of the reasons why I choose to live in Grosse Pointe.

The police and fire department support each other and they work together to keep the Grosse Pointes and Harper Woods communities safe.

The neighbors band together when tragedy strikes one.

We have a strong Chamber of Commerce and residents support local, businesses, charities, schools and infrastructure projects.

The unity is dynamic.

A senior assistance center and a hospital also within walking distance add to the overall livability and support systems that redistricting representation may affect.

My main reason for speaking tonight is to advocate for keeping the districts compact with adjacent borders and being a priority.

My current District includes communities in other parts of the state that don't have the same concerns such as the shoreline of Lake St. Clair.

I think the Grosse Pointe community has more in common with other shoreline residents.

Thank you for listening.

I know it's been a long night.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 79.

>> Good evening. My name is Lorraine. I guess after 78 speakers you get the idea that we would want square borders and not spider web districts.

Anyway I'm from Chesterfield Township, Michigan.

In case you're not aware of where that's at, it's a community of about 43,000 residents.

And it's about 35 miles northeast of Detroit.

It borders Anchor Bay, which is part of the Lake St. Clair.

Our Township has transformed from rural to a fast-growing community and we the family units small time atmosphere.

Neighbors help each other. Shop keepers are friendly. Township personnel are always ready to assist. And, no, I do not work for the Township.

Chesterfield Township residents enjoy boating, water sports, fishing, lake-side living, summer camp, concerts, campground barbecues, and many services for children and senior citizens, with a wide variety of shops, businesses and restaurants.

As we partner with and share the culture of several surrounding communities, it is important that our voting District is contiguous. We expect to elect representatives to represent the morals and values of our Township. Thank you for holding this public meetings.

And thank you for the opportunity to address you tonight.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for taking the opportunity to address the Commission. Number 80.

>> Hello. My name is Don Wiggins and I live in Ferndale. Thank you all.

You've got a very difficult job, and I admire you all for taking it on.

The reason that proposition two passed in 2018 was because of gerrymandering. And the reason gerrymandering and the result, one political party has been allowed to dominate the state legislature, our Congressional delegation, and, yeah, for a long time. No political party should be allowed to dominate for so long.

In order for you to achieve your goals, competitiveness must exist in as many districts as possible, the Congressional level, at the State Senate and in the State House levels. It's very difficult to do that.

But one way in which this can happen as much as possible is through diversity. Homogenous communities I think is what causes the gerrymandering, makes it possible.

So please give every consideration to diversity when you draw the lines. And I thank you very much.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for taking the time to address the Commission. Number 81 and 82.

>> Thank you, Commission.

I know you have a tough job, but it is something that is extremely critical.

The American Revolution was fought over no taxation without representation.

That's exactly what we are talking about tonight.

We are talking about representation.

In creating the new Government, the revolutionary Americans reached their greatest achievement. They decided that sovereignty would be living with the people of the nation, not in a single person such as a king or a Government.

The system devised was not perfect nor is it perfect now, but the idea of Government by the people and for the people was the fuel that fired the revolutionary vision for a just society.

It's the idea that allows for change when the people desire change.

Having that vision and allowing the people to decide creates the exact position that you're in.

So making sure that the lines contain full cities that are square and compact, that don't divide different areas up, think about being an elected representative.

Think about being, representing areas of people that are far away from the same thoughts or their lifestyle or the way that they are.

Now, this is America.

Okay, we have an American culture.

So having that American culture regardless of whether you are from another country, you come here to assimilate, to be American, to actually live the American dream.

And that means connecting with other Americans.

So do not draw lines based on country of origin or based on skin color or based on economic ability or poverty levels or someone that is more affluent.

Base your lines on straight, compact areas that make sense for communities.

Thank you.

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

Number 82.

>> Well, I can honestly say I can't say it any better than that.

Anyway my name is Terry Carol.

I live in Chesterfield, Michigan.

I'm in Macomb County.

And I was in Detroit when I was a child, robbed many times. And it's amazing. I says there is no way I want to raise my children in Detroit, right? So I moved to Macomb County.

Since then I've never been robbed.

It's always no matter where I've gone it always felt safe.

I would like to keep as much as possible the lines straight and square, that represents the people appropriately without partisanship. And also eliminate any of the snakes and the spiderwebs that go out into other communities that are actually put there for a reason. I guess that is why they call them snakes and spiders. Who wants snakes and spiders? So anyway thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for taking the time to address the Commission. I would like to remind everyone, you can go to our public comment tool and share in writing, including any specific areas of the maps, which you are speaking. The public comment tool is available at www.Michigan.gov/MICRC.

Number 82 concluded our live, in-person public comment for the evening. So at this point we are going to move on to remote public comment.

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Individuals who have signed up and indicated they would like to provide live remote public commentary to the Commission will now be allowed to do so. I will call your name and staff will unmute you. If you are on a computer, you will be prompted by the Zoom app to unmute your microphone and speak.

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

I will call on you by your last name or by your name.

Also, please note that if you experience technical or audio issues or if we do not hear from you for three to five seconds, we will move on to the next person in line and return to you after they are done speaking.

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

You have two minutes to address the Commission.

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

Please also go to the public comment tool and share your comments in writing including any specific areas of the map about which you are speaking. The public comment tool is at www.Michigan.gov/MICRC.

First in line to provide public comment is Gary Brenahan. Please allow a moment for our staff to unmute you. I can see you, so I believe you are unmuted.

Go ahead and address the Commission.

>> Thank you. My name is Gary. I'm a resident of Grosse Pointe. And I will speak on behalf of the Grosse Pointe democratic because I'm president.

We are here -- I'm here today to speak on behalf of keeping the five Grosse Pointes, Grosse Pointe Woods, Grosse Pointe Park, Grosse Pointe Shores, Grosse Pointe Farms, the City of Grosse Pointe along with Harper Woods and surrounding Detroit neighbors in one District for all of our Districts, Congress, State Senate and State House.

The reason this is a concern is because Grosse Pointes and Harper Woods and the East side Detroit neighborhoods were split into two House Districts. And it's our position that we should be kept as one District. And we submitted a resolution on that behalf.

Our community meets the criteria of being a common community of common interest because the Harper Woods and the Grosse Pointes share a common school system and we elect a school board.

The Grosse Pointes share a mutual aid agreement where our public services are shared particularly with fire and police.

We share a Chamber of Commerce where recreation, community groups, churches, hospitals are all shared among the community.

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We also share common borders. We share common borders with Lake St. Clair, Detroit River, where we have commerce and recreation along the river and the lake for many clubs and the association use it during the summer and year long.

So we have common transportation points, bus systems that interlink the Harper Woods, Grosse Pointes and City of Detroit.

So, based on those factors, among others, we meet the common interests criteria that was set forth by the Constitution. And we would ask that the Grosse Pointes, Harper Woods and East side Detroit neighborhoods remain together for our Congress, State Senate and State House districts.

And we have a community bipartisan position on this, recently the Grosse Pointe News had an Article back on June 10th that spelled out the position of our community and it's bipartisan and we would ask you to adopt and keep our community together.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Next in line is Rebecca Islam. Please allow a moment for our staff to unmute you. Hello, Rebecca. It's nice to see you again. You can go ahead and address the Commission.

>> Good evening, Commissioners. And thank you for the opportunity to speak. It's so long I can't keep track of time. My name is Rebecca Islam and I'm the Executive Director of API Vote Michigan, the largest Asian/American citizen engagement community organization here in Michigan. And my community of interest is the Asian/American community of Hamtramck, Michigan.

I grew up Hamtramck. And as you have heard tonight, it's home to many Bangladeshi Americans. It has a high concentration of Asian/Americans and many other immigrant communities, representing about 45% of the population.

And in the recent years Asian Americans and Hamtramck have extended into Detroit due to the high cost of housing, limited access to affordable housing as the population has grown.

I'm asking that we include parts of Detroit and Hamtramck's District.

One of the examples of why the Commission should include parts of Detroit with Hamtramck is the ability to service immigrant communities with language and materials and native languages.

There is a large demand for business, health, educational reading materials in native languages. And given the recent health crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic, it has highlighted and uncovered the need for more language access throughout Hamtramck and parts of Detroit.

Although my organization focuses on civic engagement, in last year we have worked in the community translating critical health information because that was not available through state or local Government agencies.

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Again, this is just one example of resources that my community experiences on a daily basis.

The API community trusts that you will hear our needs and consider them when you redraw the maps.

We ask as a community that Hamtramck should be connected with Detroit's District and not doing so would be the exclusion of the Asian/American voices in Detroit and Hamtramck.

I have submitted a map on the portal for your reference.

And, as you can see by the comments tonight, especially from the Bangladesh community, that my community supports the Commission and holds you high. And we trust that this independent redistricting committee will pay it forward the will of the people and ensure that fair maps are drawn, which is the ultimate goal of the Commission.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for taking the time to address the Commission. That concludes our remote public comment for the evening. Without objection we will now have Executive Director Hammersmith provide acknowledgments.

Hearing no objection, please proceed, Executive Director Hammersmith.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Good evening. We want to thank everybody for coming out tonight.

I see most of them have left by now, but, anyway we had -- and thanks for being a stalwart. And we want to thank the MRCC Banquet Center and Encore for hosting us and providing the AV. Thanks, guys. You did a great job. And thanks to the League of Women Voters, Voters Not Politician and Secretary of State for staffing the registration and the public comment sign up. And most importantly we thank you for coming out and providing your public comment. Thank you so much for being here tonight.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: As the order of items on the agenda are completed and the Commission has no further business, a motion to adjourn is in order. May have a motion to adjourn?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: So moved.

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Second.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Motioned by Commissioner Lett, second by Commissioner Witjes.

All in favor, wrong way? Motioned by Commissioner Witjes, seconded by Commissioner Lett. All in favor raise your hand and say aye.

>> Aye.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: All opposed raise your hand and say nay.

The ayes prevail. The meeting is adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

Thank you very much to everybody for attending. And thank you for all the staff for being so helpful tonight.

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We appreciate all the work that everybody did tonight.

Thank you.

[Meeting concludes]