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MICRC

10/25/21 1:00 pm Meeting

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>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Good afternoon. As Vice Chair of the Commission, we will bring the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission to order at 1:01 p.m.

This Zoom webinar is being live streamed on YouTube at Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission YouTube channel.

For anyone in the public watching who would prefer to watch via a different platform than they are currently using, please visit our social media at Redistricting MI. Our live stream today includes closed captioning. Closed captioning, ASL interpretation, and Spanish and Arabic and Bengali translation services will be provided for effective participation in this meeting. Please 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 also being recorded and will be available at www.Michigan.gov/MICRC for viewing at a later date and this meeting also is being transcribed and those closed captioned transcriptions will be made available and posted on 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, our Communications and Outreach Director for the Commission at WoodsE3@Michigan.gov or 517-331-6309.

For the purposes of the public watching and for the public record I will now turn to the Department of State staff to take note of the Commissioners present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Good afternoon, Commissioners. Please say present when I call your name. If you are attending today's meeting remotely, please disclose during roll call you are attending remotely and where you are attending from, I will call on Commissioners in alphabetical order starting with Doug Clark.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Present. And I'm joining the meeting remotely today from Rochester Hills, Michigan.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Juanita Curry.

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- >> 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.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: MC Rothhorn?
- >> COMMISSIONER ROTHORN: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Rebecca Szetela?
- >> CHAIR SZETELA: Present, attending remotely from Wayne County, Michigan.
- >> 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. Attending from Saginaw Township Saginaw Michigan.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Dustin Witjes?
- >> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: 11 Commissioners are present.

And there is a quorum.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you Ms. Reinhardt. You can view the agenda at Michigan.gov/MICRC. I would now entertain a motion to approve the meeting agenda. So moved. Motion made by Commissioner Witjes. Seconded by Lett. Is there any discussion or debate on the motion?

Hearing and seeing none it is moved and seconded and today's agenda that today's agenda be approved all in favor raise your hand and say aye. All opposed raise your hand and say nay.

The ayes prevail and the motion is adopted.

Prior to public comment we have some Commission business to cover this afternoon. First on the agenda is approval of the minutes from the meeting October 8 excuse me the meetings October 8 and 11 held in East Lansing. These minutes have been provided to the Commission prior to the meeting are there any edits? Seeing none may I have a motion to approve the minutes of October 8, 2021.

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Motion made by Commissioner Witjes and seconded by Commissioner Lett all in favor raise your hand and say aye.

All opposed raise your hand and say nay.

The ayes prevail and the minutes are approved.

May I have a motion to approve the minutes if excuse me first let's make sure there are no edits for October 11th.

All right seeing none may I have a motion to approve the minutes of October 11 please. Commissioner Witjes and seconded by Commissioner Lett.

All in favor raise your hand and say aye.

All opposed raise your hand and say nay.

The ayes prevail.

Thank you, Commissioners.

Without objection our host Commissioner Steve Lett will now provide a presentation, hearing no objection please proceed Commissioner Lett.

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Thank you Commissioner Rothhorn.

We have the PowerPoint up, please? Welcoming background.

Welcome to the second round of public hearings.

Taking place obviously here in treetops in Gaylord and we welcome everyone here.

It's the same thing.

Redistricting takes place once every ten years.

All across the United States.

And the for the first time in Michigan the citizens have a say in how new voting maps are drawn.

We have spent countless hours listening to the public input and public meetings prior to these.

To learn how to input the public's comments as to what districts should look like.

The residents get to help draw the maps and have a say about which areas should be represented.

Next.

Redistricting is your chance to make sure that your voice and your community's voice is heard and represented.

In addition to these public hearings, you can also submit comments on the public portal at Michigan.gov/MICRC.

Redistricting can keep your community together.

We have a #show up and speak up.

Speak up and on behalf of your community learn how at Michigan.gov/MICRC.

Redistricting will help make sure your electorate officials reflect your values on important issues such as healthcare education public safety and justice.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you Commissioner Lett.

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Without objection Executive Director Sue Hammersmith will now provide a brief presentation.

Hearing no objection please proceed Ms. Hammersmith.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Good afternoon, everyone and thank you so much for being here today.

We sure appreciate everybody showing up to listen.

To each other and also to give their public comments to this Commission.

So in the second round of public hearings there are three requirements that are in the Constitution to solicit public comment regarding the 161 districts that this Commission is drawing.

They are drawing 110 State House, 38 State Senate and 13 Congressional districts.

Each proposed plan includes census data, a map and a legal description.

You can find those on our website, those 20 plans if you have not looked already.

And the Constitution requires five public hearings.

So that's why this Commission is here to listen from you.

Right now there are four Congressional, three State Senate and three State House maps that have been drawn in open meetings as collaborative maps by the entire Commission.

Also ten Commissioners submitted individual maps and there is four Congressional, three State Senate and three State House maps in that category.

And the individual Commissioners that submitted maps included Commissioners Clark, Eid, Lange, Szetela and Orton so they are the ones who submitted individual maps.

As you probably know the redistricting criteria are in the Constitution.

They are listed in rank order.

So first and Foremost this Commission must abide by Federal law which includes equal population and adherence to the Voting Rights Act.

Secondly districts have to be geographically contiguous.

Third reflect the state's diversity and communities of interest.

The fourth and fifth there can't be disproportionate advantages to any political party and cannot favor or disfavor an incumbent elected official or a candidate.

The sixth criteria again in rank order is to reflect consideration of County, City and Township boundaries and lastly the districts have to be reasonably compact.

The process for adopting the maps will include deliberations, those start Wednesday of this week and will run through Friday of next week.

At which time the Commission anticipates having lines drawn that will be put out for the 45 days of public comment.

But all those maps will be tested to make sure that they comply with the constitutional criteria.

After the 45 days of public comment, this Commission will meet to adopt maps for the State of Michigan.

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They do require a majority vote of the Commission that includes at least two members of each who affiliate with each of the major parties and at least two independents or neither democrats or republicans.

After that maps will be published and with the supporting material and data and within 30 days the maps would become law.

We anticipate that they will meet on December 30th to make that final decision.

So 60 days after publication then the maps become law.

The only Court in the State of Michigan that has jurisdiction over the Commission and its maps is the Michigan Supreme Court.

And they can review at their discretion any challenges to the maps that are adopted by the Commission.

If they find that any plan fails to comply with the Constitution, they will send the work back to this Commission to complete their job.

So this is the only body that can create and adopt maps for Michigan's Congressional house and State Senate districts.

Next, I will turn it over to General Counsel Julianne Pastula to provide public hearing guidelines.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: Thank you so much Executive Director Hammersmith. My name is Julianne Pastula I serve as General Counsel to the Commission.

And I would like to share with you information regarding dequorum participation and procedure for today's public hearing.

First participation, the time limit for each public comment speaker is one minute 30 seconds.

Please conclude your remarks when you hear the timer.

The countdown will begin when you start speaking.

You may not yield your time to another speaker.

As to procedure, in person public comment will take place first followed by remote public comment participants.

During the in person live public comment portion of the meeting the Chairperson will call on participants by speaking order number to approach the microphone and provide their comment.

For our remote participants members of the public who signed up in advance to participate via Zoom those individuals will also be called on in order by the Chairperson when that time arrives.

As to dequorum subsection 11 of the Michigan Constitution prohibits MICRC Commissioners, staff, attorneys and consultants from discussing redistricting matters with members of the public unless that communication occurs in writing or during the public comment portion at an open meeting.

So during the breaks when the Commissioners come to engage and visit with you, again if you're wanting to share comments about redistricting or the proposed maps or

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anything to do with redistricting matters that information has to either be shared in writing with the Commission or via the formal public comment procedure. So that all of the Commissioners will have the benefit of hearing your feedback and your ideas. If any person disrupts the orderly progress of this meeting or refuses to comply with applicable MICRC guidelines and rules, the Chairperson may rule that person out of order and/or order their removal from this meeting.

You will hear many times today encouragement to please provide public comment and/or submit proposed maps in the public comment portal at www.Michigan.gov/MICRC.

Thank you and we look forward to hearing from you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you General Counsel.

And thank you everyone who presented.

Without objection we will now begin what you all are here for and we all are too.

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.

I may call you up in twos it's a small enough room.

But what we would like to do is be as efficient as possible.

You will have 90 seconds to address the Commission. Please conclude your remarks when you hear the timer.

Please also go to the public comment tool and share in writing including specific areas of the map you are speaking. The public comment tool is available at www.Michigan.gov/MICRC. And there is a public comment station here tonight with volunteers to assist you in accessing the website if you would like assistance.

Additionally if you have a time constraint and don't wish to wait, please use the public portal.

So first in line I'm going to call up one and two feel free to address the microphone when you arrive number one and number two follow behind.

Thank you.

>> Good afternoon, Commissioners.

I'm Kristina president of the League of Women Voters of Michigan.

The league supports the promote the vote redistricting maps because they adhere to the Michigan Constitution redistricting criteria.

And partisan gerrymandering and ensure fair maps for the next decade.

The league has been a partner organization in promote the vote coalition since 2018.

Other partners include NAACP, access, API vote and many other organizations that serve underrepresented populations.

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The league participated in the promote the vote map advisory committee.

Under the guidance of this committee PTV map drawers prepared maps using the same data as the MICRC.

The maps were drawn to meet the Michigan Constitution 7 prioritized redistricting criteria.

As a member of the PTV board the league voted to support the final maps.

We urge the Commission to consider the following promote the vote maps which have entered into the portal.

For U.S. Congress P6782.

For Michigan Senate P6783.

For Michigan house P6784.

Thank you for this opportunity to address the Commission.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you, number two. And, number three, when you are ready, please come up to the microphone please go ahead number two.

>> Thank you, Commissioner.

Thanks for all your service and everything you do for this state.

I'm in support, I'm Dave of Grand Traverse County lifetime resident.

I'm in support of the 103rd redistricting of Peach, Pine and oak drawings for the maps.

That being said some of those districts in those three areas that are down state I don't think are quite fair because they reflect some of the problems that we've had in northern lower Michigan that we are blamed on down state areas reflecting down state policies and problems up north.

If those were supported in the 103rd for the Grand Traverse County and Leelanau County areas, I wouldn't want some of the issues in the southeast lower portion of the state to be part of that. I would encourage you to review some of the issues in Wayne County and the Detroit area where some of the problems persist where there are minorities that would not get represented from their constituents.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number three please.

>> Hi, I'm Victoria I'm from Leelanau County. Thank you for your dedication to this project and I appreciate everyone's earnest efforts to create maps in accordance with the Michigan Constitution those are ones where the lowest efficiency quotient gets all voters to a representative and fair democracy.

I volunteered for Voters Not Politicians.

I review of the suggested maps show there is still work to be done.

Because the maps submitted still lean in favor of one party over another.

I applaud the effort to keep communities of interest together.

Especially pointing out Leelanau affinity with the Traverse City area because of tourism, a shared airport and hospital system.

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Traverse City is also where we do a lot of our shopping, banking and business.

We are truly a community bonded together with common interests.

I lean in favor of the birch map for the Congressional map and Commissioner Szetela's house and Senate maps.

Even so the state districts have efficiency gaps that are too high and should be reevaluated and redrawn.

The districts drawn for Southeast Michigan do not adequately allow the African/American communities to choose representation that will bring their interests to Michigan Government.

Partisan fairness is a must.

Promote the vote offered three maps that could be adopted or at least used to improve the current maps.

This is a fixable problem.

So please keep working.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number four.

>> Thank you very much my name is John.

I'm from Manistee County thank you for the work you are putting into this.

It certainly can be a thankless job but we thank you all for taking the time out of your lives to do this.

I represent a rural County in northern Michigan.

And right now everything that the maps that I have seen split this County.

And I really would urge you to consider keeping our rural Counties together as much as possible.

I think you have done a very good job and working on the criteria that you have to work with.

But again our rural Counties it's very important that we really be focused on having one representative, one Senator that can represent us.

So at all possible we just I just ask on behalf of the people of the rural Counties of Northern Michigan that you consider keeping these Counties together.

The other thing that I really want to just continue to challenge you with and you will hear a lot from today is again make this as fair as possible.

You are coming close, you are very close to doing it but I think there is more that you can do.

To make sure that we don't lean one way or the other.

Thank you very much for your time.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number five.

>> Good afternoon my name is Dennis I'm a resident of Midland County.

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I've been following the redistricting process closely and listening to other public hearings.

It seems one party continues to be pushing the AFLCIO maps as being fair maps. Well I'm here to say if you believe that the AFLCIO is nonpartisan I have some Lake front property to sell you in Sanford Michigan.

It's not true because the Lake has gone with the dam break.

Look at the organizations political giving.

This is a liberal group pushing the liberal agenda and saw the Detroit hearing and coincidentally Commissioner Szetela's comments this week saying you are open to wholesale changes to the current maps. I encourage you to listen to us the people who truly represent the communities of interest.

Please look at the oak State House map and Commissioner Lange's State Senate and Congressional maps when fixing the maps for our area. These maps are truly representative of our community.

Also I mean no disrespect but I have seen a continuous mantra coming from the democrats that I feel needs to be addressed.

They are trying to change the mandate of this Commission.

Comments when my maps do not split up Midland from Midland County or when Midland is not joined together with Midland Bay City Saginaw and Flint, we see comments stating this map is a perfect exact of gerrymandering.

The City of Midland is more in common in regards to the community of interest with Bay City, Saginaw and Flint than Midland County and do not be convinced of the mandates because the mandate says the District shall reflect the consideration of County City and Township boundaries separating Midland from Midland County is a direct violation of this mandate.

Also districts shall be geographically contiguous.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. I believe we are on number six and seven when you are ready, please go ahead.

>> Thank you, Commissioners.

I'm here my name is Scott Nelson with Midland County as it turns out.

I'm a County Commissioner.

I'm not here as a republican, I'm not here as a democrat.

I'm not here as an independent.

But as a County Commissioner.

And our job is pretty clear.

To protect the health, safety and welfare of all not some all of our County residents.

I do want to thank you for your efforts.

I know how tough this is.

My mathematics friends would tell me in is an over specified problem.

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And therefore there is no singular one solution.

I will say it's incredibly challenging.

I'm reminded once of a statement on complex problems.

For every complex problem there is a simple solution.

And it's wrong.

And in this case the reason I'm here is to talk about Counties and keeping Counties whole.

I understand that you have to make tradeoff.

I get there are priorities that you've set priorities in terms of what has higher priority than the other.

But what I'd like to tell you is that 70% of our budget is mandated by the state and the Federal Government.

And therefore our job is to execute against that.

To deliver on that.

60 out of 83 Counties that are in Michigan are of our size or smaller.

With very similar type excuse me with very similar type resources so I'd ask you please keep Counties whole.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. We are at number seven please.

>> Hello and thanks for your service and thanks for this opportunity to speak to you.

I'm Maureen mayor of the City of Midland and our Council is not a partisan Council.

Our job is to do what is the very best for our City.

And I think the very best for our City is to keep it whole with all of Midland County.

Many individuals and businesses were just recovering from the flood of 2017.

When the dams of Eatonville and Sanford broke.

We have a lot to do in our community.

It is going to take us years and millions of dollars to rebuild.

And it's important that we are there working together.

So I ask you to seriously consider that as you consider these maps because it is very important to us.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number eight, please.

>> Hello I am Nancy.

Thank you for this opportunity.

Proportional representation.

Proportional representation characterizes electorate are reflected proportionately in the elected body.

Our maps must reflect partisan fairness.

The Michigan Redistricting Commission to stay true to its mission.

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Our vision is to chart a positive course for elections based on fair maps for Michigan today and for the future.

We must live true to the mission.

Again, Nancy from Benzie County.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number nine.

>> Thank you all for being here.

I really appreciate all your hard work.

I know it's hard work.

My name is Jim from Benzie County and I'm really glad to be here.

I just want to tell you a little story.

Back in 2016 one party in Michigan got 3,000 votes more than the other party in the statewide house of representative election for the state legislature.

And ended up with a 16 seat majority.

On 3,000 vote margin.

That was in 2016, okay? In 2018 that same party lost, didn't win by 3,000, it lost by 193,000.

And still ended up with a six seat majority.

And in 2020 pretty much the same thing happened.

Their margin of loss went down, the other party only won by 16,000.

But the original parties still had six seats more in the house of representatives.

That's the wrong outcome in a democratic republic.

The number of seats won should always reflect, not necessarily match but reflect the votes cast for each party.

That is what is called fair.

That is what's called a democratic republic.

It's also not partisan to say any of this.

But it is about partisan fairness.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number ten.

>> Good afternoon.

I'm Colin of honor Michigan.

I'm here today to comment on behalf of the voters of the State of Michigan who deserve fair representation.

I became aware of this problem of gerrymandering years ago when I read a story in the Detroit free press regarding the plight of Michigan citizens near Reed City whose water wells dried up after the Nestle company started pumping out millions of gallons of water to sell worldwide in plastic containers.

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It seems that our state legislature had chosen big business over its own citizens by enacting legislation preventing a second party from suing Nestle on behalf of those individuals whose water wells had been compromised.

Quite simply it's an example of what can go wrong whose vote doesn't count.

How could the legislature have chosen big business over Michigan citizens if they weren't beholden to or simply fearful of the reach of big business interests.

You have an opportunity to go down in history as those who gave Michigan voters a level playing field or did the opposite and allowed the status quo to continue.

You are all aware of this.

I implore you to make the former happen.

Give us a level playing field at the polls.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 11.

>> Hello.

My name is Mike Ross and I lived all my life in Benzie County.

I don't believe the House District maps that they are very similar.

The house State House maps.

Put us in a community of interest.

Benzie County is on Lake Michigan.

And it's a tiny County with a small population.

And again it is split which I don't think should happen with these small rural Counties as somebody else previously said.

But we need -- our County Benzie County should be with the other Counties that are adjacent to Lake Michigan.

And those maps don't reflect that.

We are with Counties that are far to the east and I don't believe we have a community of interest in that scenario.

Secondly, I believe the maps should be fair of course.

Again you can't make every County or every District competitive.

The other problem with well there is lots of problems but one of them is that the party in power seems to only represent the citizens that voted for them.

And that have common interests.

We have not had any representation in our County unless we were among the people that voted the officials in.

Thank you for your time and effort.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you.

Number 12 and 13, please.

We do have two microphones.

>> Hand out for Secretary of State Benson.

Secretary of State Benson I have a handout for her.

Your secretary I have a handout.

Can I have the handout?

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Are you trying to give us something.

We can accept it.

>> Yes, to Secretary of State Benson is she here, she is the secretary without a vote.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Secretary Benson is not here today.

>> I will give it to her in her office, I guess. I'm James Gallant, Marquette Suicide Prevention Coalition. These are my opinions. Please consider fulfilling your fiduciary duty to pursue due diligence to avoid cost of litigation by requesting a report and recommendations from your attorneys concerning the legal claims contained in the attached house fiscal agency reports concerning MICRC's constitutional beginnings and required oversight.

These reports suggest that the prop two constitutional amendment merely revived an albeit inactive Commission already contained in the Constitution, the Commission on legislative apportionment. In those reports, Ms. McInerney cited a ruling in the Voters Not Politicians cross-complaint issued by the Michigan Supreme Court to support her claims.

Therefore, in my opinion, the attached rules of procedure approved by majority vote of the former Michigan Commission on legislative apportionment have been wrongfully blocked by Secretary of State Joyce Benson from being forward for use by the MICRC as a revived iteration of the Commission already contained in the Constitution for the benefit of her democratic party and to the detriment of the republican party.

Also, please possibly identify Secretary of State Benson has effectively fulfilled her duty to transmit the certified language of the constitutional amendment to the director of management and budget.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you, Mr. Gallant. Your 90 seconds have expired.

Thank you, Mr. Gallant.

Number 13.

>> And number 14.

>> I'm Ann from Lincoln Township.

Which is a part of Midland County.

I'm reiterating the importance of keeping Midland and Gladwin County together in their entirety in the State House, State Senate and Congressional maps.

I specifically support the oak State House map and Commissioner Lange's map for the State Senate and Congress.

I feel that these maps best represent the 2020 flood damaged areas that are still recovering and restoring homes, businesses, multiple dams, bridges as well as two lakes and the Tibawassee watershed.

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Midland and Gladwin Counties are linked together by this watershed and the importance of its combined management is crucial for the environment, recreation and public safety.

As we as having unified representation in Lansing and D.C. which will give these counties further support for their areas and needs.

Before and during the floods these Counties were together.

And should continue together for the disaster us complete recovery and restoration process.

Therefore I'm asking the Commission to focus on the people's needs.

And to honor the maps that keep Midland and Gladwin Counties together in their entirety.

Thank you.

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

>> Hello, my name is Susan.

I'm here from Nester Township and located in Ross common County.

And I'm here to first thank you for all of you being here and hearing our comments and taking the notes to remember because I know there's a lot of information coming in your direction.

And Nester Township is a very rural area despite where we are located which is on the border of also Gladwin County and for an example, I have a Gladwin address but I live in Nester Township in Ross common County and nester is one of the smaller Townships we have maybe 180 registered voters.

Therefore we have some challenges.

In terms of getting fair representation.

And it's very important for our community of interest or my community of interest of Nester Township to keep us included in the rural Counties around us because of our border we could very easily be pulled into perhaps Gladwin County or into the more southern districts.

We have large land mass.

We have very small full time residents in our community.

And therefore it is the community of interest of my choice for how we function in our community.

Mutually aid is very important to us with other rural Townships in our County.

And in order for us to provide safety, the basic needs for our community which we all share in common.

It's just that we have additional challenges because of our very rural and small full time residents.

So please consider keeping Nester part of Ross common and part of District 103 thank you.

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>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 15 and 16.

>> Is number 15? Are you number 16, ma'am?

>> Yes.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Is number 15 here? Please proceed.

>> Thank you.

My name is Chris.

I worked at the prop two petition drive and followed your work closely.

I applaud your transparency and dedication.

I traveled here from Benzie the smallest County.

Our population is sparse diversity limited but we have a diverse political opinions.

The proposed maps especially the new house 102 District won't support the steady shift towards balanced parties in Benzie.

Statewide the mix of collaborative maps approaches your expert Dr. Handley's description of a fair plan.

Where each party has a roughly similar mix of strongly and moderately partisan districts and some toss-up.

But through a micro lens the Northwest Michigan maps don't yet reflect how democrats are gaining ground as they did in all 83 Counties in 2018.

So please rework the drafts to lower efficiency gaps and align vote shares to make races more competitive.

Two quick examples Lincoln Leelanau and grand Travis in 103 meets criteria.

Lumping Benzie with Wexford Kalkaska and Antrim in 102 does not and has a disproportionate advantage to one political party and favor incumbents please do not rest until the maps meet the prop goals transparency and partiality and fairness.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. So number 17 and 18.

>> Hello, Commissioner Curry, could you let us know where you are attending the meeting remotely from today?

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: Yes, I am present and I'm attending remotely from Detroit, Michigan.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Thank you, number 17, you may proceed.

>> Thank you.

My name is Jackie.

A resident of Midland Michigan for 47 years and also a homeowner on Secord Lake in Gladwin County.

The County of Midland and the County seat of Midland particularly regarding maps segregate the City of Midland from the rest of Midland County and neighbors to the north and west and instead place it with Bay City Saginaw and Flint.

As a longtime resident of Midland I fail to see any communities of interest in this grouping.

The City of Midland should remain in districts with Midland County and Counties to the west and north for this is where the majority of community interests are found.

One of these communities of interest is the Tibawasse River watershed extends through Gladwin and Midland and includes the City of Midland.

The maps that currently acknowledge this are Commissioner Lange's Congressional plan number 243, Lange State Senate plan 247 and the oak State House plan.

The devastation suffered by the dam breaches and flooding of May 2020 was widespread in Gladwin and Midland Counties including the City of Midland.

It will be many years before the dams lakes and surrounding communities are restored.

We need to see continued cooperative effort between the Commissioners from both Counties the Midland City Government officials and one shared Congressman one shared state Senator and the State House reps from the area and it's vital to keep the communities intact drawing lines for Congressional, State Senate and State House districts.

As an impacted property owner in both Counties I want to thank you for hearing me today.

And I want to thank you for your hard work.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Thank you for those thank yous.

Excuse me number 18 and 19.

>> Hi, hi name is Kura and I'm from Benzie County. And thank you all for your hard work as you've heard.

We really do appreciate that you are doing what you're doing and we have the opportunity to have input.

I am concerned about the efficiency gap.

I feel that it's wonderful we have this way of determining what is truly a fair map where 48% of the vote will be reflected in 48% of our legislatures for example.

I implore the Commission to work for the best efficiency gap on the maps because this is a way that we will all know without a doubt that we are having equal representation, that the maps will represent our population at large.

And there have been maps drawn not by this Commission that have fabulous efficiency gaps and I implore you to look into those or to work harder on efficiency gap in our maps or your maps.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you.

Number 19 and 20.

>> Good afternoon, Commissioners my name is gay and I speak to you today as an individual member of the Midland County board of Commissioners.

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Besides our essential services at the BOC our Commission has expanded to have the complete recovery from the Dam failures you have been hearing about in May of 2020. In Lansing our current representation has been able to advocate for more than 200 million in funds to rebuild the four Dams along the Tibawassee River and flood mitigation.

In Washington D.C. as a unified county Midland has benefitted from a Federal disaster declaration and more than 100 million in District Federal assistance.

Unfortunately your efforts thwart to undermine where we have come the City of Midland has been sliced and diced and separated from the rest of the County and almost all of the illustrations, I advocate for the following State House stat Senate and U.S. Congressional maps that keep together Midland County as well as Midland County with Gladwin County.

Please reject any maps that remove the City of Midland from the rest of our County.

Thank you so much for your time today.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you.

Number 20 and 21.

>> Good afternoon.

My name is James.

To the members of the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission pray Midland County distribution concerns.

To whom it may concern, the City of Midland is the County seat for the County of Midland.

And we do not want to move our County seat for political gerrymandering purposes.

I have served on the planning Commission for the City of Midland for six years.

And was chairman of the planning Commission for two years.

I also served on the Saginaw Midland water supply system board for six years.

I currently represent 15,000 residents of the City of Midland as the District 5 Commissioner in Midland County.

The City of Midland and the County of Midland are in my mind inseparable.

We are greater than the sum of the whole because we love and embellish each other.

We do not want to divorce the City of Midland from the County of Midland.

Respectfully James.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Mr. Gisler number 21 and 22.

>> Hello, my name is Diane shields assistant vice president for Mid-Michigan health it's a nonprofit health system in Midland providing care for 23 County regions it serves. We have medical centers in Alpena, Clare, Gladwin, Gratiot, Midland, and West Branch and more than 88 employees and health providers working together to create healthy communities through solutions designed to meet the ever changing needs of the residents for the health system service areas.

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We serve many rural communities and value the support we received over time from legislatures that understand the very challenging issues we face that can be very specific to rural communities to include physician recruitment, broadband issues and care close to home for our patients.

A unified represent in Lansing for our communities gives us a strong voice to advocate for our area needs.

Midland is our largest campus and it is critical to keep Midland County whole and connected to other rural communities such as Gladwin.

Some of the community of interest needs include fixing of the Dams to include additional recovery and flood prevention measures for at least the next decade and respectfully ask consideration given for Commissioner Lange's map for both the Congressional and State Senate.

We would like to thank Commissioner Lange for drawing a map reflective of our areas and keeping the Tibawassee watershed uniting and keeping Gladwin and Midland together as a whole.

We support the State House oak map thank you to Commissioner Clark and Orton for keeping Midland and Gladwin Counties together as well.

Thank you for all that you do.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you.

Were you number 21, ma'am? Okay number 22, please.

>> Hello.

My name is John Morris I'm from Traverse City.

And I'm here today speaking to you as a volunteer representative of the Michigan league of conservation voters.

Our organization is made up of thousands of Michigan citizens striving to build a state that protects its land, water, and air so that these natural resources benefit all of Michigan citizens.

We also promote good Government initiatives because it's our local, state and Federal Government bodies that are responsible for passing strong laws for protecting the environment and its citizens.

Your work in redrawing our state's political boundaries is a critical part of the democratic process.

And as you consider new political boundaries, I urge you to do your utmost to select maps that protect the integrity of ethnic, racial and tribal communities.

Do not break those communities apart because that will weaken the voices of those who have been shut out from the halls of power in the past.

These communities want their concerns heard and they want good solutions to the problems that damage the lives of our citizens including air pollution and contaminated drinking water.

I can tell you that there are three maps that look good to us organization.

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Pine, cherry and birch.

Those maps give better representation to the citizens of Michigan.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 23 and 24, please.

>> Hello, my name is Bridgett Fox I'm a resident of Grand Haven and Ottawa County. I'm a strong supporter of Voters Not Politicians and of proposal two.

I would like to thank each of you for your hard work and dedication towards redistricting. But your work is not done.

Your task is not complete until you have drawn fair maps for our state.

Your own assessment found that all of the drafts of your map lean to the right giving republicans an unfair advantage.

Your partisan expert Dr. Handley stated the election results show that Michigan leans democratic.

Why do your maps lean towards republicans? You still have some work to do.

Some may tell you so what.

Your maps are close enough.

These people are wrong.

Your maps don't level the playing field.

And that is not good enough for Michigan.

Your maps must not advantage one party over another.

Please finish the job.

Please incorporate partisan fairness.

Please complete the mission you signed up to do.

If fairness is overlooked you will have failed us all.

Thank you.

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

>> Hey good afternoon my name is mark Smith.

I live on the north shore in Benzie County.

I say this as history our family has been on the north shore of this Lake since my great, great grandfather Hans and his lovely wife Anna emigrated from Denmark to Alberta Michigan.

From his home port of Alberta Michigan and we settled the growing City of Alberta and stretches 7 generations with our 3 grand kids enjoying the north shore Lake.

All generations have and continue to cherish the unspoiled lakes, rivers and lands of this area.

We have good schools.

Libraries.

Medical facilities.

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Low crime rates and a relaxed, friendly M22 way of life.

We see no need to add any other communities of interest to the current blend of our unique M22 District.

Our current representation in Lansing serves the needs of our constituents and we just ask that you consider that when you draw the new maps.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 25.

>> My name is art I'm out of Benzie County and also County Commissioner. My comments are specific to what is currently identified as Senate District 35. The currently proposed map shows from Muskegon County to Benzie County. If we want to follow the directive for community of interest this proposed District should include our excuse Muskegon County.

Muskegon is heavily industrial.

Oceana may show Manistee, Benzie, and Leelanau are a better fit I say this because of the geography and economic makeup.

They are contiguous take in Lake Michigan interest and tourism and agricultural as the state common denominator 101 I caution the proposed map is not considered a community of interest.

Kalkaska is an example does not take in the needs of those communities along Lake Michigan shore long Manistee and Benzie would be a better fit.

Thank you for letting me address the Council.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: You're welcome number 26, please.

>> My name is Jane Scott and I'm a 32 year resident of Midland.

The lines between City and County of Midland are blurred as we act as one community. County fair grounds are in the City and City residents over the years have frequented Sanford Lake and my family and others used the surrounding community centers for basketball practice.

I've lived through many flood events in my time in Midland but never anything like the night of Tuesday, May 19th, 2020.

That night several families evacuated to my home and we all waited to see where the water from the failed Dams would go.

Wixom, Secord, small wood, third year rain event.

The devastation was overwhelming.

My home was spared but countless homes and businesses in the City and County of Midland were washed away or damaged.

Although we were in the middle of a pandemic, the community support to volunteer throughout the watershed was a beautiful sight to see.

I volunteered in Sanford and stood side by side with our other watershed neighbors trying to salvage what we could.

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The watershed does not care what political lines you draw.

It will go where it wants.

We need a united Midland and Gladwin County to work on this huge process to make us whole again.

Grouping us with Bay City, Saginaw and Flint will complicate these efforts and are unfair to the residents of the watershed.

Please do the right thing and keep Midland County whole and with our watershed neighbors.

I support Lange Congressional plan number 24.

Lange State Senate plan number 247 and State House oak plan.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 27.

>> Good afternoon.

Jeh Johnson, Leelanau County, retired lawyer. I was a volunteer for Voters Not Politicians.

Thank you for your process.

For my County you are getting close to acceptable maps.

However on a statewide basis you could make significant legal improvements particularly as to fairness and compliance with the Federal Voting Rights Act.

Over the last several years democrats have had the most votes statewide.

But because of gerrymandering have only managed to hold one of the legislative chambers for a few years.

Your current maps would have the same result.

And for that reason are not fair to more than half our voters.

Moreover your current maps actually reduce the existing minority representation.

You should be striving to increase minority representation to comply with Federal law.

To correct these problems I suggest you consider the two sets of maps proposed by promote the vote and the AFLCIO fair maps project.

While I prefer the AFLCIO maps, either set achieves fair, more competitive districts and complies with Federal law.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 28.

>> Good morning, thank you very much for all of your work.

You guys are doing a historic and important work.

My name is Gwinn from Leelanau County I happen to be a County Commissioner.

I'm speaking as a citizen of our great state.

As you went through the criteria one of the important things, I heard was that we believe that our voices will be heard.

I'm speaking now as someone who has worked with in elections for years.

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We've canvassers and people who are excited to have their voice heard in the next election.

I happen to be a democrat.

As a Commissioner I firmly believe we need to represent all people.

But as a democrat in those elections we need to make sure that everyone's voice is heard.

You guys have done important, important work.

You're not quite there.

As the former speaker said, democrats still will not have a voice.

That will over time steel our voices.

People give up.

We have a fabulous democratic system. Keep working.

Make sure our voices are heard.

And by the way I'm very happy Leelanau is with Traverse City.

That is our town.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 29 and 30.

>> Hi, my name is Barbara I'm also from Leelanau County but from north port I voted for prop two because I think voters should pick their representatives and not the other way around.

So I'm very excited this process is going on.

I'm very much appreciate all of you for volunteers to be the first ones to go through it. Speaking from my local District, I think the Commission did a great job in the 103 House District in the Pine map.

This combination of Leelanau with northern Grand Traverse County has much in common and is the only swing District in Northern Michigan.

For the Senate District I support the AFL fair maps District 37.

This combines the coastal fruit farming retiree and tourist base communities who have different interests really from the voters in the interior of the state and need a voice in our legislature.

Overall, the MICRC maps do need more attention to the Voting Rights Act and to be sure not to dilute the voting power of Michigan's minorities especially down state.

Also I urge the Commission to try harder to get rid of partisan bias as we've heard today.

Currently the entire state leans a bit too much to the right.

But it is a swing state.

And sometimes lean slightly to the left so we really need to do better in this.

Both the AFLCIO fair maps and the promote the vote mapping districts efforts do better in this than the current maps so thanks for considering this.

I hope the final maps will be either of those to.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 30, please.

>> Hello.

My name is Darlene.

I'm a retired teacher and I live in Lake Leelanau Leelanau County. I want to thank you very much for considering my testimony.

At this point I think you have been told or I believe you think your maps are good enough.

But I don't.

I feel like they are still not fair and you have more work to do.

The party that wins the most votes statewide should also win the most seats and these maps don't do that.

Dr. Handley has said that in past elections Michigan leans democratic.

Yet all these maps lean and favor republican.

They therefore unfairly benefit republicans and so your job isn't finished until you fix this. I submitted to you my most recent written public comments, the maps that the AFLCIO offered.

They are Southeast Michigan area especially represents mapping fairly.

And it's outstanding how they have provided for both parties equally.

I hope you will consider and weigh their maps.

I also favor the Pine house map, the cherry Senate map and birch Congressional maps.

As they -- although all three need some significant changes in terms of fairness, they are a good starting point to begin to revise.

In conclusion your maps fall short of protecting the voices in minority communities.

New maps must reflect Michigan's diverse population and ensure that our...

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you, ma'am, for addressing the Commission. Number 31 and 32.

>> Yes, my name is Bill from Benzie County as well. When you're number 31 there is not much new to say.

I'm afraid but I have a habit of contacting my representatives even when I know others have because I want my voice to be heard.

So I simply want to ask you as you continue with your work, as many others have to continue to work on the efficiency gap, I believe there is more work to be done there.

And for me I think that's why more than anything else proposal two was passed.

Folks are very interested in having things be as absolutely fair as possible and as you can continue to do that work, I would appreciate that along with others that have spoken to it.

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Also as others have said I stand with the BIPOC siblings who are concerned about the redistricting particularly in the southeast part of the state and the continued support for Black and other BIPOC candidates.

Thank you so much for your work.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you.

Number 32.

>> I'm Jim.

I'm from Ross common Township of Ross common County.

And I'd like to thank you for all that you have done so far.

This is the beginning of a great experiment and I think while you know when you start something new there is going to be some glitches to it.

That happens.

But I trust that you're going to work on those glitches and move on from there.

I would like to recommend something for the future.

Rather than try and do all three sets of maps at once, I would suggest that you just do the Congress ones first and then divide each Congressional District into maps for the state reps and state Senators and I do the state Senator second and break it down to the State Representatives.

And that should help alleviate some of the problem. One of the things with the Congressional districts, I would suggest that only one County be split.

And that should help create a map which involves less of the complaints that you hear about here.

And to tell you the truth, it actually gives those Counties that split two representatives to talk to instead of one.

They get more power.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 33 and 34.

>> Good afternoon my name is Steve Johnston from Houston Lake in Ross common County.

I would like to thank all of the members of the Redistricting Commission.

You are the pioneers as we begin the process for the first time in our history of making sure that all citizens are equally heard and represented.

Once again, I thank you.

I believe however that there is more work to do.

In 2018 I joined over 61% of the electorate supporting proposal two on the ballot and created this Commission which I humbly and proudly stand today.

Intent of voters of all political persuasions is to provide fairness and representation to all of the people of Michigan.

Fairness however is more than just creating a 50/50 split.

The proportion of voters must be taken into account.

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In recent elections that proportionate is 51-49 in favor of democrats in 2020 democrats received 151,188 more votes for president.

92,335 more votes for the U.S. Senator and total of 70,646 more votes for U.S.

Congress and total of 70,625 more votes in State Representative races.

The best of the maps offered are in the State Senate and Congressional areas and predict 50/50 splits.

In the State House area those need some work.

Some of them go as far as predicting 48-42 split in favor of republicans.

That is simply unacceptable.

Better to get this right than to get it fast thank you for your consideration.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 34, please.

>> My name is Shaun Birk and I'm here from Gaylord.

Per the proposal two law there should be no proportionate advantage to any political party.

I ask you please to adhere to that requirement.

Do not adopt maps that will give republicans an unfair advantage.

Michigan is a democratic leaning state.

Fair maps reflect the state's diverse population.

Maps that lean several points to the right and give republicans an advantage are not fair.

All we want are maps with 0 political bias.

Close enough is not nearly good enough.

The Commission is tasked withdrawing fair maps.

If any of the ten maps the current any of the ten current maps are adopted, they would create a republican controlled legislature.

For the next decade.

Again, thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you.
Number 35.

>> Hi, I'm Vicki Blough, I'm from Vanderbilt, right here in Otsego County.

I would like to encourage the Commission to aim for zero political bias. None of the current tender maps do zero political bias.

And I'd like to encourage you to keep working until you have fair maps that don't benefit either political party.

Of the current state legislative collaborative drafts, I think Pine for the house and cherry for the Senate are the fairest of options.

But even those maps still need improvements to be considered politically fair.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you, number 36 and 37.

>> Hi, I'm Dana and I live in the County of Midland in the City. I spoke at the Mount Pleasant meeting and I'd like to take a moment to thank Commissioners Clark, Orton and Lange for hearing me at the meeting. Unfortunately, it was not enough. Carving the County seat out of the rest of Midland County and bolting it to a neighboring community is unacceptable. Midland shares legislative interests with Gladwin and Isabella Counties because that is the reality of the watershed. It's the reality of the place that we live. We deserve an undiluted voice on these issues. Commissioner Lange's maps for Congress and the State Senate accurately represent the interests of Midland and maps should be under consideration. The current maps under consideration unfortunately are functionally a gerrymander of Midland. Turning this process there has been a lot of discussion of what fairness is. And cutting the City of Midland out of Midland County goes beyond unfair. It's an insult. It's a disrespect for the greater community built by all the people of Midland County. Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you. Number 37 and 38.

>> Good afternoon my name is Jessica and I'm here from the Grand Traverse region I'm here to speak about the Congressional and House District maps currently proposed for our region. As it stands the current House Districts are favorable to those with higher socioeconomic status, districts 106 and 103 have the highest income levels where 102 and 104 are...have households of medium and lower incomes. There is also little regard for the whole community representation. As a person who spends time in the northwest communities on a daily basis it appears to me the lines were drawn for the sake of making change. These current districts will have unfair representation. The Commission had little regard for the state Constitution in Section 6 and subsection 13, C, EF and G and Section E the districts are not to favor or disfavor an incumbent elected official or candidate right now the two house representative of the same party will be pitted against each other in the Grand Traverse region. Item F states that there should be consideration for County, City and Township lines. There is consideration for Township lines it does not have a consideration for the particular communities as whole. And for G the districts shall be reasonably compact. The districts 100 and 102 are over an hour from end to end.

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That puts an unfair strain on whoever represents those areas.

The Congressional maps -- excuse me thank you very much.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. .
Number 38.

>> Good afternoon, Commissioners and again thank you for your service.
Jonathan, I live in Battle Creek Michigan.

Just wanted to come back I know I was at the Lansing hearing but again wanted to thank you guys as relates to the State House and the Calhoun County area.

It's really important to keep both Battle Creek and Albion together both are industrial towns have significant minority populations that identify each other and work with partner NAACP, APRI groups and I think most of your maps have a District drawn that way.

As relates to both the State Senate and Congress, I really want to encourage you guys when you're looking at Calhoun County that you look to put us with either Kalamazoo or to go up into Lansing.

Calhoun County has one of the only undeveloped Interstate interchanges in the country. That goes through Marshall and you can go 45 minutes and be in west Lansing you can go 25 minutes and be in Kalamazoo so as you're looking at State Senate and Congress, please look to that.

Also I am president of the AFLCIO for south Central Michigan.

The AFL did a lot of great work on their maps.

And I just want to say as folks come up and attack the AFL as being partisan couldn't be further from the truth.

We endorse democrats and republicans and endorse independents.

In fact, members of my union with the Midland flood gave up their weekend and 50 went to help with the flood and volunteered their time and I just kind of want to know it's offensive for people to attack us as partisans thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 39 and 40.

>> Thank you, Commissioners.

My name is Robert George.

I am from Ann Arbor.

And I'm also Washtenaw County parks and recreation Commissioner.

I've had the chance to address the Commission a couple of times so thank you for that. I wanted to talk a little bit about the State House.

I like some of the other commenters, I would encourage the Commission to continue to look at their partisan fairness metrics and improve the efficiency gap number especially at the State House, all of the plans still have relatively high efficiency gap numbers that Fayette one party over the other.

More specifically I would like to comment in support of Commissioner Chairwoman Szetela's Washtenaw State House draw and breaks Ann Arbor into four different districts and joins on the northern and I lived in many different parts of the City. The northern part of the City goes into the area around Brighton and given the increasing housing prices and the lack of affordable housing in the City of Ann Arbor more and more people especially younger people like myself are moving into southern Livingston and other areas surrounding Ann Arbor.

Which form communities of interest.

It's only a 20 minute drive up the highway.

I know a number of people a number of my friends that live in the Brighton area that work in Ann Arbor.

And so that would form a strong community of interest and would help to improve your partisan fairness metrics.

So once again I would encourage you to look at Chairwoman Szetela's Washtenaw County State House plan in regards to both communities of interest and partisan fairness.

Thank you so much for your time.

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

>> I support Commissioner Lange's plan for the Congressional map.

I know many will highlight and rightly so have done here today.

The importance of keeping all of Midland and Gladwin Counties together because of our oppressing and continued watershed needs.

I want to also provide another important community of interest as well.

Our healthcare system which has been brought up.

Our healthcare delivery system, Mid-Michigan health is based in the City of Midland and has hospitals and healthcare centers serving residents in Gladwin, Gratiot, Clare, Ogemaw Counties.

In fact, it's the largest employer in Midland Gladwin Gratiot and Ogemaw Counties.

During the pandemic it's been imperative for the hospitals to advocate with one voice to get us the resources we need.

It also allows residents to have a unified voice when advocating for healthcare policy.

And impacts our area.

I support Congressional Lange's map that reflects this as well.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you.
Number 41 and 42.

>> Hello, my name is Richard spring and I'm a resident of Charlevoix from Charlevoix County.

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You have been told your maps are good enough but by your own evaluation they continue to be bias.

Michigan is a leaning democrat state.

But all the maps currently draw continue to favor republicans.

The party that receives the most votes should win the most seats.

These maps don't do that.

That is unfair.

Which is not much improvement over the deliberately gerrymandered maps from 2010.

So far current maps have a way to go before they can be considered fair.

Thank you for your work thus far and I urge you to finish that work with truly fair maps for everyone.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 42 and 43.

>> My name is Cassandra I'm from Midland.

First, I'd like to thank the Commissioners for the work they have done creating the maps and listening to our voices so far.

I am thrilled to be able to add my voice to that process.

As someone who grew up in buy City and now lives in Midland, I'm happy to see the area called Mid-Michigan united in one Congressional District, that is the Tri-Cities and Flint.

This area contains mid-sized cities with strong industries that anchor each one.

We have shared educational connections for example Delta College, Saginaw valley state University, our high school sports leagues and academic and band competitions.

There are several connected hospital systems.

Covenant McClaren and the birch District is close to having 0 partisan bias and means the District will be competitive and therefore more responsive to all voters not just from one party.

As much as I like this fair and competitive birch map, I do have one suggestion and would like to see more of the County of Midland included.

You can put Tuscola in District ten where it more closely aligns.

Keeping the Tri-Cities in Flint together in District 11 with bit more of Midland County would meet the criteria established by the voters when they passed prop two.

It would give my area the fair and competitive District that we hoped for.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 43.

>> Hello, my name is Alison Wilcox and I'm from Midland.

I'd like to thank you for birch and Pine and keep the Tri-Cities together.

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The medium sized cities are united by businesses and educational and cultural institutions.

we also have common concerns regarding infrastructure like roads and Dams and we are all part of the Tibawasse Saginaw watershed.

I would like to encourage you that any District that includes Midland should also include adjacent Townships rather than ending at the City limits.

Like many cities these outlying areas are part of the Midland community and you can include them putting rural Townships in the thumb out into a different districts.

Because of past gerrymandering Midland has been included with Districts that are mostly rural and small towns.

It has resulted in districts that lean so far republican that it's difficult to recruit democrats to run.

Historically Midland County has been split into two House Districts.

Both of which lean heavily republican.

Republicans win by such large margins that the representatives don't even -- representatives said to me you can talk to me if you want to but it won't make any difference.

For this reason I ask you to keep partisan fairness in mind and I do believe that Midland can be adequately represented if we had more than one representative.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 44 and 45.

>> Hello, my name is Cathleen.

And I was a passionate volunteer for prop two.

And it was an exhilarating as an ordinary citizen taking the redistricting away from the legislature.

I'm a long time resident of Midland and my particular preference is for voting districts that place the City of Midland with our Mid-Michigan area urban communities of the Tri-Cities in Flint.

The maps that keep Midland County in a Congressional District with surrounding rural don't make sense to me.

That kind of District turns a blind eye to communities of interest and helps preserve a strong republican lean.

As for the flooding in Midland County, if we have two voices in Washington working for flood relief all the better.

And the shared waterways of Midland County should not overshadow the other community of interest that we share with the urban communities.

Also impacted are the Saginaw watershed as they are part of the many statewide, I'm sorry, the Dam failures and the flooding that impacted the Saginaw watershed are part

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of many statewide disasters Michiganders are experiencing due to our failing infrastructure.

Oh, boy.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. We would love to hear from you at the public comment portal as well.

Where you can finish your remarks so number 45.

>> I'm 44.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Sorry your 44 please go.

>> Okay, good afternoon.

Thank you for all the work you've done and for allowing me to speak and everyone else here.

My name is Marie.

I'm from Midland Michigan.

And Midland is a diverse urban community.

Which shares much in common with Saginaw, Bay City including a watershed as well as Flint.

These communities have shared common interests while also reflecting a diversity of political perspectives.

All the citizens of these communities deserve to have their voices and concerns and needs addressed by being placed in Congressional Districts that reflect that diversity.

In a fair and representative manner.

Maps that separate Midland from the cities of Bay City, Saginaw and Flint and instead place Midland in districts that only consist of the rural communities that surround it will dilute the voices of Midland's diversity.

The effect will be that the rural concerns will overshadow the minority concerns of the diverse Midland population.

And fair representation will be quashed.

So I'm urging you to please keep Midland in the same districts Saginaw, Bay City and Flint.

The point of having a nonpartisan committee, yourselves to redraw the voting District in Michigan is the efforts of one party and being this power.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 46 and 47.

>> Hello, my name is Jennifer Austin City of Austin I've been logging the comments on the portal concerning Midland in a spreadsheet from May to October 24 there were 905 and 728 were in favor of a Tri-Cities grouping that is 80% of all comments on the subject responding favorably to either a Tri-City Senate District Tri-Cities and Flint Congressional District and/or Midland and Bay City House District.

I want to look at this from a one person one voice perspective because some people commented more than once 305 and 209 were favor for the districts at 69%.

178 of the total 305 were from Midland.

And 108 favored Tri-Cities legislative districts at 61%.

80% of total comments in favor of Tri-Cities together, 69% of total commenters in favor of the Tri-Cities together and 61% of a Midland respondents in favor of the Tri-Cities together a majority across the board.

And listening to the comments in the coming weeks that you give the same weight to the preceding testimony as you give to today's. A majority of people have already asked you to create Tri-cities legislative groups and you listened.

We are extremely grateful for the fair districts you have created and which representative must earn votes of their constituents before the election and also while in office.

We ask you to keep the Tri-Cities together and Flint together in a Congressional District and maintain the Midland based House District that is almost a perfect 0 political bias.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you. Number 47 and 48.

>> My name is Claudia. I live in Midland County. Thank you so much, Commissioners, for your service for this redistricting process.

My home for the last 40 years has been in the City of Midland.

I volunteered for many political campaigns going door to door and plan events.

I observed firsthand how gerrymander campaign finance and miss information have kept one party in power absolutely.

This one party rule has allowed legislatures to dismiss the ideas and concerns of 45% of Midland County voters.

I'm looking forward to as close to 0 partisan bias in the new legislative districts.

When I tell people where I live, I always say Midland you know west of Bay City.

Near the Saginaw Bay.

In the Tri-Cities.

The Tri-Cities in Flint are mid-sized towns with similar strengths and issues.

We have friends and family in the Tri-Cities.

We have -- we all live in the same Saginaw Bay Tibawasse River watershed.

My neighborhood was flooded when the Dam broke.

In May of 2020.

And then the Tibawasse River continued downstream to our friends and families in Saginaw County.

Proximity watershed, mid-sized towns friends and families, colleges and economic activity are our commonalities, thank you.

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

>> Thank you, members of the Commission, who bothered to show up in northern Michigan and not marginalize the Michigan and disappointed we did not see full seats across the board in northern Michigan.

Watching this process unfold has been a little bit disturbing, a little bit disappointing if you will.

And as you've continuously continued to break apart Counties in house districts here across the State of Michigan.

Not keeping with the continuity of County lines as has been tradition.

Antrim is in pieces and it's going to disenfranchise rural voters in rural communities as a lot of times essential services are done by County lines and multiple Counties lumped together and broken apart Midland and Ottawa County and broken apart so many Counties with the maps that have been proposed and I would just urge you to please work with continuity of full Counties whenever possible.

That keeps communities of interest and Counties together where essential services often here in Northern Michigan we need to travel more than an hour for essential services and when you break those up the school directions up the areas with health centers it's very detrimental.

Think of the teachers who have been used to talk about their District in whole Counties City of Mancelona will be split in two different districts as proposed.

Thank you very much for being here.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. And 49 and 50.

>> Kurtis, I have no problem with this but I have severe problems with your House District.

You've put Cheboygan County in this area other than Otsego County I have not stepped foot in one of the other Counties in 35 years or 13 years since I quit work.

So I think as the previous speaker said I think we should be sticking with County lines. My interest which I have written and spoken about before my healthcare needs, my medical needs, big City, shopping needs I can't meet right in Cheboygan City are met in Petosky 20 or 30 minutes away.

Why would I drive an hour and a half to other places you lumped me in with.

My community of interest is definitely Cheboygan and what you have to put with it and meet my needs and help Mackinaw City residents too because they straddle the line thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 50 and 51.

>> Hi western Wexford County Cadillac Michigan good afternoon and thank you very much for the job you are doing redistricting Michigan in a timely manner.

The redistricting maps you presented are strictly political maps.

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They have not considered the nonpartisan jobs the education and locally serve our communities.

Many of these jobs are elected nonpartisan positions that shape and direct our schools, courts, hospitals and local Governments.

These nonpartisan group has worked together to better our local community opportunities.

Sadly your redistricting maps will destroy much of this cooperation and hinder the positive growth that is taking place in our local Michigan communities.

As you finalize the new political districts, please, please consider all that is in place. And working in our current political districts.

We are rural Michigan.

And should not be treated as urban Michigan.

And again I thank you.

I support Senate Szetela's proposal.

I do not support house proposals you pushed forward and I support the Congressional Lange proposal.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 51.

>> Hi, Commissioners I appreciate your due diligence on this very challenging and important job that you have taken on.

I'm Kathy from Midland County.

I know I've been hearing people talk about wanting to draw the maps that will mainly be based on protecting communities of interest.

As an active member of Voters Not Politicians and having voted with majority of Michigan electorate for prop two, myself and others are expecting you to draw maps that end gerrymandering and our partisan free as possible.

Still reflecting what the needs of the communities are, taking the best of what we've had before then working it for everyone.

I realize you've heard some of these points already but I do think they are important to be repeated.

I'd like you to continue to improve the maps so that we can have each seat shares match the vote shares and it does make sense the party that cast the most votes should win the most seats.

Your expert Dr. Handley said that Michigan is a leaning democratic state and right now the maps all lean republican.

It's a disproportionate advantage and your job won't be done until we can fix that. It is difficult for sure.

But very doable.

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I support the Congressional map birch, the state map cherry and the State House map Pine.

Please start with these maps.

And then continue to improve them until you get the partisan bias as close to possible 0. Districts need to be competitive for us to have effective representation.

Political fairness must be reflected in all of the final maps.

Thank you so much.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you.

Number 52.

>> Good afternoon, Commissioners.

I'm Chris.

From Midland County.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you for your hard work, determination and consideration as you draw these maps.

I consider it heroic endeavor, much ap appreciated.

One refers to the Dam breach areas of Midland and Gladwin Counties as being a community of interest.

I would suggest the flooded area likely wouldn't have happened had the area had good, motivated representation.

Gerrymandered locations most often produce under motivated and lack luster holders because they are a shoe in for election or reelection.

If the Congressional districts encompassing all the Saginaw watershed are split up in the fashion of Congressional map birch, the flood area will gain the clout of potentially having two legislatures with common goals instead of one.

Leaving this area intact is actually a detriment to obtaining effective representation.

Furthermore the Tri-Cities are very much a natural community of interest.

With shared industries, agricultural, colleges and universities, and sharing in the same watershed.

They should be maintained as such.

Therefore I support Congressional map birch.

I also support State Senate map cherry.

State House map Pine.

Please stick with these maps and continue to improve them.

To get the partisan bias as close to 0 as possible.

Thank you very much.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Do we have number 53? Are you over 53? Thank you.

You can.

But let's wait until we see, yeah, I believe we may have finished our public comment that has been signed up, signed up public comment.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: We have and you are welcome to make a public comment but you need to sign up at the public comment sign up table. All comments addressed to the Commission will have to go through public comment.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: At this time we will take a recess. Having concluded all of our in person live public comments we cannot yet go to our virtual public comments because that has not closed yet. So we will take a recess at this point until 5:00 and reconvene at that time. It is currently 2:40. So we will stand in recess until 5:00. Thank you everyone.

[Recess]

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: As Vice Chair of the Michigan, I call this meeting of Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission back to order at 5:00. For the purposes of the public watching and the public record I will turn to the Michigan Department of State staff to take note of the Commissioners present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Good afternoon, Commissioners. Please say present when I call your name. If you are attending today's meeting remotely, please disclose during roll call you are attending remotely and where you are attending from, I will call on Commissioners in alphabetical order starting with Doug Clark.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Present. And I am attending remotely from Rochester Hills, Michigan.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Juanita Curry.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: Present; attending remotely from Detroit, Michigan.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Anthony Eid?

>> COMMISSIONER EID: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Brittini Kellom?

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Rhonda Lange?

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

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Steve Lett?

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Cynthia Orton?

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: MC Rothorn?

>> VICE COMMISSIONER ROTHORN: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Rebecca Szetela?

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Present, attending remotely from Wayne County, Michigan.

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>> 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; attending remotely from Saginaw Township, Saginaw, Michigan.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Dustin Witjes?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: All Commissioners are present.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Please proceed Commissioner Lett.

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: If I can get Anthony to get out of my way then people could see me.

>> Welcome Gaylord.

Hi.

On behalf of the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission thanks so much for joining us today.

We need you to #show up speak up to help us #draw fair maps.

That's new for most of you all out there, right, not used to seeing #.

2018 voters by more than 61% and part of citizens not legislatures to #draw fair maps consequently the MICRC represents initiative by Michigan residents and not liberals or moderates or conservatives.

Voters may an intentional and deliberate effort to form the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission by filling in the yes oval on proposal 2018-2.

Every ten years following the U.S. census District lines for Congress for U.S.

Congressional, State House and State Senate must be redrawn in states across the country to accurately reflect their population.

The process of drawing District lines is known as the redistricting.

In Michigan there are 161 Congressional, State Senate and State House districts that need to be drawn for the 2022 election cycle.

For the first time in Michigan's history residents have an opportunity to provide input on drawing maps for Michigan Congressional, house and Senate districts.

Why should you care? Openness and transparency and public engagement represent the principles of this new redistricting process.

Now you have an opportunity to ensure your voice and your community's voice is heard.

Instead of politicians choosing their districts to best represent their interest Michigan residents can share their interest to assist in developing their districts through the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission.

We need your assistance to help us #draw fair maps.

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I would now ask our Executive Director Suann Hammersmith to fill us in a little more.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Thank you, Commissioner Lett.

There are three purposes for the public hearings according to the Constitution.

And those are to solicit comments regarding the proposed districts.

Also for each proposed District the plan shall include the census data, a map and a legal description and our Constitution does require five public hearings.

To date there are 20 proposed draft maps.

Ten were collaborative maps and those were created in open meetings by the Commission as a whole.

And then some of the Commissioners drew individual maps also and put them forward for review by the public.

There are four Congressional, three State Senate and three State House of each.

And Commissioners Eid, Lange, Szetela, Clark and Orton were the five Commissioners who put forth the individual maps.

Our Constitution lists the redistricting criteria that this Commission must follow in rank order.

So first they must meet Federal law which is equal population and adherence to the Voting Rights Act.

Secondly the districts have to be geographically contiguous.

Third reflect the state's diversity and communities of interest.

The fourth and fifth are not a proportionate disadvantage to any political party or favor or disfavor any public comment or candidate.

Six the lines must reflect consideration of County City and Township boundaries and lastly the districts must be reasonably compact.

The process for adopting the maps starting Wednesday and through next week the Commission will deliberate about any changes to their draft maps.

By November 5th, Friday November 5th we anticipate the Commission will vote on proposed maps that will be put forth for 45 days of public comment.

Those maps will be tested before they are published to make sure they do comply with the Constitution.

And when they do vote targeted for December 30th after those 45 days, it will require a majority vote that includes two members each who affiliate with the democrats, the republicans and who affiliate with neither major party.

After that the adopted maps will be published with the supporting material and data within 30 days and the maps become law 60 days after publication.

The only Court that has jurisdiction over this process is the Michigan Supreme Court. And they may review at their discretion any challenges to the maps that the Commission has adopted.

If they feel that a plan does not comply with the Michigan Constitution, they will send that map back to this Commission to redraw lines.

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Because the MICRC is the only body that can create and adopt maps for Michigan's 13 Congressional, 110 house and 38 Senate districts.

Next, I would like to introduce General Counsel Julianne Pastula who will provide a little bit of information on the public hearing guidelines.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: Thank you so much Executive Director Hammersmith. And good evening to Gaylord participants.

It's so wonderful to be here.

I'd like to briefly cover first participation.

The time limit for each public comment speaker is one minute 30 seconds.

Please conclude your remarks when you hear the timer.

The countdown clock will begin when you start speaking.

You may not yield your time to another speaker.

As to procedure, the in person public comments will take place first followed by the remote public comment.

During in person live public comment the Chairperson will call on participants by number order to approach the microphone and provide comment.

And the similar to remote public comment participants who signed up in advance via Zoom to participate via Zoom they will also be called in the order of sign up.

As to dequorum subsection 11 of the Michigan Constitutional amendment regarding redistricting, the Commissioners staff attorneys and consultants are prohibited from discussing redistricting matters with members of the public unless that communication either occurs in writing or is provided during public comment at a meeting similar to the one that is happening right now.

So during the breaks if Commissioners want to engage and visit again, please share your public comments to the full Commissioner either in our public comment portal available at www.Michigan.gov/MICRC or provided during live during our open meeting.

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

Thank you again for welcoming us to your community and we look forward to hearing from you, thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you Commissioners and staff.

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

Hearing no objection with we will proceed.

Individuals who have signed up and indicated they would like to provide in person public commentary to the Commission will now be allowed to do so.

Please step to the microphone. You will have 90 seconds. And please conclude when your 90 seconds have ended and you hear the timer. And go to the public comment tool and share in writing including any specific area of the map about which you are speaking.

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The public comment tool is at www.Michigan.gov/MICRC.

And if you would like help accessing the website, please visit the public comment tool where a volunteer will assist you.

Excuse me please visit the public comment station outside the doors where a volunteer will assist you.

If you have a time constraint or don't wish to wait, please use the public comment portal. So we did finish with number 52 and I believe we are up to number 53.

>> Commissioners Clark Orton and Lange have at least acknowledged the Tibawassee watershed issues in their proposed maps.

So Chair Szetela please when you are making these wholesale changes that you referred to please give their views serious consideration.

You're hearing from some that Midland and Flint should be in the same Congressional District.

But let me tell you what Midland and Flint have in common.

They are both located in the State of Michigan.

At this point why not just put Midland with the City of Detroit.

They are both cities, right? Clearly, I'm not serious.

But hasn't this been the logic this Commission has used to put our cities together? Let me give you some data.

The population in the City of Flint is 96,599.

And in Midland the population is 41,920 less than half the amount of people.

You've also been analyzing minority fairness.

Well let's look at that.

There are more than 52,944 African/Americans in the City of Flint.

In the City of Midland there are 897.

How does putting us together strengthen African/American voices? It dilutes them.

This is racial gerrymandering.

Keep the City of Midland with its County and in a District with Gladwin County.

Support Commissioner Lange's Congressional and State Senate maps.

And please move forward with the oak State House map.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for your comments.

Number 54.

>> Copies for the people.

Good evening, Commissioners, staff and my fellow citizens. I'm Rachel. I reside in Rogers City at Michigan and Presque Isle with no political clout. And I want to thank the Commissioners for their willingness to serve as pioneers in the process of an Independent Commission drawing legislative Districts for the next ten years.

The process is an exercise in geography, demographics, arithmetic, map skills, computers skills, and civics law, common sense and listening.

Every ten years there is a Federal Constitution mandated census that census data is used to redraw the legislative districts at the Federal state and County levels.

The Michigan Constitution requires fairness as a standard in drawing districts that is criteria four on your checklist.

Fairness means no political party should have an advantage when the maps are drawn. I looked at the maps over the weekend and some of them seem to give a 6-8% advantage to one political party over the other.

Let me illustrate how unfair that is.

Imagine an Olympic games where the in the 100 meter dash one competitor was allowed to run only 92 meters or 94 meters by either starting further down the track at the beginning or stopping earlier to win.

Anyone can tell that sort of race would not be fair.

Do not create unfairness by creating districts from their inception that favor one party. 0 variance is also important because in many recent elections they have been won or lost by very thin margins.

I understand that efficiency ratings indicate the neutral fairness analysis of the maps if that is so I recommend selecting maps that are as close to 0 as possible and I may be submitting more detailed comments in writing thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you.

Great.

Thank you.

Number 55.

>> I too want to thank you all as I did apply to be on your Commission.

And was not selected.

So I'm thrilled to see you all.

And want to thank you for this over a year because it was supposed to be a year commitment that you are aligned to.

But any way with that I'm Laura and I'm from Ross common.

And in looking at maps drawn and things I would say Ross common was put in with Midland.

And I did not feel that was very appropriate.

So in reviewing the maps I've looked at it from a small town, small area perspective.

I'm very hopeful that what is selected by you all is something that is not gerrymandered, does not favor one party that was my goal in trying to apply to be on the Commission was to make sure that every voters count, every voter is counted vote is counted in a fairway in a District that makes sense.

And so any way I have three plans that I guess I favor.

That would be the cherry Pine and birch.

But I just want to give you all my hope and faith that you will come up with something that is not gerrymandered.

Not partisan.

And is effective for this state in moving ahead.

So my goal is to really thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for that.

Number 56.

>> Voter not politicians promise the residents of Michigan that our communities should be kept together and better represented with the passage of proposal two. Please help honor that promise.

Outside of the urban City centers of Flint and Detroit and God's country up north here you do this keeping our Counties whole.

You don't destroy a shoreline State House District like you did in Northern Michigan by dividing Grand Traverse and Benzie Counties and don't cut the City of Midland out of the County like you have done in basically every map.

And you surely don't split Counties into three like you have done in Ottawa County in your proposed Congressional maps.

And here in your proposed 104th District now the new 104th you have cut strips out of Antrim Kalkaska and Oscoda, fix the maps please and keep Counties whole.

Protect our communities of interest.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 57.

>> Hi, I'm Mary Murphy from the City of Midland.

And so I say with a smile stop carving out the City of Midland in your maps.

Anyone can see it is gerrymandering and needs to be fixed.

Midland and Gladwin Counties and their entirety are best served by being put in the same State House, State Senate and Congressional districts to address our watershed needs.

I can give you three reasons, public safety, flood recovery and mitigation, and environmental protection.

Our watershed and drainage systems are connected to one another and those who actually live here know how great our safety and lively hoods depend on one another. We cannot afford another 2020 disaster.

Which is why Gladwin County at the City of Midland and Midland County are working together in recovery efforts flood mitigation and planning and efforts to further prevent erosion and sentiments being added to our waterways.

The amount of resources we need will require highly coordinated funding assistance at the state and Federal levels.

We are stronger advocating with the united voice in Lansing and in Washington D.C.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 57.

>> She was 57, 58.

>> I'm Susan and I'm from Gaylord here.

I'm here to ask the Commission to keep boundaries whole.

Counties are very much representative of our community of interest.

It doesn't make sense to split up the Detroit area as was argued in the public hearing on the 20th.

It also surely does not make sense to split up other entire Counties throughout the state. Like you did with the upper peninsula and Grand Traverse and Ottawa County in western Michigan.

And like you did in Midland County in Mid-Michigan.

Keep our communities interest intact as prioritized in the state Constitution.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you.

Number 59.

>> Hi, I'm Sandra from Grand Traverse County and I realize that the Commissioners cannot be expected to be experts on all parts of Michigan.

So we are asking that you listen to us.

We the people.

We know our communities best.

And in our area Counties are our communities of interest.

If you were from this area, you would understand that it makes absolutely no sense to divide our Counties like you have proposed.

I think of northern Michigan Counties of Grand Traverse Kalkaska Oscoda and Antrim at the State House level.

It's important to me and the people from my County that you not divide Grand Traverse County and that it remains in the first Congressional District.

I think of Ogemaw Midland and Ottawa counties on the Congressional maps.

Instead of trying to dilute conservative voices try dividing it so our important areas of interest are kept intact.

The maps as they have been drawn to date favor democrats in elections.

It's kind of like gerrymandering 101.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for your comments.

Number 60.

>> Good evening I come from Cheboygan County where we are unaffected except Charlevoix in 107.

And I seriously want to thank you all for participating.

I really want to admonish to take your duties and responsibilities seriously.

I literally watched members of this Commission asleep on Zoom meetings.

Watched head Bobs.

Watched looks of general disinterest.

Please stop that.

It's disrespectful to us as voters.

I understand that you're compensated for this.

My understanding is that that compensation over the course of your total duties will be around 40,000.

I could be mistaken.

Not chump change so please act accordingly.

Redistricting criteria number five not favor or disfavor any incumbent how is that even possible? I mean humanly how are you supposed to do that? Somebody tell me.

How do you do that? This ballot initiative that created all of you here was almost fully financed from outside interests.

It has been tried in other places and failed.

Basically failed.

So what have we spent X millions of dollars on? 90 seconds really who came up with that rule? So you are really not interested in our comments are you.

Lastly if more citizens were half as involved as those of us in this room who took our time to speak or online to pay attention and speak, we would all be much better.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you.

Number 61.

>> Good evening I'm Steve from cedar Michigan in Leelanau County.

Our communities would be kept together and better represented with the passage of proposal two.

Upon reviewing the maps put forward they certainly do not reflect these promises.

Our largest community of interest are our Counties.

You put forth maps that do not reflect communities of interest and unnecessarily split rural Counties like Grand Traverse Chippewa and Kalkaska just to name a few.

They split Ottawa Midland County totally disseminating keeping communities of interest together.

As a Northern Michigander, it's frustrating half of this Commission did not come up here personally one time to hear directly from us.

The maps don't recollection of communities and it's on display for all to see.

Please fix these maps, keep our Counties whole and keep our communities of interest in northern Michigan.

Thanks for trying.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 62.

>> Good afternoon, Jeff Lawrence.

Bear Lake Manistee County.

It's a two hour drive and I have been to many areas of the state.

In fact, virtually every County within the state in my ten years of person on this planet.

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In that time I have never seen a more disconcerted effort to destroy local communities through our Counties of which I went through the Manistee County reapportionment and everything.

I looked at what's going on in the schools as well as in the local villages and Townships. I feel that you have not taken due diligence in honoring we the people of this state.

You on the other hand have a responsibility to do that.

You have failed.

So please and I admonish the board for not mandating all of your members be at all meetings.

This is that important.

And for you to short your duty to us the people is a slap in the face.

Keep our Counties and districts as whole as you can.

There's not a reason.

There may be a fluctuate in population.

I understand that.

Having experienced that through my own Counties.

On the other hand you need to keep us whole.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 63.

>> Good afternoon, my name is David Steele.

While you do this good work, we ask you to recognize the indigenous populations of Michigan as a community of interest.

Per the C.D.C. there are 80,000 tribal peoples in our state.

This is a gross under count as it does not include those who have been disenfranchised due to broken treaties and forced assimilation practices.

This map encompass the sovereign nations of little Travis Bay band of Indians and Grand Traverse Chippewa and Ottawa Indians.

Delineated reservation boundaries and includes vital services tribal and housing complex, community centers and the Indian health services clinics and oversee the well be original of our people with mental health, vision, primary doctor care, maternal health and many more.

It is important to site these places in the creation of the see of this County map.

As we receive basic services within these areas and typically have to live within these areas to receive services.

This map is much more fair and equitable than the one the MICRC has proposed and I request it be used instead thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. . Number 64.

>> Hello. My name is Cara Hunt from Little Traverse Bay of Indians and from Petoskey.

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While you do this good work, we ask you consider us as population of interest per C.D.C. there are approximately 80,000 tribal people in the state.

This is a gross under cut and does not include those disenfranchised due to broken treaties and forced assimilation practices.

It has sovereign nations of Travis Bay Grand Traverse of Chippewa and Ottawa Indians and their reservation boundaries.

This map includes vital services for the tribal communities including housing, complexes, community centers and also the Indian health services clinic issues.

These clinics oversee the well-being of our peoples with a variety of services including mental health vision primary doctor care maternal health and many more.

It's important to cite these places and the creation of this map as we receive basic need services within this area and typically have to live within the service areas to receive.

This map is much more fair and equitable than the that proposed and I request that it be used instead.

I thank you for your time.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 66 or do we have 65.

65.

Okay.

>> Good evening my name is Sarah I'm from grand Michigan.

I'd like to thank the Commissioners for your efforts and for the time to speak to you tonight.

I can understand that this is a difficult process.

And people from communities all across Michigan greatly appreciate you taking the time to listen and consider our input.

Tonight I'd like to acknowledge the efforts of the Commission in working to keep the communities of northern Michigan cohesive.

Northern Michigan is comprised of small agricultural and tourist communities.

The people who reside in communities have shared values that support and help to sustain our small town Northern Michigan vitality that thrives on industries.

We are a unique community and have different values than that of cities a Metropolitan areas please keep Northern Michigan communities together and avoid combining our communities with urban areas to the south.

As an example you can view the proposed Senate lines on the cherry map which places small northern communities Thompsonville and Lake Ion in the same District of Muskegon which share little to no commonality in terms of economic and other interests.

I would like to remind the Commissioners this is a population based issue, not a political issue.

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I ask you to please avoid gerrymandering keep the emphasis on the cohesiveness of communities and avoid partisan politicians, thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. .
Number 66.

>> My name is Kurt from grand Michigan as well.
I'd like to say that we would appreciate it if you guys would honor our communities. You know, the interests of the communities are experts, the people that live in those communities are experts of their communities.
You guys cannot be experts in all areas of Michigan.
So please listen to us.
And keep our communities together.
Gerrymandering should be abolished and should go away and we just ask that the Commission not be expected to be experts in those areas to listen to us and the politicians promise that the residents of our communities would be the top priority.
And we just ask you to continue on that line.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Do we have number 67? All right, I believe we have gone through all the current sign ups. I don't believe that we will close until 7:00 p.m. with in-person sign up so we will move at this time to our remote public comment.

And we will return to live in person if we get any more.
So individuals who have signed up and indicated they would like to provide live public commentary to the Commission will be allowed to do so.
We will call your name and we will unmute you and if you are on the phone a voice will say that the host would like you to speak and press star six to unmute.
I will call on you by your name and note if you have technical or audio issues or do not hear from you for 3-5 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 e-mail at redistricting@Michigan.gov and we will help you trouble shoot to participate in another hearing or meeting.
You will have 90 seconds and please conclude your remarks when your 90 seconds is ended and you hear the timer.

You can share your comments in writing including any specific area of the map which you have speaking.

The public comment tool is at www.Michigan.gov/MICRC.

First in line to provide public comment is Janet.

>> Hello, my name is, hi my name is Janet and I have lived and voted in Royal Oak, Michigan, for 35 years.

I want to thank all of you for the work you've done especially under these arduous conditions during the pandemic and also with the late arrival of the census data and having to compress your time so I really appreciate.

My chief concern in coming to you is the advantage given to republicans on several of these maps.

And the reason the majority of state voters voted for you to do this work is because we want equal advantage.

And please listen to us.

And please do more of this hard work on our behalf.

And there is a way to make fair maps.

And I appreciate everything you've done and will do for us.

Thank you very much for your time this evening.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Let's move on to number two Anthony Skinnell.

>> Hello, Commissioners.

Anthony, Wayne County.

I'm interested in your Congressional maps. Sadly, I don't find any of them, Apple, Birch, Cedar, Maple, RAS, RL, Juniper sufficient for my area.

Can you Zoom in on Detroit? And, yes, so basically, I know your Congressional map. I mean, I watched it.

I mean, it was drawn by one Commission on September 16th, not from Detroit.

Took you guys 15, 20 minutes to find Woodward when you drew it and sat on the selves while you worked on the State legislative District. You split the City of Detroit very unevenly. And some of us would consider that you have a deficient Black age population for both of the districts. So I'm here to present you with a configuration that would give you two Black voting age population plurality districts. So not outright majority 50%, but surely the highest segmented population.

And then look at the way that affects my Wayne District, the rest of it. It doesn't mean you have to put the rest of Wayne with Washtenaw and Jackson like yours does. So I don't think that is very good choice you have made.

I'm not asking for some crazy big change, nothing controversial like Midland where it's a really sensible change and both deserve Detroit river frontage. And I hope you can do it. Whereas your districts, they kind of snake through Wayne County and create a chain that are not in the core of Detroit.

So I think this will be better and hope you will go something like this.

I'm sorry for addressing individual Commissioners. I meant to address the whole body.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you, Mr. Skinnell. I appreciate that.

We are moving on to number three, Lois.

>> Hello, Commissioners, I'm Lois from the Ann Arbor Ypsilanti area.

Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti are an economically interdependent community of interest.

We share a Chamber of Commerce and many residents commute to work across U.S. highway 23 every day.

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In your proposed State Senate maps Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti are packed into a single District where 80% of the people generally vote for democrats.

This does not serve our interests.

Voters in larger communities of interest like ours are disempowered when democrats are packed into a District where all republican votes and more democrat votes are wasted.

We get fairer representation if we had a voice in two State Senate districts.

Please consider a north south split where Ann Arbor and Scio Township are placed in a District directly to the north like you proposed District 31.

And Ypsilanti and Pittsfield Township are placed in a District directly to the south.

Proposed District 28.

In turn you could take the western portions of those two districts and combine them with a part of proposed District 29, creating another more rural District that lies to the west of Ann Arbor.

My community of interest could then be competitive in two State Senate districts rather than always winning just one.

Thanks for much for your work.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for your comments.

Number four Judy Maiga.

>> Hi good evening, Commissioners and thank you once again for taking comments.

I have a couple observations after watching many days of comments.

Maps that look funny but that are drawn in a way that allows them to comply with the constitutional requirements are not gerrymandered maps.

They are drawn intentionally not to favor either party by your doing.

And that is the opposite of gerrymandering.

Despite the instance of those wishing to maintain an unfair balance of power.

There are many true communities of interest.

And an entire County is not one of them.

Counties have their own elections, Commissioners, clerks and many other ways to collectively fight for the things they need.

I live in Wayne County which has been split up forever and as a County we enjoy multiple representatives on all levels.

It's a good thing.

I can still eat pray and participate with all the other cities in my County.

Even if thousands of people ask you to keep an entire County together, if you cannot do it without meeting all of the other requirements of the constitutional amendment it is not a request that you can grant.

On the list of priorities for communities of interest entire Counties must be lower to the bottom.

In order for you to make all the criteria fit.

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There were many unsuccessful legal challenges to prop two but it's clear many people are still unhappy with competitive districts that don't favor either party.

Directors that do not favor either party are not being debated.

But a priority here.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 5 Jonathan Flynn.

>> Hello, my name is John Flynn a student at the University of Michigan Ann Arbor with the campus vote project and lifelong Michigan resident.

It's imperative for college and universities as communities of interest.

As examples currently all the states Senate maps proposals split Grand Valley and Oakland and Washtenaw community college into multiple districts.

Even the University of Michigan Ann Arbor is split into the State Senate map proposal.

Additionally all the State House map proposals split Grand Valley and Oakland University in two districts.

Proposals Peach, oak and Szetela split Washtenaw community college in three districts and Pine Orton and Clark horrifyingly split it in District and Ann Arbor is split in every State House map proposal.

As the Commission moves forward it's essential not a single map proposal be approved until all college and University campuses are brought together.

Communities of interest come third and reflect County and City and Township boundaries.

People want to make their voices heard so do that considering colleges and universities communities of interest and drawing fair districts.

Thank you for your time.

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

At this time we have five more live in person people who have signed up.

We will move back to live in person public comment.

I believe we have number 67.

Just stepped up.

How about number 68.

67 is here great thank you.

>> Hello, I'm Elizabeth Scott a fifth generation Midlander and I'm here to ask you to really emphasize that we just keep Midland whole.

The City of Midland should not be sanctioned out of the rural District.

To do so would harm the rural Counties that need to be connected to Midland.

I therefore support the maps 243, 247 and the oak map.

That acknowledge the FEMA designated Tibawassee watershed.

We the people of Midland need to keep align to the rural Counties with like interests such as flood declaration and flood management.

This cannot be overstated.

We live in a watershed region.

We saw this with the flooding in Midland in 2017 from the waters coming from Isabella and Gladwin and then the catastrophic flood in 2020 from Gladwin where over 2300 residential homes were either affected or completely destroyed.

According to CNN 10,000 people were evacuated and the entire town of Sanford was lost.

It cannot be any clearer that we need to work together to ensure the residents flood declaration and flood management plans are kept in place.

We must keep Midland whole.

So again I support the maps the Lange Congressional plan 243, the Lange State Senate plan 247.

And the oak map for State House.

Thank you.

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

>> Meredith Kennedy.

While you do this good work of redistricting, we ask you to recognize we are on indigenous lands.

You are a guest on our lands.

As a guest on our lands it's important that you uphold our values.

Our values include the teachings of love truth honesty and respect with these values comes a task of providing equity and fairness to peoples within the land you occupy and within our communities.

Do not look at us here today in support of the illegal occupancy of our lands but acknowledgment that your drafted maps are currently not living up to our values.

You have silenced the voices of our relatives in the UP removing the only public hearing in that area.

There are five federally recognized tribes and numerous unrecognized people.

This is the third and final time I will co-M to present in front of you to speak on partisan fairness, the maps are disproportionate advantage with minority of the vote on at least three if not four of the partisan scoring metrics.

It's your duty to get as close to 0 and the partisan fairness.

Your maps rig elections to benefit one party over the other.

I urge you to listen to what people have to say and look for alternatives within the portal.

My indigenous relatives from other tribal nations are with me here today.

Please remember you did not come to us.

We have come to you.

And you have a responsibility to include us.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 69.

>> Nicole daily.

I'm from Lansing, Michigan.

And I'm also a little river band citizen.

I would like to reference Congressional map P6782.

Partisan fairness the Constitution requires partisan fairness you can do this while respecting the communities of interest.

If you have to review the communities of interest to get partisan fairness then do it.

Citizens have submitted maps that do both.

Organizations have submitted maps that do both.

And you have the ability to do the same.

Partisan fairness is above local boundaries and compactness.

Communities of interest are not perfect rectangles, funny shapes are okay and what is not okay is a map that rigs elections for either party.

How is any map fair in which one party can win majority of the seats while losing majority of the votes.

We voted in 2018 to get rid of the rigged system and right now none of your maps create an equal playing field.

For decades Michigan has rigged elections under a system in which one party but not the other one can regularly lose elections but win control of the Government.

You must do everything in your power to fix this system.

So far, you're failing.

This map holds our values and is much more fair and equitable than the one the MICRC has proposed.

And I request that it be used instead.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 70.

>> Good afternoon.

Captain James Gallant Fisher Harbor Springs Michigan.

U.S. merchant marine.

Reference house map P6784.

And I want to thank you all for being part of this Commission.

This is a great honor to you.

And a great honor you do to the State of Michigan.

There are approximately 80,000 tribal citizens in the State of Michigan.

Now this does not count everybody because there is a lot of people that fell through the cracks.

They are no longer considered tribal citizens for whatever reason.

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Considering all the facts and data in your Voting Rights Act analysis is leading down a path of disenfranchise M of the communities of colors despite your best intentions.

It's more important to get this done right now than to get this done fast.

Please be thoughtful and how you draw Detroit, Flint and other communities across the state.

We have large indigenous populations in those communities also.

The Voting Rights Act is meant to help voters of colors elect representatives of their choice so that those representatives can make a difference in the legislature.

Cracking the Black indigenous people of color communities and tilting the playing field towards one political party on your maps fails.

Map holds our values and is much more fair and equitable than the one the MICRC provides.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you sir.

Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 71 please.

>> My name is staff agent retired Tracey Ann Smith and proudly served the national guard for 22 years and in Afghanistan.

I'm here in reference to P6784.

Communities of interest which I am part of.

I am Little Traverse Bay band Odawa Indian and part of obviously a veteran.

While you do this good work, we ask you to recognize the indigenous populations of Michigan as a community of interest to the C.D.C. there are approximately 80,000 tribal peoples in our state that this is a gross under count as it does not include those who have been disenfranchised due to broken treaties and forced assimilation practice which I am part of.

With regard to communities of interest it is not clear where the Commission has followed a systematic way to choose among COI or the draft proposed plans reflect the COI maps.

Some districts appear to break down a part communities and others don't communities of interest is not an excuse to pack voters of a particular party into fewer and fewer districts to weaken their voice in the state of legislature, look at maps and ideas to get to partisan fairness while respecting real communities of interest.

The Commission should accompany any proposed map with an explanation of how the map redistricts.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. At this time do we have number 72? Is there a 72? Okay, until we do have a number 72, we will turn back to our live remote public comment.

And I believe we are on number 6.

Kevin Webber.

>> I'm Kevin Webber Leelanau County.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak before the Commission.

And thank you for all your hard work trying to achieve fair redistricting.

I did vote for proposal two.

I recommend using cherry for State Senate Pine for State House and birch for Congress.

As starting points for further discussion.

Although these maps represent a real progress compared to existing districts there is still work to be done to maximize partisan and racial fairness.

Especially among the proposed State House maps.

Michigan leans democrat statewide so naturally districts must be drawn so qualified democratic candidates can win majority of seats in each legislative body.

Efficiency gaps and partisan proportional bias, metrics must be brought to 0.

Thank you for your time.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 7.

>> Hello everyone.

I am went gauge Michigan and our mission is to make sure that our community or Muslim communities are politically engaged and up lift P3644, P4108, P4107.

Specifically we created these maps to create make sure Muslim communities are stay together because they have similar issues of poverty, of air pollution, of high percentage of immigrants.

So what is concerning for us specifically is looking at the draft map for the State House. We saw that it split the east end of Dearborn and south end of Dearborn which is very problematic.

They have both of the same issues and low income and dealt with infrastructure and flooding so I think it's imperative to keep the communities together to be served properly through the representative so I urge you to please look at our maps keep our Muslim communities together thank you so much.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number eight, Charles.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: That participant is not present.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you.

Number nine Aaron O'Donnell.

>> Hello, my name is Aaron O'Donnell I was born and raised in Traverse City but currently living in Marquette Michigan both in the first Congressional District and I'm here to talk about improvements for the new redistricting maps in order for them to truly and fairly represent the people of the state.

Some maps proposed have promising aspects the fact the Tri-Cities are in the same Senate and Congressional in both the cherry and birch proposed maps.

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Other areas improvement is still needed for the last 20 years Black indigenous people of color or BOPOC in Michigan have been denied their full political voice in Washington and Lansing as a result of legal racial gerrymandering.

They continue this partisan and racial gerrymandering.

If you use promote maps on the redistricting public comment portal BOPOC will be able to start addressing issues that matter to them.

There are other maps that create fair and balanced Districts that fit LBGT Detroit which is most commented on in the portal and AFLCIO State House and Senate maps.

By contrast the maps before us give disproportionate advantage to the republican party. I urge you to consider alternatives on the portal.

The people of Michigan need to be represented without partisan bias and take the action to make that possible thank you for your work on the maps and time of day and I urge you to keep these comments in mind.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number ten Gabrielle.

>> Hi there, my name is Gabrielle.

And I was born and raised in Traverse City, Michigan.

And I just want to say one thing and clear some things up about Voters Not Politicians.

That was not funded extremely by special interest.

I volunteered in 18 with them and worked with them in 2020.

And because of that can contest to the things that can happen with bipartisanship.

They are a nonpartisan organization.

So I'm here to tell you that work was done by many folks with many views.

Redistricting is an attempt to bring some equal and fair representation and I think that is a great huge step in the right direction.

For as long as all the hard work is not done in vain.

For as long as the hard work that the grass roots volunteers did to organize fund and vote prop two in and for as long as all the hard work that you are putting in, your time, your energy, your patience you know as you listen to valid voices and opinion and advice and also listen to people use this as a place to be rate you and carry on about agendas.

If we end up right where we are it's all done in vain.

The bottom line for this is that we need to be fair to our fellow people that have not had fair and full opportunities and representation like the rest of us.

It's easy when you are content or to claim this is gerrymandering when you had that opportunity for all along.

As a patriot our number one duty is to look out for our fellow Americans.

Encourage you to use bipartisanship critical.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 11.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: If you can unmute yourself, you are free to address the Commission.

>> I was trying to do that.

You got me now? Okay.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Yes, we can hear you.

>> First, I also want to thank you.

I appreciate all the work you have been doing on this but I still have concerns and that a Michigan voters consistently choose democratic candidates yet more republicans are elected because of past practice gerrymandering.

But this inequality is not just.

I do appreciate that you reduced the republicans unfair advantage.

There is still remains a gap.

Which favors republicans this is inconsistent with Michigan voters so I ask you to endeavor to lessen the gap until both parties have an equal and fair opportunity to elect to office those the voters have chosen.

Thank you very much.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you.

Number 12 Jasmine.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: That participant is not present.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you.

How about number 13, Kaylee.

>> Can you hear me?

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Yes, we can.

>> I live in Grand Traverse County and want to start mentioning the Pine birch and cherry maps provide the best representation of all the maps but there are still considerable room for improvement.

Want to echo what so many before me said and adopt a map that leaves minorities intact to avoid diluting their power and political represent face.

There is no reason for communities that share the same social Commissioner cultural and environmental interests to be split up on the maps and improvements can and must be made.

And it will have significant implications on the day-to-day lives of Michiganders for an entire decade. So considerable attention must be paid to the comments of those who will be disadvantaged with the current maps.

We are asking for not only partisan fairness but to adopt maps that unequivocally give every Michigander the political representation they are entitled to under the law.

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

We will move on to 15.

Keenan.

>> Hello, I'm coming to you today as the member of the Muslim communities across all your collaborative individual maps there are issues in the State House regarding the communities of Dearborn and Dearborn Heights.

The Dearborn cuts out the south which is a hyper marginalized community proposed 15 cuts Dearborn Heights in half and stretches it into Rosedale and Grandmont and pits the Dearborn community against the Detroit community.

Please don't split Dearborn on any border that St. Not Dearborn Heights and don't split Dearborn Heights the highest Muslim American concentrations should be in two districts and no more.

The Arab American and Muslim communities spoke out to you regarding this. Just search Arab American on your public comment portal and you will see this community came out to in early September, was a collective voice on where our community is.

For your convenience I will restate map numbers P3644, P4107 and P4108.

We know you heard us because until a series of complex VRA and partisan fairness adjustments were made in other parts of the state, the earlier drafts of this region worked fantastic.

Our communities have been split by politicians and on the verge of being split again, this time by an Independent Commission.

This sends a dangerous message of distrust and hopelessness to our community.

Please do not split Dearborn and don't split Dearborn Heights. They have the highest Muslim American concentrations and should be in two districts, no more, thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 16, Scott.

>> Good evening, Commissioners want to thank you for hearing any comments regarding redistricting and the way Midland has been carved out of the remainder of the proposed Districting that will have an interest on Beaverton and Gladwin County as a whole.

We have been tied to Midland at the Congressional and statewide level and Deb aids we worked together with our neighbors on social and environmental issues that tie us today and manager and mayor and Chair in the City of Beaverton I belief the proposed map and implications will have a devastating effect on the work myself and so many others have worked on over time.

Major negative implications could result from the gerrymandering of Midland County on our efforts surrounding our watershed.

I live on the very river that was impacted by the recent flooding that affected my community in Midland.

Most recently I worked on grants to help shore up the Beaverton Dam and surrounding watershed issues in attempt to repair the immediate damages and salvage the significant part of our economy.

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This and other regional work has never led me to Flint or Saginaw to help in a partnership but back to Midland and true partners who we worked with over the decades.

None during that time have been as critical or remains as critical to my community as the loss of income and tax base due to the flooding.

Our vote is system rebuild and recover with conservation and environment with partners from the beginning and equally impacted.

I urge you to dot gerrymander to the north and negatively impacted by the results.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 17, Steve.

>> Can you hear me?

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Yes, we can.

>> Hello, this is Steve Walker.

I'm a retired political scientist.

And I worked aggressively on the proposed two campaign in 2018. I agree with many of the previous comments that your maps are very disappointing.

But I don't want to repeat what other people have said.

So I'm going to address what I've heard different Commissioners say which I think are three bogus republican talking points.

First of all, several Commissioners have talked about how the democrats are packed in cities and suburbs and it makes it virtually impossible to draw a fair map.

Well every state is now doing redistricting including California and New York.

Obviously, these states have the same pattern where democrats are in cities like San Francisco and LA and New York City and suburbs.

But in those states the maps that are being drawn lean democratic.

And in California republicans are already complaining that it's a democratic gerrymander.

Obviously, you can draw more fair maps and you need to do it.

There is more democrats on this Commission.

I don't understand why they are so quiet and they have not you got ten republican maps and no democratic maps.

This is wrong.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 18 Sharon.

>> Can you hear me?

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Yes, we can.

>> Hi, my name is Sharon and thank you so much for this chance to express how important fair and nonpartisan maps are to everyone in Michigan.

Michigan is my home I grew up on a Michigan farm, attended the University of Michigan.

Taught middle school in Ann Arbor conducted research at the University of Michigan. And every vacation was spent fishing in Northern Michigan and currently I'm in Kalamazoo helping my daughter who is a professor at K college.

I'm here because redistricting is vital to fair elections and giving everyone a voice and electing those who understand and champion their concerns.

I am especially concerned that several of the maps give a disproportionate advantage to the republican party on at least three partisan scoring metrics.

On the other hand I was impressed with the Traverse City Leelanau State House and State Senate lines as well as connecting the Tri-Cities within the same Senate and Congressional districts.

In the cherry and birch proposed maps.

Thank you again for doing this.

And do it right because we're going to be doing having this for ten years.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you.

Number 19, Reed.

>> Hi, can you hear me?

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Yes, we can.

>> Commissioners thank you for the opportunity to join you today I'm Reed and I'm a lifelong resident of Holland Michigan.

I'm a proud Hispanic member of the Hispanic community in Holland and we celebrate hand in hand with our Dutch that neighbors.

Keep Hispanic residents in Holland and across Ottawa County.

Maps that divide Ottawa County into three Congressional districts divide Hispanic communities and in Grand Haven should be with Hispanic residents in Holland and Allendale.

Adding Muskegon and Allegan Counties accurately maintains the Hispanic voice on the lakeshore.

In doing this we keep organic communities of interest together.

These communities shared lakeshore economies, heritage and strong agricultural economies.

Attempting to place Holland with Kalamazoo manufactures a community that simply does not exist.

The same is putting Grand Haven and Muskegon with Mount Pleasant.

The map you refer for as apple does a good job across the lakeshore.

I'm asking to keep it together in District 9 and the apple map.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Talk.

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Number 20, Sonya Patrick.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Participant number 20 and 21 are not present.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you Ms. Reinhardt so that means we are on 22.

Terry.

>> Good evening to this distinguished committee.

Can you hear me?

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Yes, we can.

>> My name is Terry.

I'm a Wayne County Commissioner representing 90% of Livonia along with other areas. Prior to becoming the County Commissioner I was Livonia County clerk and represented in Livonia since 2001.

I'm here to express my deep concern over the proposed redistricting map of Livonia. And this has nothing to do with partisan politics.

Livonia is the tenth largest City in Michigan.

There are over 95,000 citizens.

And the City has a very simple defined border along the six square miles.

As this proposed map stands now, we have our defined six square miles three State Representatives and four state Senators.

The four State Senate districts includes one Senate seat in Oakland County and two other seats in Wayne County which will be shared by Westland and Dearborn.

The fourth Senate seat is a tiny sliver that combines with Plymouth and Northville.

In the maps the three proposed State Representative districts are representing only 30% of our population each along with their bigger districts Livonia will be underrepresented in every representative District and we can vote our voices.

No State Representative will be effective in representing our City.

No other City in Michigan.

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

Number 23 Carrie.

>> Good evening and thank you all for the work you are doing and my name is Dr. Carrie and I'm representing my church.

And the voting access for all coalition which is a community of allies representing 14 groups across the state.

For voting rights and particularly for the rights of people who have been formally incarcerated.

Thank you for your leadership.

We need the leadership of our State House and State Senate and U.S. representation to reflect the voters of the state.

That is in the interest of all of our communities.

This is not a democratic or republic story but electing representatives who listen to and speak for the people they represent.

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This is about race.

And about class.

And our intention to heal these for our communities.

You may be wondering why so many people are talking about prison gerrymandering and may not have heard about it before.

The problem has always existing how incarcerated people were counted and recently began to impact political representation for two reasons.

It was not until the 60s of concept of one person one vote was codified in the redistricting process and the extraordinary growth of the penal system began in earnest in the 1980s and peaking in the 2010s.

So the census is oh, I'm almost done please support the voting promote the vote maps and listen to all.

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

>> Can you hear me.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Yes, we can.

>> The maps proposed by this Commission are to reflect similar communities of interest and a vast improvement over current districts that have drawn based solely on partisan politics.

I disagree with the folks that have expressed you keep Midland County whole.

Several of the legislative maps under consideration split Midland into two parts.

These proposed maps potentially give Midland County and other Counties that are split two State Representatives, two state Senators and two U.S. Congressional representatives.

This could double our representation in the state and Federal legislatures.

Two for the price of one.

As a resident of Midland County I welcome fair, well designed Districts that also happen to increase our representation.

I call this a big win for our communities as a whole.

So I want to urge the Commission not to worry about splitting the Counties.

I think that is a win for all or the whole state.

I also want to just add quick I think I have a little time that I agree with commenter number four Judy Maiga where she explained very well the splitting of Counties and funny designs or shapes of the districts drawn that you guys are doing is not gerrymandering.

You're just doing your job.

So thanks to the Commission.

Have a good night.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you.

Have a good night.

Number 25.

Bill Williams.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Bill, if you can unmute yourself, you are free to address the Commission.

>> Let me start over again thank you for letting me speak at this time.

I want to thank the committee for a difficult job.

That was directed by the people, all the people who voted to have redistricting be honest, fair, credible and not gerrymandered for political reason.

I have observed that in 2018 and in particular 2020 state elections that those state elections showed positions that were won by democrats after many ballot recounting and Court challenges the state certified that in the 2020 election Michigan indeed was a blue democratic state.

I was and continue therefore to be puzzled by the many map versions that show advantage given to republican candidates in ways the districts are described.

In some cases, they are split, they split cities and individual school districts apart.

And that were whole for many, many years.

The committee's work so far has shown a more complex bias gerrymandering.

This need to be fixed.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 26, Doug Floto.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: That participant is not currently present.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you Ms. Reinhardt.

Number 27 Sue Smith?

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: It looks like that participant may be experiencing technical difficulties so I would suggest we move on to the next participant.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Very good.

We will go to Joel, number 28.

>> Good evening.

My name is Joel and I'm from Grand Rapids.

Thank you for your hard work and thank you again for the opportunity to speak to you today.

When you were in Grand Rapids recently, I spoke to you and mentioned you had an opportunity that few people ever will.

The opportunity to push back against an ugly political system and existed for over 200 years partisan gerrymandering.

Think back to where you were and probably where most of us were when we first learned about partisan gerrymandering.

It was probably in middle school or early high school.

It was this a class called Government or civics or social studies.

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Can you picture your civics teacher in your mind.

Take a second and think of them now.

I hope they would approve of the job you are doing.

You may get input that the draft maps are good as is.

Further tinkering is an attempt to gerrymander for one side.

You made progress towards fair maps and I thank you for it but there is more work to be done.

This is where the beauty of math and data come in.

There is no emotion.

There is no spin.

There is simply the fact of whether the maps have partisan bias or not.

Do they support the notion that one person has one vote and that vote matters equally or not.

Do they honor what we all learned about how our democracy should work in civics class when we were kids or not.

Make that civics teacher proud.

Adopt fair maps with as close to 0 partisan bias as possible.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 29.

>> Can you hear me?

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Yes, we can.

>> Hello.

I'm a resident of Canton, Michigan.

Thank you to the Commission for all the work that you have done so far.

But this is not quite enough.

At this point the maps proposed are tilted towards the republican party.

By several percentages points.

It is imperative that the maps maintain true partisan fairness in the state.

Do not think that it cannot be done.

Proposed example maps by many citizen groups as well as groups such as LBGT Detroit promote the vote or AFLCIO have done a very good job of partisan fairness while still maintaining communities of interest together.

I urge you and encourage the Commission to go back and improve the work that you have already done.

Your work is already a big improvement over the current maps.

So I applaud you for that and thank you very much for allowing me to speak.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 30, John.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Participants 30-34 are not currently present.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Very good.

That means we are on to number 35 Martin G.

>> Hello, can you hear me?

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Yes, we can.

>> Awesome thank you so much for having me.

I'd like to start out with a little quote.

Neither the fanatics or faint hearted are needed. Your duty as democrats, republicans and independents is not to your party alone but your community, your state and your country.

Your duty is not the preservation of political power but the preservation of justice and peace.

So let us not quarrel amongst ourselves on the dignity future of our state is at stake.

Let us not be petty on our cause is so great.

I currently live in Shelby Township and lived in St. Clair shores.

I won the democratic primary for the 8th State Senate District and currently running in that right now.

The District is drawn very unfairly 2-1 in republican favor and noticed how it can be signs getting stolen and it's been an uphill battle.

I would like to say though your job transcends partisan ship and if the situations were reversed in the future when I do plan to run for the State Senate again if it is drawn in the democratic favor I will not run.

I'm saying that right now.

Because our leaders duty is to serve the people, not exploit them.

Thank you for your service.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for your comments.

Number 36 Danielle.

>> Hi, can you hear me? My name is Danielle from the City of Midland.

I'm bothered by the one issue subject focus for many commenters related to Midland.

Flooding is not the only issue I want my representatives for maps to be concerned with.

Michigan in general has flooding issues and will continue to due to climate change.

Midland is not the only community where this is a concern.

The state will need to address flooding as a whole and basing maps on only the watersheds and past flood events does not represent Midland's best interest.

I want to thank you for the maps which keep the Tri-Cities together to truly represent the best interests of these communities.

I want to encourage you as a Commission to continue to focus on political fairness over lower ranked criteria such as County lines as required by the rules of the Commission.

Thank you for the work you have done thus far and remembering that funny looking maps are not gerrymandering as long as they meet the criteria.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 37 art.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: That participant is not present.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Do we have number 38? Okay, Christa.

>> In 2018 Michigan voters supported an amendment to end gerrymandering.

What the voters received was a new theory of representation in place of using geography to keep communities whole communities like West Michigan, Grand Rapids, North Michigan, Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti. The Commission used the neo liberal University of Michigan to reimagine communities of interest by placing identity and affinity groups at the center of the electoral process.

The newly defined communities of interest do not unite Michigan residents nor do they recognize residents as individuals or members of a whole community but instead as tokens of identity politics.

Your new interpretation will not unite but they will divide us by race and ethnicity.

Is that what we need more of? I implore this Commission to press pause.

You gave your ear to the University of Michigan.

Now lent your ear to Hillsdale college.

Did you know they wrote a memorandum? Read the Hillsdale memorandum on redistricting written by former Michigan Supreme Court justice Steven Markman and revisit your approach.

If your goal is to divide Michigan residents create chaos and disunity then you are succeeding.

But if just one of you is willing to stand against this then that time is now.

I'm asking that just one of you on behalf of the hardworking law abiding God fearing residents of Michigan to find the courage to press pause, read the Hillsdale report and redesign your maps constitutional.

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

>> Hello, can you hear me?

>> Yes, we can.

>> Wonderful thank you.

Thank you.

I had the privilege of coming to visit you all in Port Huron.

My name is Marie.

I live in the County of Wayne.

And I live in the City of Grosse Pointe park.

I want to first give you a big thank you and then followed I be a little oops.

So my thank you is that you have done just a wonderful job of keeping the Grosse Pointes together.

That is something that we have been requesting republicans and democrats alike we are unified on that.

Oh, and start my video.

Okay, so I want to thank you for that.

And in particular the Lake District that you've created in the state map Elm is just wonderful.

That will address many issues we have here.

And the little bit of oops is that in all the State House maps you have by accident missed the little blue part there which is one little precinct in Grosse Pointe Woods.

If you could add that in the State House maps to keep Grosse Pointe whole that would be just amazing.

I don't like the cherry map in that it does remove Grosse Pointe park.

That is like cutting off an arm or something like that.

Poking out an eye.

It just when I'm somewhere not in Grosse Pointe and somebody asks me where I'm from I say I'm from Grosse Pointe.

Just like I've been saying.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Steven number 40.

>> Good evening can you hear me?

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Yes, we can.

>> Thank you all for being here.

I know that it's a job that everybody loves you doing.

At least some people out here appreciate you I suppose.

But when we voted for this, it was to have lines drawn to represent our communities not parties that claim they represent us but to represent our families, friends and our neighbors.

Looks like I dropped out.

And I was back in as attendee can you hear me.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: We can still hear you.

>> All right, oh, man I lost my train of thought.

Ultimately there is a lot of people here talking about trying to form groups based off race and putting people in segregated blocks who it benefits and there is probably a word for that.

But it's on the tip of my tongue.

This is an opportunity for us to come here before the board, before you to describe our community, our home.

To help you make informed decisions in drawing these maps.

Not to try to carve out some more party power for whatever decisions you have.

In that regard, I do appreciate Clarkston and Waterford being combined.

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I was grew up in Waterford and raised in Clarkston and we share a lot in community.
My only complaint there is Oxford and lower Oxford otherwise known as.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 41 Vicki.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Participants 41 and 42 are not present.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: So number 43, Naomi.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: You are unmuted and free to address the Commission.

>> If you can hear me, you are free to address the Commission.

Looks like Naomi may be experiencing audio issues so I suggest we move on.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Okay let's try number 44 Sarah Holmes Miller.

>> Hello.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Hello we can hear you.

>> Okay I'm going to start this video.

Hello, the name is Sarah Holmes, not Miller.

And I believe the Commission is working hard to ensure that all Michiganders have fair representation.

And I really appreciate all the work that's gone on.

And I know that Commissioners want to make racial gerrymandering a thing of the past. However, all of your draft maps except the questionable premise that majority minority districts can be reduced to 40% minority and still have a fair chance to elect minority representation.

When, in fact, out of 148 total seats in Michigan's house and Senate, only three majority white districts are represented by Black legislatures.

In addition, Section Two of the Voting Rights Act requires that at least the same number of minority opportunity districts in a previous redistricting plan be drawn in a new redistricting plan and we do not have the same number, not even close.

So I urge you to incorporate.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you Sarah Holmes.

Let's try number 45.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: That participant is not currently present.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Okay then 46, Eb Jordan.

>> Hello, can you her me?

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN:

>> Yes, I live in Detroit Michigan and I represent Black and PJ housing.

I'm a returning citizens and I was incarcerated in Ypsilanti.

And during that time I was not recognized as a Detroit citizen.

But now I'm back in Detroit I became a precinct delegate and I'm also a Black law president.

I would like you all to take into consideration P6782, P6783 and P6784.

It closely addressed my concerns.

And thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 47Merna.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: That participant is not present.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Let's move to number 48 Natalie Hayes.

>> Can you hear me?

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Yes, we can.

>> Good evening I'm Natalie Hayes and a lifelong Michigan resident and reside in Grand Traverse County.

I want to thank you for the work you have done to draw the legislative maps and the work you will continue to do as this process unfolds.

I know I was very excited back in 2018 when there was a ballot proposal that would create the new Commission that I'm speaking for and I want to thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today.

I'm in favor of the Pine cherry and birch maps and recognize there are improvements that need to be made and I appreciate seeing the Traverse City and Leelanau State House lines together.

And also concerned about partisan fairness in this process and urge you to make the changes necessary to avoid partisan bias as we will have the maps for the next decade. Thank you so much.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: You're welcome thank you.

Number 49, Paul.

>> Hello.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Hello we can hear you.

>> Hi Paul M living and voting in Kalamazoo.

Battle Creek and Kalamazoo are interconnected at a level that they should be united in a voting District.

There are business connections and interdependence.

Large number of people live in one City and work in the other.

For instance, executive at Kellogg's here in Kalamazoo and drives to Battle Creek everyday as a neighbor.

Another my violin teacher lived in Battle Creek and worked at western.

I lived in both cities when I lived in Battle Creek, I went to Kalamazoo daily for several years and now I'm living in Kalamazoo but a lot of my work comes with work with Battle Creek Michigan.

Today I worked on a project for someone in Battle Creek.

There are cultural connections interdependence and regional arts organizations serve Battle Creek and Kalamazoo like art symphonies and civic theatre.

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Please consider the community of the Kalamazoo Battle Creek area when drawing the lines of Government representation.

At one time we were united with representation.

Please do not divide us again.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Let's move on to number 50 mark Payne.

>> Good evening can everybody hear me.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Yes, we can.

>> Good evening my name is mark Payne and ask you to recognize indigenous population as community of interest and leave no stone unturned as you use all resources and staff and all information that you receive.

I urge you make sure that maps are fair partisan wise.

As you make adjustments for higher criteria, please make sure that partisan fairness is properly prioritized.

Lastly, I support MSU's independent for social policy and public research recommendation.

That the MICRC reevaluate its approach towards compliance with the V RA.

We need primary data.

Which is public comment.

All the County clerks have it.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 51 Cindy.

>> Can you hear me?

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Yes, please go ahead.

>> I think you are trying to do the impossible because when you put these different variables up that you want to have a vote representation proportional to the vote, the way to get that would be proportional representation.

But with this system we have of plurality it discourages independent thinking and where people like if you had approval voting where you can vote for as many people as you want but not anybody more than once, then like in the Presidential primary I could have voted for three different candidates on the left that I liked.

Instead of having to choose between one and the other and that is what happens, they split the vote so much between different factions that they add extra candidates and so forth.

And so it's gamed right now by people who want to game it the politicians and people behind them.

Give people the idea they can strategize approval voting look it up on the Internet.

There is a website center for election science and also, we need proportional representation.

And then we need to find out you know the reason we have got these areas of interest were such a prejudice society that everybody goes in their own little corner because people are so prejudice, we have to get over that.

I like diversity myself.

So that is what I'd like to see so.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for sharing your comments.

Number 52.

>> Hi everybody thanks for having me again my name is Amar. I'm a community organizer in Dearborn as well as an adjunct professor of law Detroit mercy where I teach specifically about census issues and election law as pertains to Arab Americans. Also as you have as the Commission, I hope has seen is that this notion of community of interest there are some terms in the statute and the Constitution that are sort of terms of science.

You know but there are some terms of art.

Hopefully you are learning that community of interest as a term of art as the way people see themselves has a lot to do with the borders and cities of the Counties, they live in. This is especially true in Dearborn where you cut us up in three ways and remember Michigan has the highest Arabs in the country. And you run the risk of having no Arab Americans in the State House because of the way you divided the community and miss counted as white on the census.

Using top line numbers and not delving deeper you put our community at great, great risk so I'm asking you please to reconsider those maps for the State House.

Keep Dearborn together as much as possible so the ab-R Arab American community can have one and maybe more candidates of their choice in Lansing thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 53 glory.

>> Hello, my name is Lori from Farmington Hills and support prop two and maps need to reflect voting preferences of the state which leans democratic and should reflect that when the maps are done overall.

Further communities of interest need to have their voice through representation.

The maps although better than maps we've had over the past ten years accomplish neat of these constitutional objectives.

For decades Michigan had rigged elections under a system in which one party a but not the other can regularly lose elections but win control of the Government.

You must do everything in your power to fix this system.

So far, you're failing.

The current maps over all show a bias towards the republican party despite thus they are not agnostic with respect to party and not fair.

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Partisan fairness needs to be number one priority.

Further communities like my own are split up.

In my case in three districts when Farmington, Farmington Hills is a clear example of a community of interest.

Unless remedied we will not have a voice in our state Government because our votes will be so diminished.

Both criteria party fairness and community of interest while can be accomplished while moving the Voting Rights Act as well.

Please look to AFLCIO fair maps project maps for an example of fair maps.

I know you are under a lot of pressure to get these maps completed.

But more work needs to be done and the AFLCIO fair maps project map can save you a lot of time.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 54.

>> Do we have an in person speaker Ms. Reinhardt?

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: We do.

We can go ahead and allow Yousif to speak since he is promoted, then we can turn to in person.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Sounds good, thank you.

Hi, Commissioners, I'm from Troy.

It's nice to speak with you again.

I do have a map but I guess it's not pulled up but it's okay.

I base my map is P7262.

P7262.

I base this mostly on Mr. Anthony Eid's Juniper map if you can Zoom into the purple area District six which is in Troy.

This map gives Chaldeans a voice.

So I'm asking you all please I'm asking the Commission to give Chaldeans a voice in one District and gives Asian community 10.8% population shared in District 6.

The highest out of the four proposed maps.

If you look at election details, District 6 does not change much from the originally proposed elections results with Juniper only half a percent less.

My point was distribute and give Chaldeans a voice in District 6 and benefits both of our communities as we share much similarities. Please Commissioners give Chaldeans a voice.

We are estimated to be 160,000 in Michigan.

We own over 25,000 businesses and we contribute immensely to the great State of Michigan.

Thank you for listening and I will continue praying for each one of you Commissioners.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. At this time we are going to move back to live in person public comment.

We do have 72, 73, 74 and 75 with us.

Can we start with 72, please.

>> Good evening I'm Chris from the City of Midland and support Lange Congressional and State Senate and oak map for house.

Keep Midland County whole and connected to Gladwin Isabella and Gratiot Counties. Please stop ignoring our communities so greatly impacted and connected by our watershed. The Chippewa river runs through Isabella. The Pine runs through Gratiot. And the tobacco and Tibawassees run through Gladwin County. And all four rivers ultimately connect and end up at the trich in downtown Midland.

Yes, the City of Midland that should not be carved out of our community of interest.

The City that was also questioned whether or not it flooded in 2020.

And I answer that very clearly the City of Midland flooded in 2020.

We also flooded in 2017.

Along with Isabella County.

You may not know but we had to advocate for major Federal disaster declaration in 2017 too.

I urge the Commission to look at Commissioner Lange's Congressional plan and Senate plan and the oak map for house.

It best reflects our area and its needs.

It keeps the Tibawassees water shed united with a stronger voice in Washington D.C. keep Isabella and Midland and Gratiot together thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 73, please.

>> Hi, my name is Bill Schuette from Midland.

The decisions the Redistricting Commission makes should not be done with politics but should follow the institutional requirements of community of interest.

But the commute maps which fracture the City of Midland from Midland County is appears to me to be a brazen political gerrymandering act for the State Senate, State House and Congressional District maps.

That's wrong.

The biggest community of interest shared community of interest for Midland and Gladwin and Isabella Gratiot and Clare would be number one Dam repair and flood reduction.

Second Mid-Michigan healthcare, Gladwin, Clare, Gratiot and Isabella Counties and environmental benefits of flood reduction, which will reduce fertilizer runoff into Saginaw Bay.

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Fracturing and separating Midland from Gladwin County and the City of Midland and Midland County would diminish our efforts for Dam repair and flood reduction and eviscerates with Mid-Michigan healthcare and a disaster for that.

Adopt Commissioner Lange's map 243.

The State Senate map of 247 and the State House map of oak.

And do not gerrymander these districts.

Thank you.

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

>> Hi, I'm from the County of Midland.

This is the second time I've had the privilege to speak on behalf of my family and neighbors before this Commission.

At the Midland public comment forum in May there were people of all political stripes and policy priorities that spoke.

I do not recall one individual advocating for Midland to be geographically divided in Congressional or state legislative lines.

I grew up in Gladwin County.

Midland true to its name was always considered the nearest City for rural Mid-Michigan like Gladwin and Beaverton.

My wife and I live in there and live between the flood affected areas of Sanford and the City of Midland.

Keeping Midland contiguous and connected to watershed communities in Midland Counties is imperative for the next decade for state and national policy.

The slogan end gerrymandering now led to the creation of this Commission.

The maps fracturing Midland County do not live up to that promise.

The people of Flint and Genesee County have different needs and Flint is far more urban than Midland and I support Lange's map and oak map for State House.

Thank you for your time.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Our final commenter this evening 75.

>> Good evening, Commission I'm Chris and also from Midland and also have a moment close to a second home close to mere in Kalkaska.

It seems to me and I know I'm reading a lot into this we are trying to make 50/50 districts.

And when this discussion was coming up, about making this a nonpartisan Commission, it was to stop gerrymandering.

When you look at these maps now it appears that there is gerrymandering.

The only way that we get to that is through gerrymandering.

So like these folks, I'd like to ask that we keep the Midland whole.

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When I think about where we go to school, where we do our healthcare, where we go to church, all of these as specifics, this Midland County seat, the City of Midland and Midland County is a natural group that should be kept together.

And I really urge that we don't gerrymander to try to get to 50/50 just because that's a split.

These ideas of who belongs together also needs to take into account our governmental seats and how that influences and I ask that no gerrymandering be done.

With that I would support the map as well from Commissioner Lange in District 2.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. At this time we will move back to our live remote public comment and I believe we were on number 55 Kaitlyn Flynn.

>> Can you hear me?

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Yes, we can.

>> Perfect good evening my name is Kaitlyn Flynn from Grand Traverse County based on the maps provided my preference is...are Pine cherry and birch. I do appreciate Traverse City and Leelanau County being in the same State House District.

That being said I think there is still a lot that should be changed.

Really especially around partisan fairness.

All of the maps you bring before us today give a disproportionate advantage to the republican party.

So I urge you to closely consider alternatives of the portal.

Also promote the votes maps and illegal racial gerrymandering and give Black voters all the political power they are entitled to under the Constitution and voting rights act.

So if the Commission adopts maps similar to promote the vote's maps, Black voters will have all the influence in Lansing and Washington that they need.

So this is our opportunity the first opportunity we really have to truly draw fair maps and I look forward to seeing the final Directors truly being fair to the people of Michigan, thank you so much.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 56.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: 56-59 are not present and that concludes public comment.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Okay, very good so and we do not have any more in person public comment; is that correct?

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Correct technically anyone in the room who has not spoken yet has one minute left to sign up.

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>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Speak now or not forever you can still give us online public comment at www.Michigan.gov/MICRC but we want to hear from you so if you would like to speak, please do sign up.

It's still 6:59.

We have concluded online public comment and appears we have also concluded our live in person public comment. And so it's still 6:59 but I'm going to move on seeing our agenda is oh, we should make some we have a presentation we have to say thank you to are you all and many of you who helped make this happen.

So without objection, I will provide acknowledgments.

Do we have that slide up, please? So there is many people that help us make this happen, many groups as well as people.

One of those people is a special shout out to Sarah's mom helping behind the registration desk and also to the League of Women Voters who volunteered at the registration and public portal station.

Encore audio visual encore AV did a wonderful job helping us with our audio visual support today.

We have we are all at the tree tops resort stellar team to facilitate this event and last but not least we have University of students and Voters Not Politicians assisting with registration this evening.

Can we move on to the next slide, please.

We do have ways that you can get in touch with us still, it's not too late.

To #show up speak up to assist the MICRC #draw fair maps and stay engaged or call 1-833-you-draw or 1-833-968-3729. And finally you can get us on our handles on Facebook, Twitter at [redistricting MI](https://www.facebook.com/redistrictingMI). We have a YouTube channel. And always that public comment portal www.Michigan.gov/MICRC.

So thank you next slide, please.

Thank you, thank you, thank you.

And as the items on the agenda are completed and the Commission has no further business a motion to adjourn is in order may I have a motion to adjourn.

Motion by Commissioner Witjes seconded by Commissioner Lett.

All in favor raise your hand and say aye.

All opposed raise your hand and say nay.

The ayes prevail and we are adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

Thank you, everyone.