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MICRC

09/29/21 9:00 am Meeting

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>> CHAIR SZETELA: As Chair of the Commission, we will bring the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission to order at 9:05 a.m.

This Zoom webinar is being live streamed on YouTube at [Www.Michigan.gov/MICRC](http://Www.Michigan.gov/MICRC) 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 to find the link for viewing on YouTube.

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](mailto: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](http://Michigan.gov).

This meeting is also being recorded and will be available at [www.Michigan.gov/MICRC](http://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](http://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](http://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](mailto: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 morning, Commissioners. Please say present when I call your name. If you are attending the meeting remotely, please disclose your physical location as well. I will call on you in alphabetical order.

We will start with Doug Clark.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Juanita Curry.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Anthony Eid?

>> COMMISSIONER EID: Present.

Brittini Kellom?

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?

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Rebecca Szetela?

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Janice Vallette?

>> COMMISSIONER VALLETTE: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Erin Wagner?

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

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Richard Weiss?

>> COMMISSIONER WEISS: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Dustin Witjes?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: 12 Commissioners are present.

And there is a quorum.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you. 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 Rothhorn. Is there any discussion or debate on the motion? Seeing none we will now vote all in favor please raise your hand and say aye. All opposed please raise your hand and say nay.

The ayes prevail and the motion is adopted.

Without objection we will now begin the public comment pertaining to agenda topics portion of our meeting. Hearing no objection, we will now proceed with the public comment pertaining to agenda topics.

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 microphone when I call your name or number. You will have two minutes to address the Commission. Please conclude your remarks when you hear the timer.

First in line to address the Commission is number one.

>> Good morning, Commissioners.

My name is Rick Blocker. I would like to offer public comment.

The number one criteria in your Michigan redistricting criteria priority order is to districts should be equally populated, mandated by the United States Constitution and shall comply with the Voting Rights Act and other Federal law.

My understanding of the Voting Rights Act and I have talked to a number of people who is that we should have two minority majority districts.

Your District two as it currently is configured only has a 37% Black or minority voting population.

Your Congressional map District two.

I have went back and researched the Voting Rights Act.

I went back and looked at all the maps that was drawn that complied in 2010 and no where can I find this kind of percentage.

We must have a majority minority District.

It has been migration of population in Detroit and you have already went to southern Macomb County on your District one to get some more minority population.

It is imperative that you look at your map and follow your number one criteria.

The Voting Rights Act must be followed.

I'm afraid if it's not followed, we are going to put ourselves in an unnecessary situation of having M people question what are we doing in this particular situation.

So please, please, please, please follow the Voting Rights Act, let's get that number somewhere where we all can be comfortable but 37% voting age population in District 2 is currently unacceptable, thank you.

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

Number two.

>> Hello, can you hear me, okay?

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yes.

>> Hello, my name is Anthony Watkins. I'm from Ypsilanti and I'd like to thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts with you today.

I appreciate the work that you have done to redraw the maps for the state.

And for our democracy to work the party that gets the most votes has to be able to govern and right now we don't have that.

I like the way that you have split up Lansing in your Senate draft.

And I would like to see the split of Ypsilanti from Ann Arbor.

Ypsilanti has never had the opportunity to have its own voice in the State Senate, but it's very possible to draw a District that would likely send the choice of Ypsilanti's African/American voters to the State Senate.

Ypsilanti has eastern Michigan University and its own identity.

Separate from Ann Arbor.

And the University of Michigan.

There are more blue collar workers in Ypsilanti that share more in common with places like Monroe than Ann Arbor.

It would make a fair map overall and give Ypsilanti its own voice.

Thank you for your time.

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

Number three.

>> Okay skip number four.

For the public record number three skipped their turn.

>> Hello.

Hi, my name is Mari-I lived in Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti for the past two decades although my family is from rose land Michigan.

Once again, I'd like to thank the Commission for hearing our comments and for all the hard work you have been doing in redrawing our state in a fair and nonpartisan way. I know it's hard.

I would like to add my voice to the group of people who have been speaking to you about prison gerrymandering.

I know a lot of people have spoken about this, so please excuse me if I'm telling you things that you already know, but the information is important enough that it bears repeating.

So, yeah, people in prison are counted as residents of the area where they are incarcerated rather than as residents of where they lived before they were sent to prison.

Prisoners cannot vote so they are being counted as bulk to give more political power to the District where they are imprisoned while not having a voice in that region or not being able to vote.

And this is relevant here at the Detroit redistricting meeting.

Because Michigan's prison population comes disproportionately from Detroit.

Wayne County has 20.7% of the state's population.

But 29.7% of its incarcerated people.

Okay I'm running out of time so any way this is disenfranchisement as you know.

The state legislature some bills have already been introduced to outlaw this practice.

There was an Article in Time magazine about it.

It's mainstream.

It's a human rights and a nationwide civil rights issue.

But the Redistricting Commission has the chance to right the wrong from the get-go.

If the Commission can draw state District lines without the active disenfranchisement of incarcerated people, if they can be counted as residents of their original homes rather than where they are held in prison, that would be an enormous accomplishment and we would all be proud so thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission, number five.

>> Good morning and happy Wednesday.

My name is Maggie and I'm a proud Michigander who currently resides in Wayne County specifically the City of Plymouth.

I'm here today to not only thank you for your diligence in providing fair legislative reputation through drawing nonpartisan maps I know it's not an easy task to take on I would like to bring to your attention of Black civilians in Plymouth and Canton and feel they are a significant community of interest thank you for your consideration and thank you so much for your time.

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

>> Good morning my name is Sarah, I'm a Michigan attorney I live in Southfield. And I'm going to talk about partisan fairness today.

In 2010 Michigan's Congressional districts resulted in a split of 8 democratic districts and 7 republican districts.

Based on voter registration and partisan representation.

When the 2011 census came out the Michigan legislature with the help of Rick Snyder shifted the districts to split our districts to 9 republican districts and 6 democratic districts.

And due to population changes in the census the 15th Congressional District which was a predominately democratic District folded into the 7th Congressional which was predominately a republican District.

The impact of the gerrymandered districts is that during the 2008 Presidential election 12 of the 15 districts went for the democratic candidate Barack Obama and in the 2012 Presidential election with the new maps only 5 of the districts went for the same candidate but Barack Obama still won the state.

When partisan fairness is not taken into consideration the results lead to the voters ultimately being disenfranchised specifically those of color and get diluted and share partisan fairness in these maps. And like Mr. Blocker said ensure minority representation meets the Voting Rights Act, thank you.

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

>> Hello, I'm Alice from Washtenaw County.

I've been following this for a couple of weeks at least and one of the things that I'm concerned about is the use of the community of interest and the analysis you have given to community of interest proposals.

I don't see that much specificity sometimes.

I have seen some Commissioners that give us the plan that they are using but often I hear well there are comments and people said something one way or another.

And it can go both ways and when you don't specify exactly why you're using one community of interest over another or why you made one decision over the opposite

way as you said in particular things, I can't assess whether you have actually analyzed competing community of interests.

I can't and the rest of the public as well cannot actually follow your thinking and your reasoning and I would like to ask this Commission to spend some time looking at that. And actually give some explicit reasoning when you're drawing your districts.

And the reason I ask this is I have seen some remarkably poor community of interest proposals.

That lack logical reasoning or introduce fallacies to create their points for why they should be grouped together.

And that leads to unfair districts.

I think there is some racial exclusion that I know Kim Brace told you, you could look at the racial demographics of the community of interest proposal.

And I really would like you to do that because I have seen community of interest proposals that exclude by race.

I would say that Lake St. Clair District that community of interest was definitely an exclusionary community of interest proposal and hold that thought because I signed up for a second time.

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

>> Hi, my name is Kate S I'm here today from the City of Livonia.  
And first of all I would like to thank the Commissioners for the tremendously hard work that you are doing.

I come today to address the issue of the House Districts currently drawn up in the last map involving Livonia.

Livonia is a City of less than 95,000 people.

But yet it's been divided into five districts for the Michigan house.

It's completely insane.

Sorry.

But how can a mayor deal with five different representatives in their City regarding the legislature, how can the City clerk function in an election or even at polling places when you've got people voting for five different reps? It's just is not workable.

It's a tremendous, tremendous burden.

I also wanted to talk about the issue of partisan fairness.

I think for a lot of these maps that you have been drawing that you have not applied that issue as well to the map drawing that is supremely important, it needs to be looked at now before you get any further.

You know the whole purpose of this exercise for drawing the Commission was to achieve some sort of partisan fairness.

And unless you start applying that standard now, you're going to have to just redraw everything.



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But what I would say is ultimately is that dividing a City of less than 95,000 people into five sections for the House District is just unworkable and burdensome.

Thank you.

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

Number nine.

>> Hi there.

My name is Andrew I'm stopping in from Garden City today.

I just want to start out saying that I appreciate all the work that you're doing and putting in to give us a fair Michigan.

And for giving us the opportunity to speak.

I wanted to attend on Monday but the change in time threw me off.

And that brings me to my first point I love the work you guys have done to make this an accessible public comment.

There's a lot of really accessible options to it.

I would love to see these meetings be held on a weekend in ten years so it's more accessible.

My comment about my District is short.

District 7 I believe that the area of Garden City Westland, much of Livonia and parts of Canton there is a large Asian American population and I think that this should be considered as a community of interest.

Thank you for your time.

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

Number ten.

>> Good morning my name is Dorian Thompson for many years the Federal Government recognized Ottawa County as a community of there between the lakeshore communities as Grand Haven West Olive and Holland are tied like Zeeland, Hudsonville and Jamestown and they have Kalamazoo with Midland Counties are manufactured community of interest.

Let me make something clear.

These communities have nothing in common.

Ottawa County should be united and represent a lakeshore that includes Allegan, Manistee Counties.

With me today I have a petition signed by 150 Ottawa County residents that I will be asking for you to submit with your comments and they are asking you not to break up this County into three Congressional districts as currently proposed.

Breaking Ottawa County in three Congressional districts dilutes the voice of Ottawa County and breaks up the lakeshore and hope the board takes into consideration because the country is watching this process.

And this can set a dangerous precedent if you break up communities with a shared interest.

It's also my understanding the Commission unfortunately doesn't have any representation from West Michigan on it.

While this is extremely unfortunate, I believe it's even more important the Commissioner listen to residents of Michigan drawing the maps because looking at the maps and criteria your Commission passed out this morning sadly you are not living up to your promise and thank you for your time and I urge you to keep Ottawa County whole thank you.

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

>> Good morning, Commissioners my name is Brian birch I live in the City of Holland and Ottawa County and I spoke two weeks ago of keeping Ottawa County together and I drove across the state this morning to hand deliver a petition a digital petition signed by 536 of my fellow Ottawa County residents in opposition of breaking up and cracking our County into different Congressional districts and Senate districts.

Ottawa County is among these regions affected by your decisions today. As I mentioned last time a person could ride a bicycle in the current District formation from one end and with an hour cross between three different Congressional districts and Senate districts. I think it goes in opposition of everything this Commission was called and formed to do. The economic interests of Holland, Grand Haven, Jenison, Grandville area have been together for decades. These are not arbitrary lines, but economic lines that were put together by simple history and the nature of business. We ask the Commission and those of my fellow signatures to change the map which we haven't seen any changes to the west side or this portion of the map in the last three iterations.

A map that acknowledges that Ottawa County is the fastest growing County in the state and deserves accurate representation.

That our representation preserves and respects current geographic boundaries specifically County lines and we want to Ottawa County's local economies of interest to remain intact and that a District should respect West Michigan's lakeshore culture as a historic community of interest keeping Ottawa County whole makes sense and ensures we are represented fairly and our voice be heard in Washington and Lansing I thank you for your time.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.  
Number 12.

>> Do we have number 12?

>> Sorry about that.

Top of the morning to you all my name is Nicholas barns a 27 year resident of Detroit.



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Looking at this process from the sidelines being one of your biggest fans I'm sadly disappointed to see partisan fairness and VRA laws are not taken into consideration with these maps.

We have an opportunity to give the people of Michigan an accurate representation of what their Congressional, state and Senate districts should look like.

So please going forward in this process use the data that you have on partisan fairness and the VRA laws.

It's 2021.

We have too much information available to not be making the best decisions.

So ask please take in partisan fairness as you reevaluate the maps and please honor the VRA laws, I believe in you all and I believe you all can make the right decision have a great day.

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

Number 13.

>> Good morning my name is Felicia Banks. I thank you for allowing me to address the Commission again today.

I thank you again for your very hard work and your integrity in this process.

Again I am a fourth generation Detroit.

The daughter of auto workers and City workers immigrant daughter of the same.

I am speaking today to the City of Detroit, my community of interest.

And today I would like to highlight the Section of Detroit spanning from six mile and Livernois to 8 mile and as far north as Evergreen a Grand River.

The reason for this particular highlight is the concentration of the majority of Black owned businesses within the City.

I am highlighting this because I am concerned about it being diluted.

Its voice being diluted by the stretch into the communities on the other side of 8 mile and into Oakland County.

I would like for the Commission to keep in mind that this community is very longstanding, has been a source of community strength and pride for many years.

And I am asking that the Commission would be diligent in making sure that that community is not split up.

I thank you so much for your time.

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

For the public record we did have a number 14 but that person had to leave so we are going to move on to number 15.

Hello, my name is Bill Schmidt. I'm a resident of Livonia.

My family has been in Michigan since 1826.

So my roots are long.

I would like to thank the Commission for all of its hard work.

Tireless hours, both here and online.

You guys have done a terrific job.

Thank you very much.

Citizens of Michigan are counting on you.

As a resident of the City of Livonia I am concerned about dividing up our City in five different ways.

One of the nice things about Livonia it has been, it had consistency through the years. Sometimes it's been democratic.

Many of you remember Ed McNamara, longstanding democrat, Bob Ficano, longstanding democrat. Recently it's been republican and now it switched back to democrat.

But what it has had is consistency.

By dividing up the City five different ways or five different bad ideas.

So thank you very much.

Keep up the good work.

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

>> Hello good morning, Commission yep.

It's Anthony S from southwest Detroit I brought a visual aid.

Here are the maps you drew for Congressional on the Detroit what do you call this MDOT map straight from MDOT.

And I'm zeroing in on Congressional District one.

You got it starts way up here in what's that Madison Heights, Warren, centerline Hazel Park, you got a little bit of Harper Woods and Grosse Pointes in Congressional District one.

I'll show this to the camera too hello.

And then down here in Congressional District one you got Allen Park, Melvindale, Lincoln Park, Rouge, Ecorse. I don't think these two areas go together at all.

There is no commonality, no community of interest, the only road that connects these two places is I-75 and a freeway is not a community of interest make.

And so I would really ask that this area because I'm from this area and I care about this area be kept separate from this area because I feel like putting these areas in together especially like a Macomb County it's just going to completely overshadow these tiny little Down River cities and their interest.

And so yeah, I don't know.

It looks weird to me too.

If you turn it on its ears it looks like Mickey Mouse with two ears right here or if you turn it this way it looks like a circus seal clapping and laughing.

I don't know if you look at this on a drawn out actual map instead of a computer screen you may see it differently there for, I have two more drawn out I would like to give important to Ms. Reinhardt and look at them with your Congressional districts.

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Thank you.

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

Confirming that is it thank you.

Just to let the people in person know we have two people who requested to speak twice but typically we go through our remote live commentary first.

The first round then we come back to the people who asked to speak twice so we are going to go at this point to the remote public comment.

So individuals who have signed up and indicated that they would like to provide live, remote public commentary to the Commission will now be allowed to do so. I will call on your name and our staff will unmute you. If you are on a computer you will be prompted by the Zoom app to unmute your microphone and speak.

If you are on the phone, a voice will say that the host would like you to speak and prompt you to press star six to unmute. I will call on you by your name. Or the last four digits of your phone number.

If you experience technical or audio issues and we do not hear from you for 3-5 seconds, we will move on to the next person in line and then return to you after they are done speaking. If your audio still does not work, you can e-mail [redistricting@Michigan.gov](mailto:redistricting@Michigan.gov) and we will help you troubleshoot so you can participate during the next public comment period at a later hearing or meeting.

You will have two minutes to address the Commission. Please conclude your remarks when you hear the timer. The first in line to provide public comment is Mr. James Gallant.

>> Hello, James Gallant, Marquette, these are my opinions.

I'd like to continue our conversation about the rules of procedure and wondering why you did not publish the draft rules of procedure that you started deliberation yesterday. Now, you may think well you have not started deliberation, but your current practice said you did.

Commissioner Lett, a lawyer, has, you know, was in clearly engaged in deliberation and making recommendations, what not.

So please publish that so we can at least talk about that.

And I think that is abusive. I think it is abuse under Michigan adult protection law for your staff not to actually provide you with the what the passages in Roberts rules, what is the rule now, what do they want to change it to, and why do they want to do that.

So you have informed consent, that is what we are looking for is informed consent. That's what they have done.

I believe the staff has stolen the votes of the members by doing it on the side. You got side bar decisions that you never even voted on, but you think that they override the parliamentary authority manual in the Constitution of the United States just based on your personal relationships with each other.

That's not good.

And the person that talked about this is not about logical reasoning.

This is the absence of logical reasoning, that is in the Michigan public health institute. I provided you with that, the facilitated dialog program.

That is what that is built to do and it's built, I believe to circumvent Robert's Rules of Order. Because it talks about how, and it's right in there, the guy said that. And his name is Doke. Just think about who the parents are that would name their child Doke. Okay, it says right in there that you don't necessarily have to use logic to change the dominant narrative.

You're trying to change the rules and the dominant narrative without using logic and just using, oh, people just surrender. And this is, I'm telling you right now, this is my personal opinion, that the members of this Commission are being abused literally under the Michigan adult protection law.

You know, we have Commissioner Kellom, obviously. We have Juanita, I would think would be next.

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

Next in line is Margaret Schankler.

>> Hi. It took me a second for my computer to catch up.

This is Margaret Schankler. I thank you for this opportunity.

I think we can all agree that the purpose of this process is to create fair maps with District lines that don't disenfranchise any voter whether it be intentional or not.

The comments this morning have overwhelmingly used the board fairness.

Fairness is why the members of this board went through the lengthy application process to be here.

It's why all of our...the public speakers are here.

Why you've got so many comments.

I want to point out also so many members of the public that voted for fair maps that simply don't have the time, ability or information to weigh in on this process.

I urge you to remember the clear mandate the voters gave you to put fair representation at the center of every line you draw.

For example, it cannot no longer be acceptable to draw lines that give out County areas more representation than inner City ones whether it be intentional or not.

We all know the history here in Detroit the most populous City with the largest concentration of minority voters.

For decades living under the longest most successful partisan efforts to undermine their voting power largely through packing it's time Detroit got its fair shake of districts.

As the first Independent Commission created by the voters of Michigan what you do here will set a press sent do it's important to get it right this first time follow our constitutional voting rights laws to ensure one person one vote partisan and racial fairness with no packing cracking or wasted votes.

Those are the goals of this process.

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Remember why we created the Commission.

Thank you so much.

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

Next in line is Colleen.

>> Hi, can you hear me?

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yes, we can hear you.

>> Hi I'm Colleen Tuokkola. I live in Brownstown and I believe Down River should be a single District of municipalities of Wayne Romulus, Brownstown Township wood Haven and ash Township and Berlin Township as well as the Huron river watershed in Wayne and Monroe Counties I believe these municipalities have a great deal in common as well as sharing employers like Beaumont Henry Ford medical center and Ford and keeping them in District and fairness is the reason we are here today.

Thank you.

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

We are now going to move on to Erma.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: That participant is not currently present.

Numbers 4, 5 and 6 are not present.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: 4, 5 and 6.

So we will move on to Mitch.

>> Good morning can you hear me, okay?

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yes, I can hear you.

>> Okay, thank you.

Good morning, Commissioners thank you for the opportunity to share my comments. My name is Mitch and I'm a precinct delegate in Ottawa County where I'm born and raised.

I want to express my concern about splitting Ottawa County into three Congressional districts.

Splitting the County into three different districts does not make sense from a political or economic perspective and would suppress our voice and shared values.

Where I live in Holland for example, we would be aligned with Kalamazoo which is about an hour and a half away.

20 minutes north of me Grand Haven would be aligned with Traverse City which is about 2.5 hours away.

There is no doubt that Kalamazoo and Traverse City are great places and I enjoy visiting these areas. But the reality is most people living in Ottawa County visit these areas only a handful of times each year and those areas are not our community.

I can only imagine what type of representation our County would receive by dividing it into three vast and distinct districts.

95% of my personal professional and political time energy and relationships are here within Ottawa County.

There are many reasons for this.

It's a great place to be with many shared values.

Ottawa County is the fastest growing County in the state which is evident we are doing something right.

Splitting our representation would fracture that momentum and cause great harm among similar economic ties within our County.

I ask the Commission to revise its map and keep Ottawa County whole.

Thank you for your time, Disselkoe.

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

Next in line is Joel Ombry.

>> Good morning my name is Joel Ombry thank you all for all of your hard work.

Thank you also for taking input from citizens.

Yours is a challenging task and I wish you only the best in carrying it out.

I urge you to keep three things in mind as you do your work. Number one, as you know the voters choice is not the arrangement of the lines should determine our elected leaders and thus the composition of our law making bodies.

This was the message and the creation of this Commission at the ballot box in 2018.

It was definitive and republican and it's republican trust.

Number two, people of Michigan across the political spectrum must feel like they are represented fairly.

They must have faith in our system no matter who is in power.

A huge part of your job in my opinion will be to help reinforce people's faith in the system.

From what I've read and heard you are restoring and recognizing communities of interest.

Thank you for that.

Number three, some adjustments are needed to maintain communities of interest.

Specifically to the current proposed State Senate districts here in the Kent County area.

I believe the latest version combines some of Grand Rapids Metro with outlying

Townships from Ottawa County which doesn't seem to make sense.

It also combines East Grand Rapids and Cascade areas with distant and distinctly different areas of southern Michigan.

What seems more straightforward is two State Senate districts, one in the north of the Grand Rapids Metro area that contains East Grand Rapids and Cascade and one in the south.

So to recap please honor the trust given to you by the voters of Michigan in 2018.

Help restore citizens faith in the system, be they liberal conservative or somewhere in between.



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And lastly please simplify the proposed State Senate District lines in West Michigan in the northern and southern Grand Rapids Metro areas that exclude out liars from the lakeshore or southern Michigan.

Thank you for listening good luck in your work.

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

We will now move on to Roberta Urbani.

>> Good morning. My name is Robert Urbani. I live on Grosse Ile, which is an island of about 10,000 people in the Detroit river in Wayne County.

First, I would like to express my appreciation to the Commissioners for taking on this very difficult and important task.

My husband and I worked very hard on proposal two collecting signatures and then going door to door to urge voters to vote yes. We are gratified to see the results of our efforts in the thought and transparent work of the Commission.

I urge the Commission to review their maps and the proposed Michigan AFLCIO maps and recognize that in Southeast Michigan the Down River region is a community of interest.

While every resident of the Great Lakes states and prove senses is impacted by and concerned about the health of our abundant freshwater resources to shoreline communities it's a vital importance.

The river defines our communities and our lifestyles, raises our environmental awareness and affects our local economies.

I urge the Commission to combine the Down River communities of River Rouge, Ecorse, Wyandotte, Trenton, Grosse Ile and Gibraltar as well as neighboring communities such as Wood Haven, Riverview, South Gate, Lincoln Park, and others in the state Congressional and State House districts they draw.

Please ensure compliance with the Voting Rights Act free fair and competitive elections are critical to sustain our democracy and ensure that voters do choose their politicians and not the other way around.

Thank you.

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

Next in line is Nicole Hill.

>> Hi good morning can you hear me?

>> CHAIR SZETELA: We can hear you but you are a little quiet so if you could speak up that would be appreciated.

>> Is that better.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: That is much better.

>> Thank you.

Good morning, Commissioners.

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I just first want to start by saying that I'm a very appreciative of the paramount task that is set before you and the decisions that you make are vital to Michiganders across the state.

Therefore, I just want to speak on the issue of partisan fairness.

I think that it is vital that we have partisan fairness especially as a person of color whose ancestors fought just for the right to vote.

It is vital that we have fairness across the board. I'm also asking that the Commission maps should not be used to promote one party over the other.

It should be completely clear across the board regardless of the party.

I'm sorry.

Also living in a largely democratic City which I live in Detroit, it does not make me a bias person.

Regardless of my political party, I believe that it should be drawn equally regardless of the party affiliations and it should be equal and fairly did regardless of whether it's a political majority or a minority.

It is vitally important to this especially to me personally because I have children that are first time voters and I want them to see a fair election process.

Thank you.

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

Next in line is Anthony Watkins.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: That participant is not currently present.

And just one moment.

Number 12 is also not present.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Okay, all right rich Thrush.

>> Can you hear me.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yes.

>> Good morning my name is rich Thrush I'm a long time resident of the second largest City in Michigan Grand Rapids and Kent County.

I want to complement the Commission on their efforts and diligence in drawing up districts and their attention to listening to public comment.

Here are some suggestions to improve the Kent County Grand Rapids area State Senate District maps in terms of communities of interest.

Including Cascade Township on the east side of Grand Rapids area, with more accurately reflect a cohesive community of interest.

Cascade Township is now included in a District that extends over to the Lake and all the way down south to the state line.

Cascade Township is closely aligned with Ada Township to the north and thus would be a good fit in the northern District currently drawn.

Also East Grand Rapids which is currently in the southern District around Grand Rapids would be a better fit in the north District.

These two areas have more in common with the north District.

More affluent neighborhoods compared to south working areas and little manufacturing industry there like in the south, there is no issues with low cost housing or housing density.

There is little minority population and issues that this population would be concerned with.

These changes could provide for removing the four rural Townships to the west in Ottawa County from the north District that do not fit.

South District would have to be expanded slightly to make up for these population changes in the north.

In general the State House maps drawn for the area around Grand Rapids are well considered and will represent voters accurately except for the addition yesterday of Vergennes of 87 that include Ada Cascade and Kentwood St. I.

It's a very different farming less affluent community and does not fit.

Thanks again for listening to public comment.

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

Next in line is Joe Bower.

>> Good morning I hope I'm on now.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yes, you are.

>> Good morning I live in Kalamazoo.

My comments reflect a concern about the redrawn map for the State House seat in Kalamazoo.

I lived in the City for 29 years but I'm very much a citizen of the greater Kalamazoo region.

My church is in Parchment my doctor is in Oshtemo and do much of our shopping in Kalamazoo Township I enjoy downtown Kalamazoo many cultural amenities we have friends all across the County.

In fact, as a resident of the region I have as much in common with Kalamazoo's east side as I do with a resident on the western edge of Portage.

This regional mindset is shared by everybody I know and it's often reflected in the way our local Governments and businesses and non-profits work together to guide regional economic prosperity provide services like fire protection, deliver healthcare, address environmental concerns like PFAS contamination in the local watershed.

I'm very concerned the proposed State House District will impede this regional collaboration.

It's my understanding that the new map mostly mirrors Kalamazoo City borders.

And as the region's center and its oldest most urban and poorest community Kalamazoo faces issues that its neighboring communities do not.

At the same time the City is home to two hospitals the County Government colleges community amenities and social services.

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So to me the redrawn map will divide our region.

I fear the separation could prompt other communities to leave Kalamazoo on its own to provide services and address challenges that while lying within the borders of the City effect the entire region.

Please reassess the draft map and consider changing it so that the City of Kalamazoo is not separated from its neighbors but remains an engaged part of the region.

Thank you for your consideration.

And thank you for your service on this important Commission.

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

Next in line is Reed Rosado.

>> Hi, can you hear me.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yes, we can.

>> My name is Reed Rosado I'm a lifelong resident of Ottawa County and in Holland Michigan.

Not much would get in college student on a day without classes but speaking on behalf of my fellow Ottawa County residents is worth it.

Proud member of the fastest growing County in the State of Michigan.

I'm also a proud member of the fact that Ottawa County is the largest density of Latino Americans in Michigan.

The Latino population directly coincides with the growth of Ottawa County of a whole and people of color are coming to this part of Michigan for a reason and that is opportunity.

I feel the progress we made in Ottawa County would be harmed if the current map is used our values and way of life is something people want to be a part of and truly honest and fair redistricting process will protect this progress and keep Ottawa County whole.

Lakeshore thrive in the west and agricultural thrive across the county.

The keyword in all of this is thrive.

The phrase I will use if it ain't broke don't fix it keeping Ottawa County whole is working.

Putting a thriving community in three risks minimizing if not silencing thousands and must not be pursued.

Again a truly fair redistricting process will keep Ottawa County whole at the Federal level.

I'd like to thank all of your for your work on the Commission and hope you will protect the growth and future of Ottawa County by keeping it whole thank you.

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

Next in line is Ofelia.

>> Buenos-Dias.

Southwest Detroit and Down River.

[ Speaking Spanish ]

In southeast Detroit.

Thank you.

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

Number 17, Commissioner or Sarah Reinhardt?

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Hi Madam Chair, if we can wait just one moment, I'm waiting to get an interpreter on the line so Ofelia can provide her statement again and have it translated into English for you as well.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: That sounds good thank you.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: Madam Chair.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yes.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: While we are waiting for Ms. Reinhardt to facilitate that accommodation, I would like to strongly suggest that Ms. Ofelia's time be doubled to accommodate the translation that's going to need to be provided.

Her testimony is going to need to be translated in segments for the benefit of the Commission and the ease of the interpreter.

So if we could have two, two minute segments for Ms. Ofelia.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Ms. Reinhardt is she going to speak again with the translator translating.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Our translator is now present can you hear me?

>> Yes, can you guys hear me.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: You are a little quiet.

>> Can you hear me better.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: That is much better.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: Madam Chair I understand what you are getting to if it's real time translation then the two minute timeframe is appropriate.

But if it needs I was not sure the method in which it was going to proceed.

If it's in segments the time should be doubled if P it's relayed in real time the two minutes is appropriate.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Ana could you please relay to Ofelia she will be given that her statement will be translated into English for the Commission and that she will be given four minutes instead of two minutes to accommodate the time for translation.

>> Will do.

Okay we are all set.

Okay we are all set.

You can set the timer.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: You can let her know she can begin whenever she would like.

>> I think she froze.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: She froze, yep.

Thank you very much to the Commission for your time.

Part of the south Detroit region.

We just want representation for all our areas taking in consideration not everybody speaks English here.

And we would like our maps to be justice so we can have the correct representation among us.

So we sent you a map and the main interests for us is for you guys to take in consideration the communities of interest of people that don't speak English.

We also put in that map Dearborn.

So if you could please take that in consideration to the communities that our first language is not English.

So this will reflect in our maps and there is fairness all across the state.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission and thank you to our translator for assisting us there.

>> You guys are welcome.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: All right, we will now move on to Niki Becerra.

>> Can you guys hear me.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yes, we can.

>> I spoke yesterday and also sharing today.

I wanted to include with my public comment from yesterday which was not said is that I live in southwest Detroit.

I have lived here for 23 years.

I live in the zip code 48209.

And I wanted to also say that I would like 48209, 48210 and 48217 to be held together as a District because we have a lot of communities of interest that are similar.

As well as different socioeconomic background that would be better represented if we stayed together.

Thank you for your time.

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

Julianna Struyk.

>> Juliana, Struyk.

>> Good morning. Can you hear me.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: It's a little faint so if you could speak up it would be appreciated.

>> Can you hear me now is this better.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yes, that's better.

>> Great good morning, Commissioners my name is Juliana-Struyk a student at hope college in Michigan before I begin, I would like to take a moment to thank you for your work as this is not an easy task.



Touring my time at hope I come to love Ottawa County and its distinct culture and the college and Grand Haven and agricultural, manufacturing and even trapping directly connects these communities to Zeeland, Hudsonville Jamestown and even Allendale. The more time I spend here the more it becomes clear to me it's 'tis distinct culture provides a marketable environment within the County.

Thus Ottawa County should remain whole at the Federal level separating it in three Congressional districts would not only diminish the fastest growing County and hard to grow in the future.

The current draft maps do not make sense.

Holland is not in a community of interest with Kalamazoo.

It should be with the rest of Ottawa adds well as Allegan and Muskegon cones along the lakeshore.

People like me are choosing to come to Ottawa County for a reason, please keep Ottawa County together so we can build a brighter future.

Thank you so much.

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

At this point we move on to Jayne Ann O'Neil.

>> Good morning can you hear me?

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Yes, we can hear you.

>> Thank you, good morning, Commissioners. My name is Jayne O'Neil. I live in Bloomfield Township. When I moved here 30 years ago my mailing address was Birmingham and changed to Bloomfield Hills but I live in the Township where we have a beautiful senior center and a beautiful library.

Of our own.

A library that has reciprocity with the Birmingham library my children went to Birmingham public schools my church Birmingham church is in boom feel hills the City I take art classes at the Birmingham Bloomfield art center I'm saying all this because I've heard the District was drawn that includes Bloomfield Township and Bloomfield Hills but does not include Birmingham but it does include Auburn Hills and Orion Township this does not make a lot of sense to me.

Bloomfield and Birmingham are so similar and interconnected people often say one when they mean the other.

I ask that you reconsider this District with these communities of interest in mind.

And to each and every Commissioner I want to thank you personally for taking on this very important work.

I am very concerned about climate change and that's what I've been paying attention and worked on proposal two that created this Commission.

Fair voting districts is the only way we will get the right people in office who will address this crisis.

I firmly believe that this will impact the actual future of humanity.

Thank you.

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

At this point we will move on to Tony Daunt.

>> Good morning.

I'll ask like everybody else are you able to hear me right now?

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yes, we can hear you.

>> All right, thank you for the opportunity to speak.

Unlike some of the presenters of past like retired auto worker Bob king from yesterday or the various presenters from the AFLCIO I won't try to mislead you or obfuscate my name is Tony Daunt director of fair maps and paying attention to your work for some time and yes, I'm a conservative activist and been involved with GOP politicians. I have three point to make one the lack of transparency is kind of shocking and alarming the constantly changing agendas deadlines and methods of commenting are troubling and make it very different for people to participate.

The deletion and editing of comments is alarming as was brought up yesterday and charging hundreds of thousands of dollars the e-mails the public was promised they would have access and transparency in 2018 when they voted for this.

The excuses from staff do nothing to address those.

Second partisan fairness is below communities of interest.

And the folks insisting that it should be your primary focus are simply left wing partisans who will condemn anything that you do as a gerrymander if they don't like the results. You can't take politics out of politics. And maps that provide either side a chance to win majority in the given year the best you can do.

Finally the shape of these lines.

The proponents of this made a big show in 2018 about the shape of the lines.

Featuring even a commercial featuring the spokesperson jogging across multiple lines and folks are trying to gas light on what's important.

Now we have insanity like Ottawa County split three ways and Livonia split five ways and others.

I strongly urge you can to live up to transparency and release your e-mails for free and respect those on communities of interest.

Thank you.

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

Next in line is Sarah Leon Martinez.

>> Hello, can you hear me?

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yes, we can.

>> Okay my name is Sarah Leon Martinez.

And I am here to make a comment about southwest community.

I am not born but I was raised here in southwest Detroit.

I have lived here my entire life.

I personally know Ofelia who spoke before me.

I would like to take a moment to admire Ofelia because it's not easy to get in front of a crowd and speak a different language which I think is extremely important.

I was invited through DSDC which they both work for and it's my understanding they proposed a map that includes like-minded people in our community, our community of interest, we are a majority of Hispanic people here Hispanic owned businesses. It's extremely important that we have equal representation so that our community thrives.

We have always been looked down as a minority and I don't think that is fair.

We are getting stronger.

We are doing everything that we can to provide a better future for ourselves and children and for our grandchildren to come.

Thank you very much.

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

Morgyn.

>> Can you hear me okay.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yes, we can.

>> Commissioner members my name is Morgyn. I'm a junior at Hope College. As a resident of West Michigan, I'm here to speak about some concerns I have regarding the possible Congressional District lines that would divide several communities of interest in Ottawa County.

Commissioners Ottawa County is a vibrant lakeshore community up and down the shores of Lake Michigan and tourist visit to support small businesses and the beautiful state park in places like Grand Haven and Holland generations of residents made their livelihood because of opportunity created on the lakeshore.

Enjoying and preserving the lakeshores are not just ideal but a way of life for Ottawa County residents and it's a County that values Dutch and spread across the county. Accurate redistricting process was to keep Ottawa County intact at the Federal level and are not diminished.

There are clear and strong agricultural communities that run from Jamestown to Holland and Grand Haven and Hudsonville is I'm keenly aware how splitting Ottawa County will reduce our voice in Washington the interconnectedness or bluntly the sense of community is something I'm extremely fond of and Holland is Ottawa county and Grand Haven and James Township is Ottawa County, please do not divide in Congressional districts with some going to Midland and others going to the Indiana border.

We are not an afterthought, we are not a County, we are a destination and economic powerhouse and fastest growing in the state.

Keep us together and keep Ottawa County whole thank you.

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

Lisa DiRado.

>> Hello, my name is Lisa DiRado. I'm a lifelong Michigander. Hello, my name is Lisa DiRado. I'm a lifelong Michigander and am 26 years old from Northville.

The reason your Commission exist is to end partisan gerrymandering which means creating fair districts.

Not looking at the most significant way to end gerrymandering namely looking at partisanship, this far into the process is a negligence of your duties.

I've been told that your consultants suggest you don't use partisan conditions until later in the process.

That doesn't make sense.

How can you even begin to draw fair districts if you can't gauge partisanship? I collected signatures for Voters Not Politicians and I firmly support strengthening our democracy for letting citizens draw election maps.

But many did not support this Commission and some even sued to prevent you from doing this critical task.

Do you understand how important it is for you to succeed? If you fail, the idea of citizens drawing fair districts will be tarnished.

Your regular citizens just like me who believe in democracy.

You saw a problem gerrymandered districts and you want to be part of the solution.

Don't let anyone lead your Commission astray.

The best time to look at the partisanship of the districts was the beginning of the process.

The second best time is today.

No one will remember the people who led you astray.

They will remember the Michigan independent citizens Redistricting Commission.

Don't let us down.

Don't let democracy down.

Review your charge, assess the partisan may tricks now and draw fair districts.

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

Kim Gates.

>> Hi there good morning to begin with my name is Kim Gates and I live in Caledonia Township in Kent County and I want to thank the Commissioner for your time and effort to try to establish fair representative District maps.

It is evident that you work hard to take into consideration differing viewpoints.

For each person's opinion there is an opposite opinion.

In general I see progress away from the former maps.

Since this Commission has no representation from West Michigan, I'm sure that you value the input of West Michigan citizens and I do have a couple of considerations.

The House District maps seem fair until yesterday when Vergennes a remote rural farming community was added to House District 87 which contains Kentwood Ada and Cascade Townships.

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Which are much more dense in population and commercial business.

I asked you to reconsider including Vergennes in house District 87 and exclude them from that.

As for the Senate maps, I encourage you to add Cascade to the north of Kent County District Senate map.

Cascade is now included in a map that goes all the way from Kent County where it's located to the southern state line.

The Gerald R Ford is in Cascade which has a significant impact on Kent County and Cascade is integral to the Metro area and Kentwood to the west for shopping, business and neighborhoods.

Those rural, small town communities stretching south to the border of Michigan do not align with the interests of Cascade Township.

East Grand Rapids Township must also be included with the north District.

Because it's issues are consistent with those communities in that District.

East Grand Rapids does not align with the south District.

I'm sorry I have run out of time.

Thank you for your consideration.

I appreciate the time and effort you've put in.

>> CHAIR SZETELA:

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Manuel if you are able to unmute yourself you are free to address the Commission.

>> Can you hear me now?

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yes, we can.

>> Okay good morning my name is Manuel-Brenes and I reside at 4003 Rockwood Kalamazoo Michigan.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you the members of the committee.

I'm concerned that the proposed Districting in Kalamazoo is not inclusive enough because it's not included in the Kalamazoo Township where my family lives.

The Kalamazoo Township is a vital part of the City of Kalamazoo and needs to be included.

Since I moved to this area in 1990 Kalamazoo has been good to me and my family.

Our school District has students not only from the City but Kalamazoo Township and Oshtemo and distant areas in Parchment.

The Kalamazoo promise also provide scholarships to students of this surrounding areas and the purpose of that Kalamazoo promise was to promote economical growth and encourage the families to stay and not leave the area.

I'm a retired school administration.

Very proud of being in Kalamazoo.

And I feel in the way the map is being designed it disenfranchises my family.

Please include our Township in the new redistricting.

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We appreciate your effort and thank you for all the work you do.

Thank you.

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

Sofia-W.

>> Hi, can you guys hear me all right.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yes, we can.

>> Thank you for holding this meeting today I'm coming before you today asking you revisit your Congressional maps for West Michigan.

Much time is spend discussing Midland and flirt and Ottawa County and along the lakeshore have been divided without a second thought.

Holland is a cornerstone of the Lake Michigan shore and it's placed with Kalamazoo that has nothing to do with Lake Michigan Grand Haven and even Muskegon is placed in draft proposals with one map touching Saginaw Bay.

These are not communities of interest.

Please fix this.

Your task is not an easy one but you divided up Ottawa County and separated the heart of the lakeshore from neighboring communities.

This reduces the attention the Great Lakes will receive in Congress while minimizing the voice of Ottawa County at the Congressional level.

Before you vote on your draft maps, please correct this mistake.

It erodes trust and divide common sense when Ottawa County is split three ways at the Federal level while neighboring Kent County which has approximately 64,000 residents is more than double Ottawa County's population.

It's not divided a single time.

Ottawa County should not be in three Congressional districts.

It should be kept whole and part of a District that encompass the shoreline of Lake Michigan.

Thank you.

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

Bob Cinabro.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Bob, you are unmuted and free to address the Commission.

>> Bob, if you are speaking, we cannot hear you.

Looks like Bob may be experiencing some technical difficulties so we can move on to our next participant and return to him later.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Sarah Howard.

>> Good morning this is Sarah Howard.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Good morning.

>> Good morning, Commissioners good morning, Chair Szetela, it's good to see you this morning.



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As you know I'm the attorney for the fair maps project of the AFLCIO.

We want the Commission to be successful in drawing fair and constitutional maps.

We know that this is a difficult task.

There's no way for you to make everyone happy.

And it's impossible to perfectly reflect each community of interest in its own ideal configuration.

Communities of interest sometimes have vague boundaries, they can overlap, they can conflict with one another.

You already know that you will have to pick and choose which communities of interest to prioritize and you have already started to do so.

There will be communities of interest that you can't reflect in the State House map but that you can in the State Senate or vice versa.

As you have to pick and choose between communities of interest, remember that you have six other criteria that you must follow.

When multiple communities of interest exist the Constitution of Michigan obligates you to prioritize the communities of interest that best help you draw a map that complies with the other six constitutional criteria.

Including partisan fairness.

There are plenty of submissions in the portal and for public comment that will help you get to fair maps.

We already know and you probably do too that your draft map disproportionately and significantly favor one political party over the other.

This is contrary to what the voters intended when they amended the Constitution.

In order to fix this and to get to partisan fairness you will have to change your maps to prioritize different combinations of communities of interest than what you have now.

Michigan Constitution doesn't permit a map that adheres to a certain set of communities of interest but has a 5% efficiency gap.

It does permit a map which adheres to a different set of.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission Ms. Howard.

Kyle Stefanski.

>> Can you hear me.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yes.

>> Hello, my name is Kyle Stefanski I want to thank you, I want to thank you all for allowing me to address the Commission again.

I'm a lifelong Michigander who is born and raised in Warren.

Again I want to say I really appreciate all the hard work the Redistricting Commission is doing to redraw our District maps.

It is very important that it gets done.

We need maps that reflect partisan fairness because our current District maps are lacking it.

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Today I would like to give some comments on how the City of Warren should be redrawn in regards to State Senate districts.

Warren should not be divided into multiple State Senate districts like it is currently proposed.

People living in Warren should be able to have their voices heard since it is the third largest City in Michigan.

Warren is also home to important employers such as General Motors the U.S. Army and Stellantis I believe all of Warren should be in the same State Senate District.

Thank you for your time.

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

Kurt.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Kurt you are unmuted and free to address the Commission.

Kurt, if you are speaking, we cannot hear you.

It looks like Kurt may be experiencing technical difficulties we can move on to the next participant and return to him later.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: John Keenan.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: This participant is not currently present.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Okay, Asm-Rahman.

>> Good morning can you hear me.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yes, we can.

>> Hello, my name is Asm-Rahman part of Hamtramck and APA Michigan thank you for taking on communities of interest so seriously.

On June 2537 community of interest map was submitted by one of our community member Rebecca Islam highlighting the Bangla Town here in Hamtramck.

However I'm concerned the draft map that were drafted this week are going to split the community of interest.

Please note we are watching the mapping process as they are being drawn and want to pay attention to our communities.

I want to ask you make the draft map more acceptable posting them on the redistricting website.

We are eagerly awaiting for the roll out so we can analyze them.

So it doesn't happen.

I humbly request you to modify the suggested map to include our community that's left all around Hamtramck and I want to thank you in advance for your consideration.

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

Amanda Jaczkowski.

>> Can you hear me.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yes, we can.

>> So my name is Amanda Jaczkowski, Hamtramck resident and concerned about lack of attention given to the Bangla Town map for request for the community of interest.

I have attended multiple events hosted by API vote and Rebecca Islam have listened to other hearings and stuff as well.

And almost each time a Commissioner has recognized that Rebecca's work is vocal in the process as a citizen and kind of alarming to me to see that the map is not only split into two but three different sections.

And that significantly reduces the power that her voice has and her community has which is also my community and it's very concerning that it's split into three sections when it has been recognized this has been one of the more vocal communities of there in this process.

This is a very high immigrant population.

It's a high, there is strong ethnic and economic ties, everything is there.

That would make this a community of interest for this mapping process as has been explained to us and what a community of interest is.

And so I would just request that you really reevaluate your mapping lines, the drafted lines for the Banglatown Township and Yemen town area and make sure there is a unified voice provided for these people.

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

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Madam Chair number four Irma-Glacier has joined the meeting.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Let's go to Irma-Glacier.

>> Good morning, can you hear me.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yes, we can.

>> Good thank you.

I want to thank the members of the Commission for the vital and difficult job you are doing I'm Irma from West Bloomfield and live in the most gerrymandered District in our state I feel that we've had no voice in many of the decisions that impacted the issues that are so important to us.

I look to the Commission to remedy this situation.

It is essential all the members of the Independent Redistricting Commission consider fairness in drawing the maps that will determine Michigan citizens future.

Fairness means the communities of interest should be considered.

Contiguous communities should be considered.

And we should be eliminating the cracking of the cracking to dilute voters will or packing districts.

You have to be fair.

Because that is most important criterion to give voice to majority of our state's citizens.

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And to help to restore the trust in our Government.

I thank you for allowing me to speak.

And I especially thank Sarah Reinhardt for going that extra mile to get me on.

Thank you.

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

Thank you, Ms. Reinhardt, for all you do.

All right Curtis Fernandez.

I want to make sure I don't skip him by accident.

>> Kurtis.

>> Are you able to hear me.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yes, we are.

>> Hello, my name is Kurtis Fernandez I'm a community organizer with API vote Michigan.

I want to thank the Commissioners for all the work they have done thus far as I appreciate that this is very complex work.

Similar to the very recent comments of two Hamtramck residents that we've just heard, I wanted to call to attention the fact that the current draft maps split the Bengali community in Hamtramck and Detroit into three State House districts.

Our organization API vote Michigan does a lot of work in Bangla Town and Hamtramck and Detroit to provide services to the community the Bengali and wider community.

And if this community is split into three different districts that may mean we have to advocate to three different state reps for the same needs.

API vote submitted a map back in June highlighting this community of interest.

That we asked to be taken into consideration.

We've also had the community speak up during meetings last week.

The Commission has said that they would revisit the maps but thus far we haven't seen any updates and we are just getting worried given that the Commission will have to start deliberations soon.

Again, I want to thank the Commission for their efforts and with the various communities in Metro Detroit and throughout the state.

And I trust that you will listen to the feedback that we have all given.

Please keep Bangla Town together.

Thank you.

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

Amanda Oster.

>> Hi, can you hear me Szetela se yes, we can.

>> Perfect good morning and thank you for the opportunity to provide comments this morning.

It's my hope that you as Commissioners will listen to the input from residents like myself when drawing the new voting maps.

I'm a resident of Midland County and have been for the past almost 30 years.

I've been following the Commission's work very closely.

I know yesterday there was a lot of discussion surrounding Midland County I'm here today to voice my support for keeping Midland County whole not separating out the City and including Midland County and its entirety with its neighboring rural counties of Gladwin, Isabella, Clare and Gratiot. Watching the hearing I know the flooding of 2020 in Gladwin and Midland have been discussed to be clear the City of Midland had major flooding along with the flooding in Sanford and in Gladwin County. That is why it's so important that Midland and Gladwin County should remain in the same District to ensure continuing and united effort in our recovery. Further I support map 179 in keeping Midland and the proposed 13th District that keeps Midland whole and in the westward facing rural District.

Putting Midland into an urban District will not only dilute the voices in Saginaw and Flint as your expert Bruce Adelson has stated but I believe it will also violence the voice of all of us in Midland as well.

Keep Midland whole and in a District with its rural neighboring counties of Gladwin Isabella Clare and Gratiot thank you.

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

Emma hall?

>> Can you hear me.

>> Yes, we can.

>> Perfect. As stated, my name is Emma Hall.

And I'm a student at Hope College in Holland, Michigan.

I want to thank you first of all for taking the time to listen to what all of us have to say and I know that your job is not an easy task.

Although I was not born and raised in Ottawa County, I have come to love the area as well as the people in it.

I have loved living on the coast of Lake Michigan and I know this is something I share in common with many others across Ottawa County.

Lake Michigan is an integral part of the economy of Ottawa County and enjoying utilizing and protecting the Great Lakes are not just ideals but a way of life for many of these residents.

This is shown through the generations of residents who have made Mary livelihood and supported their family based on the opportunities created from living by the lakeshore. A fair redistricting process requires that Ottawa County remain intact at the Federal level.

However be lakeshore Counties such as Muskegon and Allegan splitting up the Ottawa County into three Federal districts would not only create inefficient sent and inaccurate representation but also harm the future prosperity of Ottawa County.

Again like I stated before I was not born in Ottawa County.

But I have realized how the how the place is connected so closely to the lakeshore but also the agricultural.

By splitting up the County you end up hurting the agricultural voices of the blueberry farmers in grand Haven and different producers outside of Zeeland and vegetable and flower growers in Hudsonville and Jamestown Ottawa County is the fastest growing County for a reason because we have opportunities Ottawa County has to offer. If the committee decides to keep the current draft of the map it will diminish the opportunity people are seeking as well as voices so I urge you please not to break up Ottawa County and I also thank you for listening.

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

Adam Kroczeleski.

>> Hi, can you hear me.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yes, we can.

>> All right great.

Thank you for holding these meetings first of all.

I know it's a lot to from a lot of different people from a lot of different places of the state. I just want to make a few comments with regards to where I live Arenac County, I was a County Commissioner for six years and I've looked through several of the proposed maps, house Senate and Congressional.

And there are only a few actually I think there may only be one Congressional map that actually includes Arenac with what I would call our communities of interest based on social, economic and civic ties.

We Arenac and Bay County are very closely linked.

We share Bay Arenac, ISD intermediate school District students into to Bay City for career technical education.

The Bay Area community foundation oversees the funds for the grants that help Arenac County.

We share rotary clubs, many residents live in Arenac but work in Bay City and we have residents of Bay City that work in Arenac particularly in the school District so I know we are a smaller part of the state but Arenac is definitely part of the Great Lakes region because we rely on those more urban areas and those urban areas also rely on us.

And so we are very deeply connected.

We have the same shoreline.

We share the same Government organizations and I just would like to draw that to your attention and I thank you for your considering those facts.

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

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: That participant is not currently present.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Okay Rachel Atwood.

>> Hello, can you hear me.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yes, we can.



>> Hi, I'm Rachel Atwood thank you for the opportunity to speak this morning. I'm a resident of Georgetown Township I'm also a precinct delegate and I'm speaking on behalf of those in my precinct. I'm disappointed that a Commissioner from southeast has ripped our community out of Ottawa County to place it with a Grand Rapids focused District. Georgetown Township is Ottawa County through and through whether it's road funding, school districts or the sheriff's office we rely on all of it is Ottawa County. I'm frustrated this Commission has no representation from West Michigan on it. And while nothing can be done about it at this point you can draw maps that reflect input you receive from Michigan in public comment. As it stands now the map first drawn by Commissioner Clark is atrocious. We have 50,000 people in it and kept whole and Ottawa County which has roughly 290,000 was cannibalized not two but three Congressional districts perhaps this was an oversight because none of you know the area well but it has not gone unnoticed for those of us who live here. It's shameful you have not revisited this area Georgetown h Hudsonville and Jamestown are growing communities in Ottawa County and we share values background and heritage in Ottawa County. To break us off to places with Kent County is wrong and I'm asking you before the maps receive a vote. I know your task is difficult but to see the way that you've carved up West Michigan and our lakeshore communities is really shocking. And it does not all line with the values that we prioritize here in West Michigan. Georgetown Township we associate with Ottawa County and the lakeshore. Not with Grand Rapids. Georgetown Township aligns much more with Hudsonville, Zeeland Holland and grand Haven please listen to us who are speaking we took time out of our day to attend and participate in the meetings and we appreciate your time and we ask you keep Georgetown Township with Ottawa County and keep Ottawa County whole. Give the Lake Michigan shoreline a proper and united voice.

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

>> Thank you so much.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: David Ryden.

>> Good morning. Can I be heard?

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yes, you can.

>> Great. Thank you. My name is David Ryden. I teach electro politics at Hope College and I've written extensively on redistricting and fair and effective representation. I want to stress the importance of Counties to represent communities of interest and why Ottawa County must be treated as a whole in the final Congressional maps. Counties are the building blocks by which Government is organized.

They are Central to how we vote to how benefits are distributed to how programs are implemented at the state and Federal levels.

Hence courts have always encouraged the preservation of natural political boundaries IE Counties in the process.

Ottawa County residents share a distinctive ethnic and cultural character, rooted in the immigrant story first of Dutch settlers in the 1800s and more recently in the success of Hispanic immigrants who populate the County.

They share economic interests in a strong manufacturing base to the fruit fields and the family farms across the County.

The robust economy has made Ottawa County and magnet for young and owl the beaches parks trails lakes and rivers they have a vested interest not only in enjoying those resources but in preserving them.

Currently Holland is in a District with Kalamazoo both are wonderful cities but distinctive.

To lump them in the same District is to diminish the representation of each.

Meanwhile Hudsonville Georgetown Jamestown and others are with Grand Rapids but no one would contend those towns have more in common with Grand Rapids than with Holland and the rest of the County.

We know from the long history of partisan gerrymandering that the quickest way to nullify effective representation of group interests is to split, crack and fragment them into separate districts.

Please don't do that to the residents of Ottawa County.

Thank you.

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

At this time we have one of our participants who is not present earlier who has arrived so we will go up to Carrie Hatcher-Kay.

>> Good morning, Commission I really appreciate your taking the time to listen.

Good morning, Commission I really appreciate you taking the time to be as diligent and thorough.

I'm a clinical psychologist and made it my life's work and passion to be a listener.

To help individuals, couples, families and communities heal.

It has come to my awareness and close personal connection that there is a community of people who have been punished for mistakes that they have made and end up being punished for a long time and maintained in cell blocks called prisons.

And they are not counted when they it's time for them to be counted in the census from the communities from which they come. But until now have been counted in the

County where they excuse me let met turn that out where they have been imprisoned.

When my daughter goes to college, she is counted in the District from which she is home unless she wants to choose to change.

We need as listeners and you have chosen and I really appreciate your service to be a listener to those people and those voices because that's how our communities will do our best.

Will do their best for healing for all voices to be heard.

So prison gerrymandering artificially inflates the voting power of Counties with prisons and disempowering Counties where incarcerated individuals come from and I encourage you to look at how to end prison gerrymandering presentation ID01465 in our submissions from the voting access for all coalition and a number of members of our community our coalition has spoken to you over the last couple moves and appreciate your good listening and taking to Danny Jones and Jenny and others after their shares.

And invite you to go and look at the volume of public comment on.

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

>> And so that was submitted.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: All right John Keenan.

>> Hello.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Hello.

>> Yes, can you hear me.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yes, we can.

>> I want to thank you for putting me back in the lineup I was having technical difficulties my name is John Keenan and after reviewing the plans I'm not sure you understand the reason you exist is to end partisan gerrymandering so the fact you are not looking at partisan issues this far into the process to me appears to be hindering your work.

I've heard that your consultants suggest you don't use partisan conditions until the end of the process.

But that just seems ridiculous.

How can you ever begin to draw fair districts if you can't gauge partisanship? Your job is to draw districts as close to 0 political bias as possible.

Yes, you have other requirements too.

But creating fair districts across the state is critical. I know you are citizens who want to make a difference.

You saw the gerrymandered districts of the past and you wanted better.

I want better too.

Don't let anyone hijack your Commission.

Begin now to assess the partisanship of the districts you are drawing and prioritize partisan fairness.

That is why you exist.

That is literally your job.

Please consider the importance of partisan issues as you continue your work of redistricting.

Thank you so much.

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

So we are going to go to Bing.

>> Good morning, Commissioners and thank you Madam Chair for the opportunity to address you.

My name is Bing Goei.

I am a resident of Grand Rapids.

I've lived in Grand Rapids since 1960 as we arrived as a family of immigrants from, we were all born in Indonesia.

I'm currently a member of the west member Asian American association and our community of interest is the Asian American and islander of the greater Grand Rapids Metropolitan area.

Gerrymandering has to divided our community and other minority communities leaving us unrepresented and disenfranchised.

We believe the previous gerrymandering is a large factor for the fact that no single person of color has held a state office from the greater Grand Rapids Metro area for the last decade.

We when we don't have a place at the table, we don't have a voice.

The Asian American population has commonalities with larger and have lack of representation of West Michigan Asian American citizens at the City, County and state levels of Governments.

And the greater Grand Rapids Metro area Asians are one of the fastest growing population our needs concerns contributions and presence are often unheard and we received care relief funding of 25 million designated for minority and minority owned business not one Asian business owner was invited to discuss the plan.

If it were not for the Asian American and having a seat at the table, we would be prevented for getting the much needed COVID relief funds and we face many issues as other marginalized communities and AAPI have difficulty accessing medical and mental health healthcare, language barriers, transportation issues, at risk senior citizens, a community divided by gerrymandering is a weakened community and municipals of Kentwood and Wyoming are home to large of minority.

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

Louise-Weller.

>> Can you hear me? Can you see me.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yes, we can hear you.

>> Okay, thank you to the Commission for this very difficult work that you're doing.

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I am Louise-Weller a resident of Livonia and it's getting cut in pieces and gerrymandering the politically balanced City of Livonia I'm asking to prioritize partisan fairness.

Livonia is a City of about 95,000 citizens almost the ideal size for one contiguous State House legislative District.

In the past four years mayor and City Council elections have been won by only a few hundred votes out of thousands of votes.

The last State House legislative race was won by 237 votes out of 58,667.

That's a definition of a balanced elaborate.

I am asking the Commission to resist the pressure to draw maps for Southeast Michigan that would split apart the politically balanced City of Livonia and actually cause rather than solve further gerrymandering.

Please keep the contiguous community of interest of the City of Livonia intact at the State House legislative District.

Further, please also consider that Livonia is located in western Wayne County and shares a community of interest with other western Wayne County communities such as Canton Plymouth and Northville.

The communities are also coming into political balance.

So the whole area is becoming more balanced.

Keeping western Wayne together would result in a politically balanced Congressional District.

Please avoid the pressure to gerrymander western Wayne and especially the City of Livonia.

Thank you very much.

>> CHAIR SZETELA:

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: That participant is not currently present.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Jennifer Schlicht.

>> Hello, can you hear me.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: We can hear you.

>> Thank you so much.

Good morning, Commissioners my name is Jennifer I live in Ypsilanti born and raised Michigan this is my home and integrity of our democracy is near and dear to my heart and I have worked on it many years.

I would like to thank you all for your hard work and two concerns I have at the moment the first is disenfranchisement of prison Michiganders and residents of the community so they will return to upon their release.

To cast votes for those representing their home and families and children.

This Master of Social Justice and fair representation and be fair with partisan ship released e-mails from 2010 redistricting cited streets three miles from my parents' house where I was born and raise to make it easier to cram voters in the District and

who I have spoke to over the years are disenfranchised because of these measures and why voters in 2018 large reason voted for this Commission to exist.

They have a vote but their voice is muffled I'm worried that residents in Hamtramck as we heard earlier and other communities would feel the same way and urge that you make this a priority to avoid this happening.

Your responsibility is great but so is the opportunity to restore faith in our state Government and Congressional delegation.

And to create a truly representative democracy.

Please consider maps submitted from nonpartisan groups throughout the vote AFLCIO and okay folks on language with uniting community factors and the Voting Rights Act.

Thank you so much for your time and thank you for the work you do.

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

Angie Miller.

>> Good morning can you hear me.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yes, we can.

>> Thank you.

Hi, my name is Angie Miller and I'm a lifelong resident of Saginaw County.

I'd like to take the opportunity to thank the Commission for all the work you're doing.

I spoke to you in person in Midland in May and virtually on September 20.

Today I am again speaking to you about the Congressional map which includes Saginaw Genesee and Bay Counties.

And there was discussion yesterday regarding the four Congressional maps that have been drawn and Congressional maps that could be eliminated.

Much of the discussion is centered around Saginaw and Genesee Counties.

I ask you to remember on Monday, September 20 there Adelson and the Commission reviewed the newly drawn Saginaw Genesee and Bay County Congressional map, District 11.

Mr. Adelson took a look at the election result data and stated and I quote the election results do provide for an opportunity to elect here.

Mr. Adelson at the time said he preferred the map with the Saginaw and Genesee and Bay to the map which Saginaw and Genesee split.

When the Commission and Mr. Adelson reviewed the map which included Midland, he specifically looked at Midland election result data.

Mr. Adelson stated Midland, not only doesn't support candidates of choice but overwhelmingly doesn't support candidates of choice.

It potentially dilutes the minority voting strength.

Mr. Adelson further stated to me there is more of a compelling reason not to include it from what we have seen from the elections it has more of a dilutive effect.

I realize you have some hard decisions ahead of you.



I ask that you consider the data in this instance the data clearly supports a Congressional map that connects Genesee, Saginaw and Bay Counties. Also when reviewing the other maps both Senate and house, I asked that you remember the minority community.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.  
Andrew Thompson.

>> Good morning my name is Andrew Thompson and I'm an employee of the AFT local 6244, AFLCIO. I'm a 2021 artist fellow and concerned citizen. I live in Michigan 14 District State House 6 and State Senate one. What we know is wrong about letting politicians draw the districts are ability to cherry pick the electorate packing districts over here and diluting districts over there doing so has eliminated partisan competitiveness and does not resemble the citizens of the State of Michigan and more people voting for democrat and the republican holds the majority of State House and Senate and important to democracy is the idea we take turns one party might be in power today but another party in the future because we take turns. There is one party that has been resistant to taking turns and has used tools and tricks including drawing District maps to artificially hold on to power. It is a hard job that you're doing and I appreciate what you are doing. The goal should be to make politicians be holden to the people by having more competitive districts such that if either party wants to be in power, they have to work harder to get our votes. Even if the District lines look irregular and break up cities cross municipal lines or County lines guess what they already do that. But right now they are doing it in service of one party over another. I live in Detroit and am unsympathetic to speakers worried about their cities and Counties being divided up. It's inevitably where I live. Let's have competitive districts such that voters have a voice and a choice. Thank you very much for listening.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission.  
Now, that the opportunity for in person and remote public commentary has concluded, without objection we will hear from individuals  
We have one more.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Yes, one more for first person first round.  
>> Good morning.  
My name is Mr. Gibson I'm a fourth generation Detroiter born and raised.

I would like to thank you all what you're doing to draw these fair maps for Michigan. And I really just wanted to ask you all to take into consideration the wants and needs of Detroit and compare it to surrounding areas when it's time to draw these maps. That's it thank you.

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

All right. Now, that the opportunity for in person and remote public commentary has concluded, without objection we will hear from individuals Seeking to provide a second two-minute public comment. Hearing no objection, we will now proceed with individuals seeking to provide a second public two-minute comment.

Individuals who signed up and indicated they would like to provide live, remote public commentary to the Commission will now be allowed to do so. And we will do the same process as the first round.

Please step to the microphone you will have two minutes and please conclude when your two minutes is up and you hear the timer.

So number one I believe that is you in the Peach shirt.

>> So I was speaking previously about the need for specificity and evident based analysis of the communities of interest.

And I would just like to bring up the rural urban divide I have seen this Commission honor in creating rural districts versus urban districts.

I have seen it happen on several occasions.

I would like to know first of all why you chose to go with that premise.

I come from a rural area myself and I see no particular reason to separate rural areas from City areas.

It's not like we can't have a political District that encompass both.

And I ask for specificity when you are using these communities of interest to inform your decision because I have seen comments that say they need a rural area or they need their rural District separated because they like campfires or they enjoy flowers.

And they have values as if people in the City don't have those things or like those things.

And I need to know that that type of bigotry is not informing your decision.

And I've also seen claims of rural districts where if you look up specifically where they are from it's a housing development right on top of the City.

There was one who said she wants nothing to do with Lansing and this woman is 13 minutes' drive from Sparrow hospital.

If that person is -- if that COI, if you just use a general way of addressing it and this is the type of community of interest that you're using, then I don't know that you are actually being well informed as to what is or isn't a rural District if you do choose to use a rural District.

Thank you.

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

Number two, Anthony S.

>> Okay thank you so much Commission for being here for three days in Detroit. It's greatly appreciated that most populous area of the state.

I'd like to agree with the commenter who just spoke.

I want to get to my visual aid in a second but you know I saw these comments yesterday on the public comment portal and they look like they were copy paste like a shame e-mails you get and it said Szetela resign you are not really independence you are former democrats and I said you know what that might be the case.

I used to vote in whatever donate to democrats myself but that is really a function of two things.

This law that I mentioned yesterday how it limits Michigan to two major political parties and says there will only be two and it's also a function of the non-specific vague designation of nonaffiliated that I've mentioned here.

Nonaffiliated just means you're not affiliated by the two political parties by the Michigan law.

It's a self-enforcing partisan cat us quo machine with so many democrats and republicans on this Commission and that the designation of nonaffiliated it's not specific. Are you independent? Are you a former democrat, former republican, you could be a green party you could be a libertarian you could be anywhere so I think the next ten years around the nonaffiliated designation really needs to be change and allow for greater specificity of what your real affiliations are.

I want to get back to here is your Congressional map I drew on the Metro Detroit and looking at Mickey Mouse here and Mickey Mouse ears here and here and once again I would like to state these tiny Down River Allen Park Melvindale and Lynn can't park have no community in interest with Warren centerline Hazel Park, Madison Heights, fricking Harper Woods. I don't understand putting that together and the steel worker did not want to be with these either and neither do I thank you.

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

At this point we will return to our live remote commentary.

We have one more go ahead, ma'am.

>> Again my name is Kate.

Thank you for allowing me to speak and thank you for all the good and very diligent work you are doing I wanted to talk about western Wayne County as a separate Congressional District.

Western Wayne County is made up of a lot of communities with groups in them.

There is a high population of Blacks and south Asian as well as the Arabic community.

And I would just say that I would encourage you to make a Congressional District incorporating all of western Wayne County together.

Also I'll go back to what I said before about Livonia being split into five portions.

It's not a way to make a community feel together.

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And being able to work together to get things done.

So I would encourage you to look at that proposed map again.

And look at it and consider very strongly not splitting Livonia up into five parts.

Thank you.

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

All right returning to remote person comments.

You have two minutes to address the Commission we will follow the same process as before.

And please when I call your name allow the staff to unmute you and you can address the Commission.

The first in line is James Gallant.

>> James Gallant, Marquette, these are my opinions. And, Commissioners, why did you just allow your self-identified secretary without a vote, Sarah Reinhardt, to unilaterally suspend the public comments rules on the fly?

That is like how far removed you folks really are of reality. There are a few rules here, you know. This kind of rule and takes a little second. And your speaker Tony Daunt, you know, spoke of the promises of the constitutional amendment.

And some of those making those promises may very well have been charlatans and fraudsters and I see them very clearly. I've talk to them.

In my opinion the 2018 prop two promises, according to the Michigan Supreme Court decision in Voters Not Politicians' cross complaint, as in the, you know, the fiscal house report determined, that the promise was a revived reiteration of the Commission on legislative apportionment that was already contained in the Constitution.

Changing the name to the Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission, adding unaffiliated members and updating the former unconstitutional formula in the criteria and now you have current criteria.

That is what is said, and the Supreme Court decided that.

They said this is going to take a constitutional amendment. And then 20, 18 years later it happened.

Okay.

So the codified rules of procedure approved by vote of that iteration of the former iteration of this Commission is controlling for these proceedings, and that is the promise. But, you know, some people would like to not, you know, recognize that.

So I'd like to expand upon Commissioner Lett's comments who personally put these fundamental breaches of the legitimate rules of procedure. He is the one that started this whole thing in favor of his own personal values as the Chair -- the Commissioner's first chairman.

He just started. There was no semblance to vote at all. What do you want to do?

Good to go. He started wheeling and dealing. And he talked about the deals that are made in the cloak room. They call that the cloak room, back when they had cloak

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rooms, you know, that is where the real deals happened. I was reading on the Internet Commissioner Lett was quoted.

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

Sarah Howard?

>> Good morning again Commission.

My name is Sarah Howard. I represent the fair maps project.

Last week we recommended some changes you could make to your first draft State Senate map to help it move to partisan fairness with a 0% efficiency gap.

Given your current State House map is 0.3% less biased towards the republican party than the intentional 2011 gerrymander we wanted to provide some help to fix the State House as well.

First, we are concerned that your Detroit area maps will reduce the number of representatives from the City of Detroit.

We believe that the Voting Rights Act analysis will require you to make some substantial changes there.

Unpacking Ann Arbor Greater Lansing, Kalamazoo and Saginaw would give these Metro areas much better representation and would greatly help the partisan fairness of your overall state house map.

A VRA analysis using primary elections may show that it's possible to draw two democratic leaning districts between Saginaw and Bay City with at least one District's primary dominated by voters of color.

Keeping Flint together would allow you to draw majority Black District and additional districts nearby that would improve the overall partisan fairness of the map.

we fear that VRA analysis will show that 37% is not enough in this part of the state.

Reuniting Albion with Battle Creek would benefit that heavily African/American City much more than putting it with the overwhelmingly white rural areas that you have done.

Restoring the southwest lakeshore District would be much better from a community of interest perspective and for partisan fairness.

We want you to succeed in drawing fair and constitutional maps and this is how we think it can be accomplished.

Thank you for your time this morning.

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

This concludes our public comment for this morning.

However, I'd like to mention that all e-mail and mailed public comment is provided to the Commission before each meeting.

And Commissioners also review

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the public comment portal on our  
www.Michigan.gov/MICRC website  
on a regular basis.

We appreciate everyone who  
provides public comment in  
whatever way you choose and  
invite you to keep sharing your  
thoughts communities of  
interests and maps.

Without objection we are going to take a 12 minute break so everybody can stretch and  
take care of some personal needs hearing no objections we are going to stand in recess  
until 11:30, it's currently 11:18, thank you everybody.

[ Recess ]

>> CHAIR SZETELA: All right, everybody ready? Sorry guys so as Chair of the  
Commission I recall this Commission back to order at is 11:32 a.m. secretary could you  
please take the roll?

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Commissioners. Please say present when I call your  
name. If you are attending the meeting remotely, please announce during roll call you  
are attending remotely and disclose your physical location.

We will start with Doug Clark.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Juanita Curry.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Anthony Eid?

>> COMMISSIONER EID: Present.

Brittini Kellom?

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?

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Rebecca Szetela?

Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Janice Vallette?

>> COMMISSIONER VALLETTE: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Erin Wagner?



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

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Richard Weiss?

>> COMMISSIONER WEISS: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Dustin Witjes?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: 12 Commissioners are present.

And there is a quorum.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you, Ms. Reinhardt.

Next, I'd like to move on to unfinished business agenda 5A complete business from the previous meeting so we skipped one the process for deliberation of draft proposed maps and determining the number of maps which maps to post as draft maps prior to public hearing without objection I would like our Executive Director Sue Hammersmith to facilitate on this topic please proceed Ms. Hammersmith.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Sarah Reinhardt has volunteered to chat about the deliberation portion of the process, so I would like her to weigh in here.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT:

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Could you repeat that.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: There is also the calendar that was unfinished business.

Do you want me to work on that part? Szetela sed whichever you prefer.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Okay.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: I'll go first.

Hi guys I just want to come up here so you can see me.

All right so as you all know you're going to go into deliberations in the near future and I M all just going to read through the process that you all have already adopted.

Which can be found online under the meeting materials and notices Section.

It's called mapping process and procedures.

And this is the deliberation of draft proposed maps for the public hearings.

So the purpose of the deliberations that you all are going into is really three different things to make final adjustments and drafts that individual Commissioners created that way want to take into the public hearings.

And also for you all to decide which collaborative maps you all have collectively worked on that you want to take as a group into is the public hearings as well.

So I'll start with prior to deliberations sessions similar to when you all come into mapping sessions, this process outlines you all researching and reviewing not only public comment but the drafts themselves.

Looking over any that have been submitted, the ones you created collaboratively to familiarize yourself with them.

And also additional alternative maps could be submitted at this time.

So that means that any Commissioner who wants to submit one draft of each District type could do so or if you only want to submit say a Congressional you can do so.

I believe the Commissioner decided yesterday that you would have to submit these by the beginning of the meeting next Monday, is that accurate? Okay, great.

All right. And also if you do submit it as a Commissioner, you do have the right to withdraw that if you decide hey, I submitted this but I don't want to submit it anymore. Going into deliberations the first is map adjustments.

So this is similar to the collaborative mapping format that you all are very familiar with right now.

You can make any final adjustments to your maps based on additional input from your consultants or additional public comment you received including partisan fairness analysis we anticipate to be occurring on Friday.

So any adjustments that you'd like to make and includes additional VRA analysis from Bruce.

And any alternative maps would also be subject to this analysis.

So that could be something that you as Commissioners if one of you has a map you can solicit that analysis from your consultants.

Or you can do it in a public session.

Similar to how like if you would like to create an alternative map you can do so during public session during your mapping session by directing EDS to pull that up for you.

All right so number two is determine number of draft proposed maps.

So I want to clarify something here.

The number of proposed maps that you take into the public hearings only the collaborative maps that you all have created during mapping sessions can be limited.

You cannot limit the total number of maps submitted by individual Commissioners.

Each Commissioner has the right to submit one map of each District type.

So you cannot tell you guys cannot tell yourself we are only going to take three total maps to public hearing.

Each Commissioner has the right to submit their own map for public hearing review.

But for the collaborative maps if you all decide you only want to take three collaborative maps per District type forward to the public hearings that is what you can limit.

This may be a discussion where you all have created two collaborative maps for like Congressional or something like that.

And maybe you decide you know, we don't really want to limit it, let's just take all of them.

And that makes it really easy in that case there wouldn't be a vote which is the next step in the process.

You wouldn't need to vote to eliminate one of those maps.

You could just take all of them and that would make it a pretty easy process.

Like I alluded to hear the next step in the process is voting if you decide for collaborative maps say you have three collaborative for Congressional but you decide collectively that you only want to take two to the public hearings, that is where the voting would come through and you all would do a series of like ranked votes to decide which ones you want to take forward.

But again if you all collectively decide we like all three of our Congressional maps and want to take all three then you could do that and a vote wouldn't be necessary. But a motion to take those forward to the public hearings would be necessary.

So that's really all there is here.

Oh, sorry I do want to go through the review of the draft maps.

So the deliberations consider you all presenting the maps that are up for being presented for public hearings.

And there is a process written out here to cover that.

So the Commission will you all will discuss maps as they are presented.

You will start with the collaborative maps and they will be presented to you all by your Chair or Vice Chair.

First you go in the order of how the maps were created.

So I believe the order of that would be State Senate and then Congressional and then house.

After that any individual Commissioner who has created an alternate map, they could like to take forth to the public hearings will be able to present that map to the Commission.

And similarly if any Commissioner wishes to withdraw their alternate map they can do so at that time as well.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Ms. Reinhardt Commissioner Orton has a question.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: What is up?

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: You said they would present be presented in the order that we made them, so Senate, house, Congressional or whichever way.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Yes.

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: Do we have to do them in that order?

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Not at all.

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: I don't like that order.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: This is how the process is outlined but if you would like to go in a different order you are welcome to do that.

As Doug always likes to say continual process improvement.

You all are more than welcome to edit this process as you see fit but just going over here what has been adopted by the Commission currently.

But the order this contemplates you would start with State Senate and any Commissioners who have their own individual State Senate plans would present after

the collaborative State Senate and proceeding into Congressional collaborative and other collaborative maps.

Commissioner Witjes?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: For the maps we create personally I just want to be reminded the ones if I were to create one of each, they have to be in by Monday morning before our meeting correct.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Correct.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Got it.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Any other questions?

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Eid?

>> COMMISSIONER EID: I understand that every Commissioner has the right to propose their own map for each of the three under the Constitution.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Uh-huh.

>> COMMISSIONER EID: But do all of those? I thought that was more of an end process? Do all of those need to go to the second round of public hearings?

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: That would be a determination for each individual Commissioner to make.

The Commission collectively cannot deny any one Commissioner their constitutional right to put forward a map during public hearings.

Any other questions? Any other questions on the process as it's laid out here? MC?

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Because we're talking about the deliberation process and you mentioned there was some mapping in there also, but I'm just thinking about how the full review of and the full sort of deliberative process will take place more or less Friday after we have partisan fairness.

And yeah, what I'm thinking about is Monday and Tuesday I'm thinking about the schedule.

That's what I'm thinking about, how we can use our time well and that this deliberative process you are outlining really feels like it's going to start on Monday.

Maybe we can take some pieces actions today and tomorrow but it just feels important to recognize we are potentially able to deliberate with all the tools we need after Friday. Or on Friday I suppose.

Is that accurate?

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: That is accurate as the process is laid out.

The first step of the deliberations is map adjustments based on input from your consultants and one example listed here is partisan fairness analysis.

However I will say that your VRA or your VRA counsel is also present so if there are any map adjustments you would like to make prior to deliberations, the Commission is very welcome to do so.

Although this is the process that you have adopted now, the Commission is always able to tweak them or maybe change the order.

Yeah.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: So for excuse me, Dr. Handley is going to be analyzing our collaborative maps, correct?

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Correct.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Will she also be looking at maps that individuals submit as well.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Yes.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Is that happening Friday or because we now have this Monday deadline will that be happening at some other point?

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: That's an excellent question.

I believe that that would happen on Friday as well.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Okay.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: I'll defer to your Executive Director about the timing of analysis occurring VRA analysis and political fairness analysis for individual maps and whether it is required that that individual Commissioner undergo that analysis or make adjustments in a public setting.

Or whether they could do that like make any adjustments that they would like over the weekend for example.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Executive Director Hammersmith?

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: I think this is part of the reason we were asking for maps by the end of day today so that we could get them to Dr. Handley for that partisan fairness analysis.

So the time that has been switched to next week then she could assess those next week.

But yeah, there won't be time to make adjustments if she gets back with you as something you might want to adjust.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: So for collaborative maps any adjustments that would need to be made based on partisan fairness or VRA analysis would need to be done in a public setting but my understanding is that for individual Commissioners who are submitting a map and they receive feedback from your consultants that that does not necessarily have to be done during a public meeting.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Okay Commissioner Mr. Adelson it looks like you want to say something then Commissioner Eid.

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: Yes, a couple things.

I would I don't want to make any commitments for Dr. Handley and what her schedule is.

So I would suggest that is something that should be explored later.

I'll also suggest that there are aspects of the rules you may want to consult with your General Counsel who has a teleconference right now.

So I would suggest that there may be additional questions that you might want to pursue when General Counsel Pastula returns.

I can't speak to the detail that she can about your constitutional requirements and the rules of your procedure.

So I would respectfully request that if there are questions that when she returns that she is the best person to address some of the things that have come up.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Eid?

>> COMMISSIONER EID: So it seems like the current time, this timeline that we put in place is our timeline.

And because it's our timeline we do have the ability to change it if we need to change it. To me it seems like we are not going to have enough time to really bring the best maps forward to the second round of public hearings.

In my opinion what we should do is think about extending our time a little bit so we have a longer amount of time to look at these maps with the complete both of VRA analysis and partisan fairness analysis.

If we are not going to get that until Friday, only being able to submit maps until Monday is wholly not enough time.

Now I understand that that might cut into our public hearings a little bit but I would rather have better maps at those public hearings than worse maps and more public hearings.

So we just might need to take a look at changing that timeline a little bit.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Thank you Commissioner Eid I understand that, that is the next item up for discussion calendar.

And your Executive Director is going to walk you all through that.

But before we move on, I just want to quickly summarize one more time exactly what the deliberation process is as outlined in your adopted process.

So prior to deliberations you all will research and review and submit any maps that you want by Monday morning.

And then the deliberation process itself begins with any additional map adjustments you all want to make based on information from your consultants or public comments.

Step two is you all determining the number of collaborative draft proposed maps you want to bring to the public hearings.

Step three is review of all collaborative draft maps as well as any individual submit maps from Commissioners.

And step four if it comes to this is voting for the number of maps or for the actual maps that you want to bring through.

Unless you all decide you just want to bring them all through which is fine too.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Orton did you have a comment? You are all set? Okay, so I think at this point we are going to go back to Executive Director Hammersmith.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Okay in regards to the calendar, there are certain dates that need to be met.



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So if you extend the time now, then your Friday November 5th is your voting day for your proposed maps that you're going to put forth for the 45 day period of public comment.

So that date is really nonnegotiable for you to vote on the final maps on December 30. So if you want to change something in this time period up until that point, then you can change.

It's your schedule.

You know, you could do four public hearings in some weeks if Edward is not going to like that.

Three are hard enough.

But you know, those are some options you could consider.

And also there's Friday October 29th and Monday-Friday November 1-5 for those deliberations on your proposed maps.

And I want to note that November 2 is an election day.

So we have no MDOS staff that day so we would be unable to hold a meeting.

So there's only five days built in for your next round of deliberations.

So just so you're aware of the dates.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Ms. Reinhardt?

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Thank you.

Apologies for the late update.

But I just wanted to outline that yes November 2 is an election day.

However our department recognizes the strain that the Commission is on time wise and our staff can be made available that day for a meeting, thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you Ms. Reinhardt.

Yeah, I personally don't want to extend our timelines.

I think that's going to create more of a crunch on everybody else.

And I would rather have us be in a position where we get our analysis from Dr. Handley and Mr. Adelson and you know, maybe we can't narrow it down to one map, maybe we have five, I would rather bring five maps and get the process rolling than move deadlines.

I think we have spent an enormous amount of time on these maps to date and given careful consideration of lines drawn and considered the Voting Rights Act and considered this as we moved along so I think at this point the partisan analysis and the voting rights analysis is important.

And I anticipate we will have some changes based on that but I don't think pushing things out further is necessary.

To accomplish those changes if we are prepared and efficient with our time preparing before meetings.

Commissioner Orton.

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: I also don't want to push our timeline out but I feel very pressured to that we don't have enough time to make thorough, good maps. So I feel like something has to give and this will be very unpopular but we are only required to have five public hearings. And we are scheduled for nine. So I think maybe the hard choice is maybe we give ourselves another week by getting rid of a few of those. I don't know which ones and I know we want to go everywhere in the state but we are just out of time. And we don't know how long we are going to need because we haven't done some of the analysis yet. We have not experienced that. So we just don't know what that is going to bring until it happens. I think it would be better if we are going to change any schedule for public hearings it would be better to do it sooner rather than last-minute.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Witjes that is definitely an interesting idea I have not heard mentioned before and we do have lots of ways for people to reach us other than public hearings so go ahead Commissioner Witjes.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Sorry Commissioner Orton that is a very unpopular opinion. I also I agree with you that we have limited time and that we are going to feel rushed but these are the public hearings that in my mind are going to be some of the most important because the people are actually going to be able to see the products that we have been working on. And we need to have those hearings to listen to what the public has to say. I mean, are we required to have five? Yes. We are doing nine but we were required to have 15 or I believe I can't even remember any more, ten and we had 16. So we have done that once before and going above and beyond our constitutional duties and we should continue to do so.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Eid?

>> COMMISSIONER EID: I was not suggesting we change the November 5th day because I think that day is important to have the maps to give the 45 day window to reach December 31st. But there is a lot of time between today and November 5. And I think that's the time we need to look at figuring out how to get more you know more time and I agree with Commissioner Orton, looking at the number of public hearings might give us that ability even though you know I hear what Commissioner Witjes is saying too. I really like the public hearings personally.

And I think they are a great tool to use.

But if it's going to be in detriment to the maps we bring to those hearings, and by eliminating some of them if it results in us having more time to make better maps before those public hearings start, then that might be a good thing to discuss.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you Commissioner Eid I believe Commissioner Lange has her hand up then we will do Commissioner Orton then Mr. Rothhorn then Mr. Clark.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Thank you.

I just kind of want to second the thought that Commissioner Orton said.

It's kind of funny that same exact thought was going through my head prior to her saying it.

I understand the Commission has gone above and beyond in terms of hearings. And that's great.

But as the maps stand right now, I don't think they are the best work that we could do. And I do think that we need to put more work into them just based off from public comment and online comment on the maps themselves.

So it may be unpopular, but I would be open to considering eliminating some of the hearings if that's what we need to do and that's all I've got.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you Commissioner Lange.

Commissioner Orton?

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: So a couple things about that.

I think we all want to as many public hearings, as we can do and we all want to let the public see the maps and make comments on them.

But they can still see the maps.

Not we are not going to have a public hearing in every town.

They can still see the maps.

They can still comment on the maps.

We have many ways to do that.

So maybe we don't do only five.

But maybe we do something in between five and the nine that we have scheduled.

Whatever we can fit in.

Or maybe we do more than three in a week.

I don't know what the solution is.

But I just think the public while they want us to come to their town and they want us to be there for a public hearing and they want to be able to talk to us, I think what they really want is good maps for the next ten years.

So I think we have to do whatever we can to give them that.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Rothhorn then Commissioner Clark.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: So what I'm asking myself right now is we in the mapping MICRC mapping process and consideration document we also have on Page 12 public hearings and debriefings and what I'm thinking about is as we what I'm

thinking about is are we do we have time as Commissioners when we are on the road with our public hearings to map.

It feels like we might not but that is why I'm asking you like in this public mapping and process and I'm seeing shaking heads meaning we don't have time to map.

It feels when we are debriefing after the public hearing what we will be doing is maybe just understanding whether we want to change something or not.

And then we will have and before November 5 then we would actually sort of quote unquote remap if we needed to.

Is that accurate? That's a question I suppose.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: If I had a crystal ball this morning you know I would have built in the agenda for public comment.

You know who is to know you are going to have 60 people on a Wednesday in September.

So again we don't -- you know, I think the maps really bring people out.

They want their opinions heard.

They want to share their communities of interests.

So the public hearings are scheduled from 1-4 and 5-8.

The plan is to have some time in the 1-4 meeting to debrief on the previous public hearing.

I don't know how much mapping could be accomplished during that time.

1-3:30 sorry.

1-3:30 and 5-8.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Miss Reinhardt then Commissioner Clark then Commissioner Witjes.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Thank you so appreciate the comment Commissioner Rothhorn.

I think that there's a couple considerations here regarding mapping during or prior to public hearings on the days of public hearings during those debriefing sessions.

So first, the Constitution does require prior to public hearings maps be published.

And so those maps that are published I believe are the maps that are contemplated to be brought forth into public hearings.

Your current mapping process and procedure document outlines those debriefing sessions and states that no map or COI changes or adjustments specifically no map adjustments will occur during public hearings or debriefing sessions.

And I believe that the thought process here was twofold.

That the Commission might benefit from hearing all of the thoughts of the public prior to making any changes.

And, second, also if you change the map after say the first public hearing, then those in subsequent public hearings will really be commenting and providing comment on an

entirely different map than the individuals at that first public hearing had an opportunity to comment on.

So that was the thought process there for withholding any edits until after all public hearings occur.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you I just want to summarize what I'm hearing we have that opportunity to map before and after the public hearings, not during. And so this is the it's sort of the time is now if we are going to get these maps adjusted. Okay thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Clark then Commissioner Witjes.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Yeah, in my opinion this is time versus quality. And I would go 100% towards quality product.

And if we have to adjust time and schedule then we do.

Even if we don't get to November 5 date and imperative working to and when that comes into consideration, we don't want to walk into this without a quality product. And that will be even more difficult if we end up in Court afterwards.

So I think that's the direction we should head.

And I would support that 100%.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Witjes?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: So I've got a thought and next radical idea here. So we can't make changes to the maps while we are on our public hearings. We don't do that.

We have the able to make a copy of the maps that we are -- have been working on and clone them over like doing the collaborative mapping process now.

I'm still totally against getting rid of any of the second round of public hearings.

However, what we should be doing after the first public hearing eating something, and potentially having a meeting there to at least take a clone mop and get the big ideas of the things that we've heard for that particular meeting down on something.

Then we have our second public hearing that evening and then we have an hour after that mar meeting where we do the same thing so when we are done with all of the actual public hearings, we now have everything written down and placed in the software already somewhat so that we can reconcile those particular ideas into making quality maps.

What kind of thought does that or anyone have thoughts on that.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: General Counsel?

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: Thank you so much Madam Chair.

So publishing the maps puts the public on notice what plans they are coming to talk about.

And I appreciate Commissioner Witjes' problem solving attempt.

But that would result in multiple versions of different maps that the Commission would then have to go back and reconcile during the deliberation rather than going through all of the -- rather than going through and making the changes at one time.

Let me say it more clearly the Commission will have the public hearings after that they will do the debriefing sessions where the Commission will be noting those major ideas or changes or suggestions or proposals, whatever word you want to insert.

And then when it comes time to deliberate and make map adjustments you will be working through the material captured in your debriefing sessions.

So it will in effect be what you're suggesting, Commissioner Witjes.

You would just will not have multiple different plans that you'll have to overlay and talk about, you will have to revise, you will have the guidebook being the debriefing session to guide the map drawing after the conclusion of the public hearings.

Is that responsive, I hope? I would not recommend -- [ off mic ]

You will have to integrate them.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Witjes?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: So follow-up, okay so not doing multiple clone maps how about just one clone map of each type? That we can for an hour or so after the public hearing ends, we can go in and jot some ideas down and where we want to potentially make changes.

That way we only have one particular item to overlay on our completed maps to make changes.

I mean I see the issue of time.

We have plenty of time in my opinion.

And we can work slightly after a particular meeting to take a look at or discuss what it is that we heard.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Rothhorn?

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: What I'm aware of is how I'm thinking how our Congressional the four Congressional maps how we have to keep track of it all. So I'm worried the more clones and differences we make that we you know keeping track of it I mean I think it's for the public as well as for ourselves making sure that we understand as much as possible what the reason is for the clone for example.

What the alternate version is.

I'm recognizing the need to actually just track all of this and hold it right because there is complexity here.

And we are trying to do something complex and being able to deliberate with all of these things holding all of these complex things I have to have a reason that I'm holding them all.

Sometimes it doesn't make sense and I think many Commissioners have said that why we are holding all of them unless I can understand like okay this is it's not apples and



oranges this is actually an orange and an orange or this is the one that made this clone because we think this reflects more partisan fairness than this one.

But this one actually has COIs reflected that aren't in the partisan fairness one.

Right what I mean to say then I know why we have two choices.

I need to understand like that is the kind of when we make, I just want to offer when we are making clones it feels like it's important to name them somehow so each of us and the public can understand that the reason that there is a clone.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Witjes?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: I think I made it pretty clear I'm against removing public hearings and I'm going to leave it at this particular statement.

During the course of our time I've heard many if not all of you say we want more public comment, we want more public comment, we want more public comment multiple times. And you are now going against what you said and wanting more public comment by taking the ability for the public to come and give public comment away.

The fact we are even thinking about doing this is mind boggling to me and if it even comes up to be a vote, I'm telling you right now it's going to be no for me through and through.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Lett?

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Changing or adding things to the maps that we put out prior to our public meetings coming up, whether we have five or 25 there is a basic unfairness to the public if you start changing them as you go.

The reason being the first one that you have, those people looked at the maps that were taking on the road and they made their comments or make their comments or make their suggestions based on that.

And then if we come along and say okay, we are going to clone this, we are going to put in these changes and we take that and add it to the next meeting, then the first meeting didn't have an opportunity to talk about that.

And they may not like what you did.

So the idea behind taking all these on the meetings is here is what we are looking at. Make your comments.

We will take them into consideration at the end of the road trip and then we will put out for a second comment period what we have come up with based upon what you have told us.

And my second point as long as I got the floor, is why aren't we meeting next week?

We have a whole week.

Why aren't we using that?

>> CHAIR SZETELA: I would say for next week that was sort of kicked around that we definitely can do that.

But the constraint we have there is that three day period that we need to get the maps to Department of State so they can post them out on the website which is why I will

support Commissioner Orton's concept of actually reducing some of the public hearings specifically that way that would give us a whole other week to work on maps if we need to.

So rather than starting the hearings October 11 start them the week after which is the 18th and I mean my personal thought is we could do 7 instead of 9, we could potentially eliminate Marquette because they are...frankly is not a lot of changes in those maps up there from what they had previously.

And then we have Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo which are really close together we could pick one or the other.

And then we could still have 7 meetings which I think is sufficient.

We still have the portal we still have the my Districting site and have people able to submit comments in multiple ways, they can dial in remote.

I don't think we are eliminating public comment by doing that but I think if that gives us that two week period to maybe come up with better maps that everybody is more aligned around, I think that's a great option.

And I definitely agree we should and use that time next week and then I agree with you as well Commissioner Lett that I don't think we should be redrawing maps on the fly.

I think we need to be comfortable with what we have going in and then we will listen to public comment on that and at the very end we can make changes if we so desire Commissioner Clark?

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: I agree with Steve.

One alternative that came to mind was why don't we just have one map you know the house, the Senate and the Congress? And solidified that and present to the public as our recommended maps to go forward.

So we would only have the three maps and we can get that done this week and beginning of next week if we have to.

And then take their input and then when we get finish all the public hearings then we can come back and take what we've heard and make the adjustments.

There is to do that there is I think there is a few major areas that we got to address.

We got to address the Bay City area.

We got to address the Ottawa Township area.

And I think we got to have a conversation about the way we dealt with Detroit with the spokes because we are getting some feedback relative to too many districts within a Township.

We heard a lot of that today.

So that really goes back to a bigger problem and a concept that we used.

But if we can get those things resolved and just put out the three maps and say hey guys this is what we recommend but we are willing to change it if you know based on your comments.

And we are going to take those into consideration.

And I think we could get it done a lot quicker that way.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you Commissioner Clark.

Commissioner Wagner?

>> COMMISSIONER WAGNER: I just want to say I think Commissioner Orton's idea is intriguing and limiting the public hearings.

But I hate to see that because they all seem to be key areas in the state.

And my next question was to EDS representative, I think it is Kent that is here today maybe.

Will you all be providing the QR codes for the maps at the second round of public hearings so that people can comment while they are there? On those maps? Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Curry?

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: I just want to make a comment on the mapping and from the comments that we heard this morning.

I don't think that we -- unless we get like one guy came with 500 signatures, one came with 150 signatures, unless we get something like that, I don't think -- we can't just keep changing because we hear another group saying I like it like this.

They don't have enough people to back them up with their with what they want.

I don't think we should just be we will be changing until this time next year so we need to just stick with somebody that has come in with a large petition or whatever and then if it looks better for us then we should change it.

But you can't bounce around on every comment that we hear unless the comment has some self-worth with it is my comment.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you Commissioner Curry I agree with assessment.

So do we want to keep discussing this? Do we want to break for lunch and think about it? I feel a lot of times when we take a break and come back, we sort of clarify what we do.

Lunch sounds great.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: Madam Chair.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yes.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: Really briefly I was hoping Commissioner Wagner's question about the QR codes and the ability of the public to provide public comment during the second round of public hearings.

I certainly would defer to the communications director and I don't have the answer on the QR codes.

But I understand that there are going to be public comment stations at the public hearings.

But again I would defer the details to the communications director in particular about the QR codes.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: All right so without objection we will now recess for 60 minutes it's 12:15 right now hearing no objections we will stand in recess until 1:15 thank you very much.

[ Lunch recess ]

>> CHAIR SZETELA: I call this meeting of the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission back to order at 1:16 p.m.

Will the secretary please call the roll?

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Hello, Commissioners.

Please say present when I call your name. If you are attending the meeting remotely, please disclose your physical location as well.

I'll call on your in alphabetical order starting with Doug Clark.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Juanita Curry.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Anthony Eid?

>> COMMISSIONER EID: Present.

Brittini Kellom?

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?

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Rebecca Szetela?

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Janice Vallette?

>> COMMISSIONER VALLETTE: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Erin Wagner?

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

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Richard Weiss?

>> COMMISSIONER WEISS: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Dustin Witjes?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Present.

I will return to Doug Clark?

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: 12 Commissioners are present.

And there is a quorum.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: We will return back to unfinished business and talking about deliberations regarding plans.

Hearing no objections let's continue with where we were at if we so desire.

Do we want to continue discussing the public hearings do we want to sit on it for a day and return to reconciliation.

Commissioner Rothhorn?

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: One of the things sort of summarizing it, it feels there is an either or scenario with we either get to do you know the yeah, we have to cut short the hearings or we get to continue mapping.

I'm wondering if there is a both and scenario what I mean to say is there a way for U us to push back and get a week next week for use partisan fairness and the process and tools we need and can we sort of tack on just one or two meetings public hearings I will say.

At the end of you know, I guess the first part of November? And I don't know if Mr. Woods is here or not.

But that's sort of my question.

Is there a way for us Sarah Reinhardt?

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Your communications director is on Zoom and looks like he has his hand raised.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Mr. Woods, you're on Zoom?

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: Can you hear me.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yes, we can.

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: Thank you so much Ms. Reinhardt yes Commissioner Rothhorn through the Chair I did reach out and have talked with both treetops as well as Flint and they do have dates available on November 1st and November 2nd so we wanted to move the event in Gaylord to November 1st and wanted to move Flint to November 2nd that would be an option the Commission could consider.

And if they end it that way and you kept all nine you would actually start Thursday the 14th of October in Marquette if that is a desire of the Commission.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you Mr. Woods it sounds like we have an option there so that is good to hear.

I suppose we have to continue deliberations and help you know when to firm those up but I'm guessing that that's important.

Is there a deadline director Woods when we need to sort of help you know what we want to do? So that you can get those dates?

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: I think we want to do it as soon as possible.

Because that way we could release the dates that we have for them to rent to someone else.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: So it was again November 1st and 2nd; is that correct?

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: November 1 we would do Gaylord and November 2 we could do Flint they have space available at both of those locations.

We were scheduled to be in Flint on October 11th at the Dort center.

So we would postpone October 11th to move 2nd at the Dort center and then we were scheduled and have signed a contract with tree tops resort for Tuesday, October 12th but they are willing to move us to Monday, November 1st.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Excellent and the only I'm wondering because November 2 is election day, we I'm wondering in terms of Department of State is there a conflict or potential conflict or a reason we couldn't do November 2nd in Flint? If we wanted to do the public hearing? I remember you said that your office understood the pressure we are under but is there do we, yeah, I'm thinking about how we can make this decision as a Commission recognizing all the pieces that need to be in place and knowing that we want to do it as soon as possible but maybe we can do it tomorrow or make that decision tomorrow so you can help us understand what the costs and benefits might be? Is that...

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: I think that I can confirm if you were to host a public hearing that day that, sorry.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: We can't hear you.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: I think we could accommodate that.

If you decide to host a public hearing that day, we will do our best to accommodate and make it work.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for that.

So yeah, I guess I'm thinking about that's an option.

I do feel like I need a summary from maybe Executive Director Hammersmith where we were because you were trying to help us pull this altogether.

And I feel like I would benefit from sort of some options and what has happened and understanding where we are, help us understand where we are right now.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: So we talked yesterday about using the first two days of next week Monday and Tuesday, to complete your draft maps.

And then that would allow three days for the mapper and CSS to be able to produce the maps publish the maps, and the documents that were needed for public hosting prior to the public hearings.

If you wish to take more time next week, you could meet all five days next week, MSU union hall is available.

And they have given us contracts for those days.

And then you would then allow the three to four days the following week for everything to be published.

And then start October 14th at Marquette with the dates that Edward has suggested.

If you take the first two and bump them into November 1st and 2nd.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Orton?



>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: I feel that that's much better because that gives us more time after we have the analysis on Friday to look over what we have and what we need to do.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Any other comments or discussion?

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: Madam Chair I just had a clarifying question if the public hearings end on the 2nd the Commission would have three days to do the deliberations and the adjustments.

Again, okay.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Orton?

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: Okay, I did not realize that.

So is that because we are saying that November 5th is the drop dead deadline.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Uh-huh.

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: Is that true? Like we cannot go any days longer than that?

>> CHAIR SZETELA: I believe that is a drop dead date because that is the latest day we can approve and still have what 45 days for it to become final or to for additional public comment before it becomes it's not final at 45 days what is it.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: Madam Chair that would trigger the publication would trigger the 45 day period for public comment the final public comment period on the final proposed maps.

That would make after the 45 day period, that is the soonest the Commission could vote to adopt any maps.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: So that puts us at December 30th vote date is that correct? And that day is what we really sort of have to hit from a planning for elections concept for everybody else down the line about from us? That was my understanding.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Commissioners maybe what is before us is, yeah, the value of this week and shortchanging our final week of deliberations after the public comment.

That feels like the choice we have to make here.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: I'm just wondering like what level of changes are people feeling are necessary to the plans we already did? Because we have the two Senate maps, we have four Congressional maps and it looks like we have one house map at this point. Commissioner or I always want to call you Commissioner Sarah Reinhardt.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Wanted to alert you that Commissioner Lange's hand is raised.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Can't see her so Commissioner Lange go ahead.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: I was just making sure I heard you guys right you are talking about potentially having a hearing on November 2nd.

Which is election day? Is that correct?

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: That is an option that director Woods was talking about.

We could do if we, yeah, that is an option November 1st in Gaylord I believe and November 2nd in Flint.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Do we really think having one on election day is the best route to go?

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Any thoughts, comments, Commissioner Eid?

>> COMMISSIONER EID: Well this was a comment on what you asked Commissioner Szetela does anyone have any comments on what Commissioner Lange just asked first?

>> CHAIR SZETELA: I don't think anyone is saying what is a great idea. I think we are just throwing out ideas.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: I believe the Secretary of State's office would be available on election day.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: They said they could make themselves available.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: I apologize.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Eid?

>> COMMISSIONER EID: It's hard to say right now how many changes we need to make to the collaborative maps because they have not undergone the proper analysis yet.

So I mean I don't know if we need to make changes.

I don't know if we don't need to make changes but until that happens then we are kind of speculating on what those changes may or may not be.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Orton?

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: I agree and I don't think we should shortchange ourselves or box ourselves in to not having enough time should we need it.

And one other point I was thinking about while I ate lunch is that while we all want to have all the public hearings and we want the public input, public the public hearings are not what is going to how do I say it help us in Court like having good maps is what we have to do to make it through all of our, all of the challenges that we're going to face as long as we have enough public hearings which we are not talking about having enough to comply.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: So I just want to get a feel for individual public hearings just to sort of gauge what people are thinking.

So are we all feeling that we want to continue to have nine public hearings, is that the feeling? Because it seems to me we may be able to readjust the schedule and I'm just looking at the calendar we were supposed to have a drop dead date Tuesday October 5 so department of stay would have that Wednesday, Thursday Friday to submit the maps and up load them before the public hearings so I'm just wondering if we can change dates a bit or like Commissioner Orton suggested before potentially drop a hearing or

two so we can then rather than starting on October 11th maybe start on October 12th or October 13th and that way that would give us an extra day or two to sort of resolve things after Dr. Handley's presentation.

Anyone have any thoughts? Commissioner Clark then Commissioner Eid.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: My thought is that this is all about the citizens of Michigan and that we should keep the nine public hearings and there shouldn't be any doubt about that at all.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Eid?

>> COMMISSIONER EID: Yeah, I would be in favor of reducing it to the five that are constitutionally mandated in order to get more time to bring the best maps with us to those hearings.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Clark I don't think everybody heard you in the room with your comments would you restate it?

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Yes, sorry about that.

This is all about the citizens of Michigan.

And therefore I think the nine public hearings are warranted so that we get the broad geographical perspective of the state on the proposed maps.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Lange did you have a comment?

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Yes, since it seems like we are doing kind of a polling here, I'm going to go along with what Commissioner Eid said.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Reduce the number of meetings just to clarify hearings?

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Correct.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: I personally am in favor of reducing the meetings.

Particularly hearings, everybody keeps correcting me.

I mean I personally am in favor as I've said before is eliminating the Marquette hearing because we have three hearings that first week, I think if we chose not to go to Marquette that would only put two hearings that week and we could potentially reposition those and pick up a few days.

And you know we have been to Marquette before.

I don't really think we have seen a lot of public comment since we were there, we got a lot there which was very helpful and I think we have natural geographic limits on what we can do in Marquette anyway and I think the people up there recognize that.

We are not going to have the Upper Peninsula split in two for a Congressional District because we can't based on population.

So at a minimum I think we should consider not going to Marquette and then that would reduce one hearing for that first week then we can potentially juggle the other hearings.

Commissioner Woods, did you have something what did you say about tree tops the treetops can change the date or can't change the date I thought you mentioned something about treetops then we will go to Commissioner Lett.

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: They can change the date.

Are you able to hear me sed Szetela they can change the date?

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: Yes, they can change the date.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Okay, Commissioner Lett?

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: While I understand your reluctance to go to Marquette keep in mind the Upper Peninsula feels extremely extremely, extremely slighted in this whole process.

And to now come along and say we can't do anything for you anyway and so we're not coming back is just kicking dirt in their face.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for that feedback, Commissioner Lett.

Mr. Clark?

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: I agree with Commissioner Lett on that.

And we don't want to isolate a portion of the state at all. And we need to include them and make sure that they are included.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Rothhorn?

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: So is there so I just want to is so if we don't publish the dates on November 4th excuse me November 5th publish the meetings can we do it I think that is a Friday, is November 5 a Friday.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: You mean vote for the maps?

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you, when we publish after the public hearings and when we vote, if and November 5th is the date that we have decided is the sort of drop dead date, there is no November 6th option, correct? There is no November 7th option? Is that what we're saying?

>> CHAIR SZETELA: General Counsel do you want to weigh in on that or Ms. Reinhardt either way?

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Looks like Director Hammersmith has an option or a thought.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Director Hammersmith I can't see you behind all the monitors.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Sorry I'm hiding behind the monitors I need a booster seat.

Yes, November 5th is the date that is required in order to give the mappers time to get everything published.

All the data has to be published.

Every piece of data that you've used, maps like produced right now for the apportionment in the State of Michigan, the CSS are going to produce those maps for us.

And EDS is going to produce maps for us.

So they need that time.

We have to have that published and right.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Witjes then Commissioner Clark.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: So it's appropriate to call ourselves a legislative body, correct? Okay so there is a reason for why I asked that question.

November if November 5 is the drop dead date, which is fine by me, and I'm still not in favor of reducing any of those particular public hearings, if members of Congress need to do things where they are working 12-14 to 15 hours or pulling all nighters at one particular point to meet a particular deadline we should be under the same rules and regulations or be subject to the same things to meet a particular deadline.

We have the time to do it.

If we need to work 10, 12, 14 hours one day or 24 hours one day for example as an extreme on the November 4th or 3rd to get it done then we need to do that.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: We are not a legislative body so I would say that to start with. I would say that is easy to say when you don't have children or a spouse or a house to maintain and don't have people to care for.

You don't have a job part time.

That is very easy to say.

Number one I don't think it's necessary that we need to kill ourselves.

I said this repeatedly.

That when people are overworked, they make bad decisions I don't think working all nighters will give us better maps I think it will give us worse maps.

All right so in the interest of moving forward because I don't think we have really go ahead when I'm done Commissioner Clark, I don't think we have really reached any consensus so I think at this point what we should do is go back to our mapping and maybe tomorrow morning we will have a better feel for how we are progressing because I don't think we have any consensus whatsoever as to where we stand right now.

And I think maybe spending some time finishing these maps up might help us get some clarity on that so Commissioner Clark, I will let you provide a comment then I think we are going to move on.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Question to our executive director.

Who requires November 5th date? You indicated somebody required it.

And I still am interested in making sure we produce the product we want in the date slips it slips.

So who is the person?

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Well, this is the date on the schedule in order to meet the timeline to have the final maps voted on December 30th.

So we just took the December 30 and backed everything up, provided this to the Commission.

You decided it.

But we really can't change it and meet the deadlines that in order to be knowledgeable and helpful to the board of elections.

I mean they are on the other end with a compressed timeframe, so they need our vote by December 30th so that is how we backed into the November 5th date.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: I realize there are all this downstream work that other organizations have to do.

Would a week delay, why wouldn't that be acceptable? If we chose to adjust the dates?

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Executive Director?

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Something we can discuss.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: General Counsel or whoever wants to weigh in on that.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: Sue did you want to? So I think much like the Commission losing six months, the Bureau of election for updating the QVF which is over 8 million data points for the qualified voter file, the Commission, again, the candidate filing deadline, there are all these critical which the legislature bills were introduced to modify the statutory filing deadlines for nominating petitions and so on and so forth that are in committee.

They are not being moved on.

So the date of November excuse me please December 30th is critical to those -- that downstream work.

So really, I see the question before the Commission as whether prior to November 5th you want -- that devoting the time to mapping and the work product or the hearings. And that there cannot be any more days added before November 5th, so the question is how do you -- how are you structuring your work time, whether it's adding more hours as Commissioner Witjes and other Commissioners have advocated for in the past, whether it's those details and certainly we acknowledge none of us know the extent of the map adjustments that would need to be made either for compliance activities prior to the second round of public hearings or certainly to the what will need to be modified or what the Commission elects to modify after the second round of public hearings. But really that's the question before the Commission is what are you going to, what are you prioritizing in your work prior to November 5th.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Not on speaker at this point we will go back to our mapping process which I believe we were with Commissioner Orton so Commissioner Orton you can direct our map drawers and John or Kent which one is drawing today? I thought that was John.

I don't even see him so Kent it's all you.

So I think the question is where do you want to start? Because we have the four Congressional, two Senate, one Senate complete, two Senate and one house.

So.

>> MR. KENT STIGALL: Three Senate maps.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: One is not complete one is missing Monroe I just looked at them so there is one that is incomplete.

>> MR. KENT STIGALL: There is three.



>> CHAIR SZETELA: Where do you want to start Cynthia?

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: So yesterday I think we kind of left it and still didn't have a good process for this so I'm wondering how do we want to do this? Like we've been rotating through Commissioners and they move districts and things. But I don't see that working well in this process.

So I think we need to come up with a good process for how we are going to either compile the four maps down into one or two or just what we are going to do.

I don't know the answer to that.

>> MR. KENT STIGALL: Excuse me chairman.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Go ahead.

>> MR. KENT STIGALL: If I recall, Commissioner Orton we had four of them. I think we had gone down and briefly looked at each one; is that right?

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yes.

>> MR. KENT STIGALL: So we moved on to that point of is it going to be four or are we going to change some or is it going to be three or is it going to be two.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: I honestly think and it's a suggestion feel free to say no it may be easier to start with the Senate because we only had two maps with the Senate and the difference between the two is one combined Battle Creek and Kalamazoo and the other did not.

So that might be an easier place to start than with four Congressional.

So go ahead Commissioner Vallette.

>> COMMISSIONER VALLETTE: Well, I think, Cynthia and correct me if I'm wrong, you are also thinking we shouldn't go through and take turns.

That maybe we should just bring up the map and talk about what somebody remembers, you know.

That they heard or what.

Because going around and taking turns isn't going to work.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: No, I agree.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Maybe we have one director and one like so what I'm thinking about is helping facilitate.

What I can do is help facilitate the person, well, I don't know if I can do this.

But I guess what I'm offering I'm willing to try to model something.

I guess because I think what I think we are trying to do is not talk about it, just try to do it and see if we like it.

So what I'm going to try to do is yeah is model it.

What I'm thinking about again it's okay and it is me and what I'm trying to do is do this in a collaborative way and we will start with the Senate and what I'm going to ask I'm just going to ask questions do we -- is there -- are there any strong feelings right now with any one Commissioner that we start with the Battle Creek together, Battle Creek and Kalamazoo together or not? Commissioner Orton?

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>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Orton?

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: I would like to see the two maps and see what they look like.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Bring up V16A and B one at a time so we can see them, Kent?

>> MR. KENT STIGALL: Yes.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Witjes?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Just a thought since we have the maps drafted with our lines, would it be a better idea to take the regional approach at this point in time, put those on and say let's look at the west region and if anyone has anything to say or suggest for that particular region then we all deliberate on that? Then move from region to region around on each map? I'm just asking that might be a good idea.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: I kind of like that.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: So I think it might be easier to resolve the first issue of Battle Creek versus Kalamazoo then just work off of one map rather because they are the same except for that deviation.

But then maybe go to regions and see I think that would make sense, yeah, but I think we sort of should discuss this.

This is the one with Battle Creek and Kalamazoo together.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Maybe we should describe this map too.

Chair Szetela you're certain that is the only change or the only difference?

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yep, because I drew that.

I drew the split based on public comment so this was I think we left off then I proposed an alternative map with them split just because we were receiving public comment so that was the concept, we talk about at the time is let's throw them out there and if we see any comments one way or another.

So Commissioner Witjes?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: So just my thought on the Battle Creek Kalamazoo area, is we have them together in one map and we have them split in the second map which would be the house.

So we are taking into account the individuals are saying they should be together or they should not be together depending on which map you're looking at.

So sed.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Szetela we are accommodating both just on different maps.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Correct.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: We have them together, hold on.

We have them separate for the house obviously because of size.

And then Congressional we have them separate too.

So maybe that's something to think about. Congressional they are separate.

House they are separate.

Obviously because of size.

So maybe putting them together here might, yeah.

I think that's makes sense because I feel like for this particular combination, we have received a lot of conflicting comments.

Some people said put them together, some people said keep them apart.

Anyone else? Commissioner Eid?

>> COMMISSIONER EID: Well, yeah, exactly we've had a lot of conflicting comments so I think we got to decide what are we going to do when we have conflicting comments like this.

Because either way it's going to support one community of interest.

That is Battle Creek with Kalamazoo or without Kalamazoo so community of interests are supported either way.

Maybe we should look at some of the other metrics to determine which way to go.

And maybe we should do that for all of the areas where there are these conflicts.

We could look at it on Friday if it being with Kalamazoo or not being with Kalamazoo produces a different level of partisan fairness or a different level of compactness or something like that.

And maybe that is kind of lead us in the right direction for which one to choose to bring forward.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: So I think that is a very astute comment Commissioner Eid. We can make that decision that we want Dr. Handley to look at both of these and tell us which one is more balanced from a partisan fairness perspective and that may resolve the conflict so.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Is other data point I think that Commissioner Eid brings up is we can look at, this is where I'm challenged, General Counsel is not in the room yet so I'm going to hold withhold it.

What I'm thinking about is looking at the old maps, and what I'm thinking about is number five that we shall not demonstrate or give an advantage to an incumbent and if we have a District that is the same as the old District, right we may be unintentionally giving an advantage to the incumbent and I'm listening and I will repeat to see if my thinking is accurate and I want to understand data points and how we make decisions and if we are, yep, if we what we could do is look at the old map, the 2010 districts and if we have a District, if we have drawn a District with the fresh start that we did and created a District that also is the same as the 2010 District than we may unintentionally be giving advantage to an incumbent and I'm wondering if that is accurate in my head or that is faulty reasoning?

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: Through the Chair to Vice Chair Rothhorn, Commissioner Rothhorn, if I understand what you're saying is compare the maps to do an incumbent analysis.

No, I would recommend that the constitutional language is they shall not favor or disfavor, let's always be precise, districts shall not favor or disfavor an incumbent elected official or a candidate.

First of all I don't know how you would for the candidate thing.

But districts shall not favor or disfavor incumbent elected official or candidate.

The Commission does not need to consider incumbent data.

Once you have that data or that knowledge any decision you make will either favor or disfavor an incumbent so it really -- I think this is another instance where the partisan and the political things should not be influencing or weighing on the districts that the Commissioners are drawing.

Is that responsive? Vice Chair?

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Yes, thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Clark?

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Yeah, we've got two maps here.

Can somebody explain what caused us to make a second map? What was the logic behind that?

>> CHAIR SZETELA: It was simply the feedback about Kalamazoo and Battle Creek so we have one map that has Kalamazoo and Battle Creek together.

This is what you are seeing right here and a second map that has Kalamazoo and Battle Creek separate.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Okay.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Kent can you pull up the second map so everybody can see the one with them together.

>> MR. KENT STIGALL: You want to bring up V16B.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: V16B.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: That means some of the surrounding districts got reconfigured.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: One wraps kind of around the other one.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Correct.

Here is what I'm afraid of.

Let's say we bring both maps to the hearing.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Uh-huh.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: We have 50% of the people say I like this one and 50% say I like that one so we are right back where we are at this moment.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Well I think to Commissioner Eid's point Lisa Handley might tip that analysis for us because she can come back and say one is better from a partisan fairness.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: We don't have that data now.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Hopefully on Friday we will so yeah this is the one that splits Battle Creek and Kalamazoo.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Okay.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: And so to Commissioner Rothhorn's point the District of Kalamazoo on this map is pretty much the same as the current District and the District of Battle Creek is similar to the prior District in that it pulls in Barry County but the previous District also went up into Ionia which I thought people said they did not like so this is similar to the prior districts.

Definitely it's the same with Kalamazoo but Battle Creek is also pulling in a lot of rural areas.

Mr. Adelson?

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: I wanted to address a little bit in listening to the discussion about potential changes to come.

I also wanted to make the point that as you recall when I believe these were the and forgive me if I'm mistaking the house, I believe these were the State House districts in the Wayne County area.

That several of them are...have the appearance of being packed.

And that is something that must be addressed.

That is one of the changes that I envision.

And frankly the discussion yesterday about the Congressional District and having Flint and Saginaw in the same District, that's another issue.

So there are -- I don't have a list of things that I know inclusive list must be addressed. But the backed districts are absolute.

I mean as we talked about at the time that was an issue and then we have the same issue, a similar issue to what we talked about yesterday combining two majority plurality Black cities in one District rather than splitting them to dilute the minority voting opportunity and also that split them also raises some other issues that are beyond. So I wanted to just make that point in going forward with additional discussions and looking at as General Counsel said doing a compliance review and check, which is standard best practice in redistricting before a vote on going forward with whatever set of draft maps you decide to go forward with, thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: So just to sort of expand on Mr. Adelson's point when we have Kalamazoo and Battle Creek separated, we end up with District 21 for Battle Creek that is 6.7% African/American.

And the Kalamazoo District is, hold on I'm scrolling up 13.8% African/American.

When we combine those two cities together into, I think this is District 21, we end up with 16.75% African/American along with 3 percent Asian 2% Native American.

And 6% Hispanic so we end up with about 25% minority in that -- when those two districts are combined.

So it does increase the minority representation to add those two districts together.

Just something to think about.

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: Wanted to add too and I appreciate that Madam Chair.

I think this is a similar thought with the Flint Saginaw discussion yesterday.

There may be some districts that are not ability to elect districts the way some of the districts are in Wayne County.

However there is a significant point that whether it's the voting rights act or the 14th amendment that if there are minority populations that are being separated as part of decision making and that calls into question some other constitutional issues beyond what the Voting Rights Act specifically requires and taking your point, I think it is important to look at essentially whether you have the ability to within the confines of the law to combine minority populations as an option.

Or like the Flint Saginaw example do you separate them into two districts? I think that is a very important consideration.

Some of the Counties will present as more substantial because the minority populations are higher.

But to your point I think that if you take the option of and that is putting aside communities of interest.

If you separate communities into two districts, then one of the questions and concerns that I would have is are you deliberately essentially cracking minority populations? So that is going to depend on what the jurisdiction is.

But I think that's an ongoing thought.

And I would just bring up the Flint Saginaw discussion because I think that is very informative about choices that can or may not be made.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Sorry, just looking.

Any thoughts, comments? Commissioner Eid then Commissioner Clark.

>> COMMISSIONER EID: Well it sounds like we should move on to the house map and fix those things and maybe come back to this.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Clark?

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: As Anthony had said before I think the significant thing is Lisa's Dr. Handley's analysis that she is going to present to us.

I see where both maps are relevant to present at a hearing.

But we may eliminate one based on what she says.

So I would wait on that and move on to the house maps.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: You are proposing we just wait on these two maps and move on to the house.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: House or Congress either way.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: I think that is reasonable because I want to see what she has to say.

Commissioner Orton it's technically sort of your turn.

Are you comfortable with that? Did you hear what he said?

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: Yeah, whatever people want to do is fine.



>> CHAIR SZETELA: So it sound like we are going to reserve these two Senate maps for Dr. Handley's analysis and if we need to make changes do it then. Did you want to move on to Congressional or do you want to go to house? Commissioner Clark go ahead.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: I see one other problem with this map that we have to address and that's we have a significant number of comments from Ottawa Township and in this map Ottawa Township is not whole.

And that's what their expectation is.

So I think that needs to be addressed.

And maybe one of the maps be adjusted for that.

So that is the Senate map, I'm talking the Senate right now.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Repeat that, please I did not quite follow you.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Okay fine.

Today we received not just today but today we received a lot of significant comments about Ottawa Township not being one District.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Ottawa County.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Yeah, Ottawa County.

Excuse me on that.

So I think it might be to our benefit to at some point to adjust one of these maps so that we reflect their expectations and we can have a discussion on that before we go and actually do it.

But I think see to me the relevant things we got to resolve are Ottawa Township, Bay City area, did we do the right thing in Detroit with the spokes? And then the Kalamazoo and Battle Creek thing.

But I don't want to short Ottawa County at all.

So I think at some point we need to address that.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Witjes?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: So I'm going a different approach with regards to Ottawa County.

I think we should wait to see if more public comments come in with regards to it supporting the keeping it whole, not splitting because there is public comment that came in today on our portal saying we should split it.

So we when we get everything from, we have to do something to no don't do something we need to take a look and see what the overwhelming feel should be and I feel that that may be a little premature at this point to do.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: So Commissioner Lange has her hand up then Commissioner Curry.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Thank you.

Regarding Ottawa County, I saw one comment on the portal and I went back 50 pages I saw one comment that said don't split it.

And all of the comments today were regarding the Federal which would be our Congressional districts, right? For the Federal.

So isn't that something we could look at now? Because I think the -- isn't the population of Ottawa County too high for a full Senate District?

>> CHAIR SZETELA: I believe that is accurate, yes.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Okay I just wanted clarification.

I believe they were talking about the Congressional District and being split three times so I think now is actually the prime time to look at that.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Okay so where are we going Cynthia?

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: So I'm not sure where we are going.

I feel like we have so much to do and so little time but so much of it depends on Friday.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: All right.

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: Sorry, I think my finger beat your finger instantaneously.

We agree certainly your legal team agrees that Friday is significant in that Dr. Handley will hopefully be able to present partisan fairness.

But it is important and I'm sorry I'm going to speak for you.

I will speak in one voice that the legal team strongly believes there are issues in addition of course to the partisan fairness.

There are many voting rights issues and just in talking about the packed districts in Wayne County.

And there may be and talking about Ottawa County.

I don't recall if Ottawa County has voting rights act implications for example.

So there are other considerations.

Certainly we agree with the partisan fairness and that is significant.

But there are other issues.

And, yes, there are compliance reviews do take time.

And there are many considerations that we are going to need to evaluate.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA:

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: Okay so I guess I don't know where to go.

Does anyone want to take over?

>> CHAIR SZETELA: So Commissioner Curry still has a comment so let's see what Commissioner Curry would like to talk about.

So if it helps to clarify, so right now we have four Congressional maps that we did.

Version one has Flint separate from Bay City and Saginaw.

Version two has Flint combined with Bay City and Saginaw.

Version three three adds Midland in with Bay City, Flint and Saginaw and four we have a start of bringing in Muskegon with Grand Rapids but we did not finish that but that was the attempt was there so there is one little area we have to tweak but does not include Midland with Saginaw and Bay and Flint.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: Are you all keeping from the comments that we got, what was it this morning, where they wanted Ottawa kept whole?

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yes, and I think that is what we are kind of contemplating is in any of our Congressional maps right now Ottawa is not whole. And do we want to actually make Ottawa whole?

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: They had about 500 signatures. And then one other person had 150 so I think we ought to kind of look at it. And also Detroit.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: So Commissioner Clark?

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Yeah, I think the issue in front of us at the moment is do we want to address this now or later? And it may be relevant I don't think Dr. Handley's analysis is going to impact Ottawa Township. But do we want to adjust it now or later? And I would say and I understand this was Dustin's point let's wait.

It's too premature to do that, to make those adjustments on this.

We will have to do it on all three maps if we decide that is the right approach.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: For this map in particular we should at least try to balance this map if we are going to submit it to Dr. Handley, is it number four because remember Cynthia you kind of jogged across to Muskegon but then we never connected the area of Ottawa that got cutoff.

So it's kind of sitting there right now.

Go ahead Commissioner Eid.

>> COMMISSIONER EID: See how it's sitting like that.

>> COMMISSIONER EID: I'm just a little confused.

We heard twice now that we need to change the house map before it can even undergo analysis by Dr. Handley.

So why are we -- I don't think there are VRA issues with this County.

There are other issues community of interest issues for sure.

But it would seem to me that fixing those packed districts so they are at least in compliance with VRA and then they can undergo further analysis later would be the more time efficient way to proceed currently.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Orton? General Counsel?

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: I was going to offer again for clarity that any of the maps that the Commission -- the Commission I would recommend the Commission endeavor to fix as many of the maps as they can prior to Friday.

And that, that way Dr. Handley can run the partisan fairness review and provide her presentation.

But all of the maps will need to be to use the Commission's terminology fixed. I prefer compliance analysis.

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But that any of the maps whether you publish two Congressional options or maps to the public, three or the four, but the arm needs to definitely be addressed.

And I know Mr. Adelson mentioned a couple packed districts but there really are you know other things that the Commission needs to look at for every single one of the plans.

So again I can't make there be any more days before November 5th so I would recommend you just start fixing.

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: Okay, well, we hired you because we thought you could add more days.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: Just start fixing.

It's a great conversation.

All of that.

But wherever you want to start let's start.

[ Off mic ]

In the house.

We are ready.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: If you want to go to the house, I had Suann had sent out a map that I had reworked those House Districts last within.

We can put up the house map and overlay what I did or we can fix this.

Because I think what I did with the house maps is going to fix the VRA concerns possibly.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: And Madam Chair, I'm so sorry but that was one I did see post and circulated your maps of to be presented or Commissioner Eid's and again the clarity whether those were intended to be collaborative maps or your independent maps or you don't know yet to see how the conversation goes.

But again at this point the Commission doesn't have any collaborative maps in a final stage ready for partisan fairness.

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: Okay so my understanding when we did this is it was kind of an experiment to see if we could connect these two up.

And it did not succeed.

So I think it is just a copy of the other map that we have.

So we just get rid of this one.

And go back to the other one.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: So version four of the Congressional we are just setting aside.

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: Yes.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: We are not considering it a complete map because it's not done.

Does anyone have any objections or concerns about that?

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: I do.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Lange?

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Sorry it's hard to see my hand, Kent can you do me a favor and scroll out please so I get a whole view? Okay, this map also took into consideration we have a, okay, wait never mind.

Wrong map.

I apologize.

Continue.

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: Okay just to clarify I believe the only change on this was just that arm that we were trying.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: We were playing with it.

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: Complete copy of the map, the version before so we are getting rid of this one.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: It's a complete copy of version two of the map before.

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: Okay.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Except for that arm.

>> MR. KENT STIGALL: I believe the idea kill it or fix it.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: I think the idea is kill it I think that is what she is suggesting.

Commissioner Clark?

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Yeah, and that is relevant to the base of the area is what we are talking about.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: No just Muskegon.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Muskegon.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: We were trying to draw in Muskegon.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: When we get to Bay City, I got a comment then.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Eid? Okay so Commissioner Eid?

>> COMMISSIONER EID: Well you know I actually think it's the right idea to include part of Grand Rapids with part of Muskegon.

There is a way to do it without having it be so much like an arm.

So I would not necessarily say kill it but I think the other things are maybe we should come back to it later and do the other things I mentioned before first.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Clark?

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: I think Mr. Adelson gave the point that because it's extending so far to the west that this perception that we are trying to link in more minority districts into the Grand Rapids District is not a positive thing.

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: To your point Commissioner Clark I think that is right on. Whenever you have a narrow geographic strip and I remember we discussed this before that to link with a significant minority community that always raises concerns for me of a potential racial gerrymander you are literally drawing a map and reaching out geographically to capture a minority community.

So I do not advise the map as described here.

I think it is pretty much a reach out in a narrow geographic way.

And I would not endorse that.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Witjes?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: I have an idea for the Congressional map that could potentially fix some things.

I don't know if I should do it now or wait until my turn or if we should just do it.

I think we are just not really doing much of anything currently just going around in circles.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Go ahead Commissioner Witjes.

So do you have your own map you want to break up or do you want to work with this one?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: I want to work with this one because I did not send it over to anybody for review.

I just did it a couple minutes ago.

All right let's just get rid of let's go to manage districts Ken cannot Chair.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yes.

>> MR. KENT STIGALL: This plan has been posted on the website so I'm not going to change this and I need to make a copy of it then we will edit it.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Assuming it's okay for me for go and I did not want to take anyone's turn if anyone had ideas.

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: So happy to let you take a turn.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: All right so District Four District nine and that little piece of 13 that is in between everything let's go ahead and get rid of that right now.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: 4, 9 and 13.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Piece of 13 that is between the District 4 and the island of 13 I will call it.

>> MR. KENT STIGALL: Is that it.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: That is fine for now.

It will change a little bit more but let's get rid of District 9 in its entirety.

>> MR. KENT STIGALL: Delete nine?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Take the whole thing.

No, I'm not taking the whole thing.

All right let's put the Counties of Berrien all the way to Muskegon in District 9.

>> MR. KENT STIGALL: All of Berrien?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Yes.

>> MR. KENT STIGALL: That will impact 8 as well.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: We will make adjustments to 8 as well.

>> MR. KENT STIGALL: Okay so all these three localities?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Correct.

And let's grab Ottawa County and Muskegon County as well.

>> MR. KENT STIGALL: Ottawa.



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>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Yep.

>> MR. KENT STIGALL: And Muskegon?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Correct into 9.

Okay, now, I got to think how I'm going to explain this particular part.

In regards to District 8, in Kalamazoo, the six Townships on the east side including the one that looks like a tooth.

>> MR. KENT STIGALL: I heard most of that but let me get it up here.

So you said take on the east side.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Galesburg Charleston all the way down to border of district 8.

>> MR. KENT STIGALL: That area?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: No, the 6, so the bottom, no, no, no, the east side there is the first two rows, yep, we will do that yep.

And the very top two of what you just selected, don't include that.

>> MR. KENT STIGALL: Okay.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Put that into District 8.

>> MR. KENT STIGALL: 8.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Let's Zoom out and head north a little bit.

The Section of District 9 that is right above Kalamazoo, those two rows of Townships going north get rid of those or put them in District 4.

>> MR. KENT STIGALL: All of that in District 4?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Yep, District 4.

Part of District 4 on the south the 8, actually, yep, all of Kalamazoo Portage and the four at the top put that in District 4 as well.

>> MR. KENT STIGALL: I'll change the colors here in a moment.

Okay.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: The bottom eight Townships right there, correct, yep.

Yep.

And then the two that are in the corner of what you just created yes right there, those two.

And then put the one that is directly above that in there as well.

Put that into 4.

Okay now the six we will take all of Grand Rapids and then the two below, not the ones that far north, just, yep, and just the first the leftmost two rows.

Correct put that into District 4.

Fill the rest of it with District 13.

Let's look north here for a quick second.

>> MR. KENT STIGALL: Did I miss a little bit.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Rockford into 13, yeah, Rockford and that is the configuration I just put together.

What do you all think?

>> CHAIR SZETELA: I'm sorry were you done Witjes?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Yes.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Okay Commissioner Clark comment, sorry.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Two comments.

One is Kalamazoo extends up close to Grand Rapids I believe, yes, and that was one of the comments we heard at the Kalamazoo hearing was they don't think they are associated economically with Grand Rapids.

And they wanted to be moved from that and dealt with differently.

The second thing I think what we have done here is in the Grand Rapids area we don't have a Metro six.

We stripped some of that away.

So and that was a key point at the Grand Rapids hearing.

So I think those two things have to be considered seriously on this configuration.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Orton?

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: What I heard a lot of is that Battle Creek and Grand Rapids did not associate together and did not want to be together.

Not about Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: I think that is a function of Battle Creek was with Grand Rapids. Kalamazoo was not.

I don't believe in the prior maps.

And I feel like this still I mean the problem that Commissioner Orton was trying to address was the request from people in Muskegon to be asked to be affiliated with Grand Rapids.

And this still is not putting Muskegon with Grand Rapids.

So I don't really see how it solves that problem.

Although from a VRA perspective I think Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids you're still on equivocal what footing versus the Metro six that we had before.

I just feel like we are sort of going outside of a lot of the communities of interest that we had heard including Grand Rapids and the Metro six and I frankly would be surprised if Kalamazoo wants to go with Grand Rapids but we are still not accommodating that one thing that we were trying to accommodate which is Muskegon with Grand Rapids.

Commissioner Witjes?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: I looked at way too many maps over the past couple days forgive me.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: We all have.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Metro six we tried handling that in the Senate and it did not work due to population, correct? I can't remember.

If that worked in the Senate then.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: I thought we split it into two in the Senate.

I would have to look.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: I can't remember but if you can put the Metro six of Grand Rapids in the Senate District, there we go, we have worked with that community of interest and put them together in one of the maps we are working on.

So if that works, I feel like that would be a good place to address the Grand Rapids Metro six.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: So I'm looking at our Senate maps and we did have them split in those maps.

The Metro six, yes, and the Senate maps.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Wondering if they can be put together in the Senate? Potentially? Because I don't know.

I can't remember.

I can test it out.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: I feel the population would be too high. That County is 600,000 something, yeah, 600,000 I thought.

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: Madam Chair if I may I think that Commissioner Witjes raises a point that I think is also similar to the Flint Saginaw debate.

As I recall with the Senate maps and as I recall with public comments and looking at population there is a large minority population in south Grand Rapids than in north Grand Rapids.

And there also that Township and I hope that I recall the correct name Kentwood which I believe has a significant minority population.

So I think this is an example of from a Voting Rights Act perspective I'm not sure that you can combine for the Senate map.

And I'm only referencing the Senate map because of population.

All six because that is going to have a potentially dilutive effect.

And when we look at the Senate maps as I recall I think that there are some particular districts that have been drafted in the greater Grand Rapids area that will reflect that.

So but I think that is a very important point to realize in evaluating these.

That although there may be comments about uniting certain cities in one District, that may implicate just like Flint and Saginaw Voting Rights Act issues 14th amendment issues because you may be cracking, splitting, diluting minority population.

So I just wanted to mention that as an FYI that that may not be possible because of the number one criteria and priority.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Witjes? Do we have, is it Rhonda? Rhonda okay so Commissioner Witjes then Commissioner Lange.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: I just wanted to get the ball rolling and doing a little draft here for consideration to take things into account.

And this can go for public comment potentially on our portal right now.

But I just wanted to do something because I felt like we were just talking and spinning in circles.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: I think that is absolutely helpful Dustin thank you.

You created a map that keeps Ottawa Township together so I'm sure you will get lots of positive comments about that.

I mean it's a worthwhile map to have.

And then again Dr. Handley can also conduct her analysis on it and gives us another option which I don't think is a bad thing so thank you for doing that, Dustin.

All right did we want to do anything else with the Congressional? Commissioner Lange I'm so sorry.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: It's okay you can't see me so I know it's hard to remember I'm here.

I like what Dustin has started.

Based off from the comment with Ottawa County, that ought to make them happy.

My concern there is a couple of things.

Kent, can you scroll out so I can see the whole state? A little bit more? My concern, oh, and just a little bit, that is a little too far out, please.

I think my concern is and I know it can't be helped because of population guidelines but how stretched out 13 is, now it's stretched out even more.

And I'm looking at it and I'm thinking about comments though that came in also from Barry County.

Barry County was asked to be kept with rural areas they are extremely rural.

Farming communities, what have you.

And would associate better with more rural areas.

I don't know particularly if they were talking about Eaton County or Ionia County, but we did have a few comments like that.

So I'm wondering if putting Barry County with Kent County is the best thing.

Or if there is a way to accommodate them more also with a rural area.

And I know we had public comment and maybe I can clarify a little bit.

I think some of the concerns with rural areas when you look at the farmers, they do have distinct needs.

A bad year, bad weather can affect their crops and sometimes they need the Government to help step in.

People living in rural areas unlike Flint you know they had the water issues with the pipes, rural areas can be groundwater issues you know with their wells.

And say like the PFAS.

So just trying to give a little bit of clarification, I think.

People had commented about rural, urban, while we are all Michiganders there are distinct differences and there can be distinct needs of each.

And so I'm just trying to look at it when I look at the maps like I said I'm trying to be fair for everybody and take in consideration what needs of certain areas would be compared to other areas.

So in coming from a rural area I'm trying not to be bias but when I hear the people say that they would prefer to be in areas that have the same needs, that's what I'm looking at.

So I'm almost wondering I don't know a lot about Barry.

And maybe Cynthia you're kind of down from that area I think maybe you could tell me a little bit more about it so I could understand what their comments are and if that is something that we should address if we go with this particular drawing?

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: Were you asking about the Kalamazoo, Grand Rapids.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: She is asking about Barry specifically do you know Barry?

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: It is rural I guess what we are calling rural.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Right.

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: It's between Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo.

So if you're going to link them you are going to have to go through there.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Right.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Witjes?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Was the total plan deviation that low on the one previous as well or did it magically drop below 1%?

>> CHAIR SZETELA: I don't know.

I thought it was pretty low for Congressional but I'm not sure.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: I can't remember.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: So do we want to just have this presented as an alternative map to Dr. Handley or do we want to tweak it a little more?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: It's up to all of us.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Eid go ahead.

>> COMMISSIONER EID: The only thing I don't really like about this map is I don't think Kalamazoo should be with Grand Rapids.

I think you're pairing two major cities that don't have a lot to do with each other together. And there is a rather large distance between them.

But I like the lakeshore aspect of it.

There is a way to include Barry with the other more rural communities and include Grand Rapids with Muskegon.

Just it wouldn't look so much like this as a different plan.

But, yeah, that is the only part I really question is Kalamazoo being with Grand Rapids.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Any other comments on this map? Commissioner Witjes did you have another comment?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: I think I agree the Commissioner Orton there is definitely more in common with Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo and Portage than Battle Creek to Grand Rapids.

And two major cities that could have slightly different beliefs, one representative representing all of them in my opinion is a good idea.

So and we also have some rural communities in there as well so in my opinion this is a pretty nice mix for a District.

Another way I'm looking at communities of interest is we have two different communities of interest.

Technically three different communities of interest.

They are technically intact.

Yet they are also with other communities that maybe a little bit different than them.

Or have different belief systems than they do.

But they are still whole.

So we technically are taking communities of interest into account if we were to blend two cities or something together.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Lange?

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: I still I can't get over this, you guys.

What would happen if we switched it a little bit and put Barry, the open part of Barry into 5 and the half part of Ionia into 13? Just the way 13 stretches just doesn't look good.

And if you recall we did have public comment from a couple of sheriffs that talk about Gratiot, Montcalm, Isabella Mecosta County, if possible, to keep them together because of the work that they collaboratively do so that may be a way to take into account those areas also.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: I think we are collaboratively mapping if you want to direct.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: I was going to say I don't think that is a bad idea so you are suggesting to take off those four blocks in Barry that are currently in four and move them over to Eaton, is that right and possibly all eight of them up and down? Is that.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: The ones that are in 13 to add those to 5 starting out.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Kent can you go ahead and do what she is asking? Thank you.

>> MR. KENT STIGALL: So down here it's to take these four Townships?

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: The five that are in Barry County and add them over.

>> MR. KENT STIGALL: These five.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Yes.

>> MR. KENT STIGALL: And this little town here? And Hastings I suppose.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Correct so that puts us at 21,000 over.

So then you were saying put this area.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: That area in 13.



>> MR. KENT STIGALL: In 13.

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: Excuse me Madam Chair.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yes.

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: I just wanted to address one of the comments that Commissioner Lange made about the shape.

Usually aside from the population deviations in Congressional districts, shape becomes a legal issue primarily like with the reach into Muskegon.

If there is apparent for want of a better term a robot arm extending into an area to capture a racial minority that usually triggers constitutional considerations.

Other than that, if the shape is not rectangular or not square, as long as the population deviation is okay, then that is typically okay because you're not creating a shape for a constitutionally impermissible reason like a racial gerrymander.

So I just wanted to point that out.

That the shape is usually not a legal consideration unless there is a reach out to capture a racial minority.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you Mr. Adelson.

So Rhonda I know Kent is dying to ask you what you want to do with the little pieces around Ionia that are currently in 13 that are dis-contiguous I know he wants to ask you that I can tell by the way she is Zooming in and out.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Kent please put those in to 13.

>> MR. KENT STIGALL: Okay, so let's start with technically this little thread here can stay in three if that is the way.

These two need to go definitely need to go somewhere.

So 13 I suppose.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Kent wondering how much population is left in this Township if you could is there room to put the whole? .

>> MR. KENT STIGALL: That is the Township.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: I'm just wondering if you can put the whole area around it.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Five is overpopulated Rhonda so if you add that Township around Ionia to 13, I think you will actually be.

>> MR. KENT STIGALL: Yes.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Let's do it.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Then E with don't deal with all the little boxes.

>> MR. KENT STIGALL: A go to 13?

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Yes, please.

I think that is better.

I think it's keeping areas together that might assimilate better together.

I think it's taking into consideration as much of the community of interest comments that we got, at least as far as the ones where they asked about Montcalm, Gratiot, Ionia, Isabella and Mecosta County. So I'm open to any comments on that.

But I think it also looks better.

It does not stretch as far.

And I know, I understand what Mr. Adelson was saying, but that was one of the issues we heard of when people complained about the prior maps about districts going from Northern Michigan all the way down to Lansing.

So just trying to keep some of that in mind of some of the complaints people had about the previous maps also.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Sorry I'm just running some numbers today and we have a proposed change MC and I were debating whether we could move the rest of whatever that County is you just reassigned with Hastings into five and then grab a row right next to Grand Rapids to put into Grand Rapids because I know that is Caledonia area that we received public comments about wanting to be the Grand Rapids but looks like we don't have the population to balance that properly.

I mean maybe we could grab Caledonia and not the rest of them.

So Caledonia is 15,000 people.

Then I would feel bad leaving out Cascade and Ada.

So why don't we Kent why don't we try this and see what to do we will just grab Cascade and Caledonia and put those into 4.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Not Ada?

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Not Ada for right now I don't think we will have a population with Ada and worried we will get a really odd looking District.

>> MR. KENT STIGALL: That is 35,000 people.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Go to the area of Hastings that Township there and how much just start grabbing that and see the population Rutland, Hope, and then keep going up Thornapple, Yankee Springs, Orangeville, Prairieville.

>> MR. KENT STIGALL: Where are with going this area?

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Four Townships 1234.

>> MR. KENT STIGALL: That right there is 40,000 so if you took that out you would be about 4,000 under or less than 4,000 under.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: So what if we take off Thornapple because that is more heavily populated.

Thornapple the very top one there so just remove that one from the selection.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Could add it to five.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: So go ahead and assign that and let's see what we have.

Yes, put it in five.

And we will have a long skinny District between Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo but then you're putting more of the rural areas together, I think.

So Rhonda would it be problematic to put lower areas of 13, 5 is over, right?

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Correct.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: To take 5 and put them into 13.

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>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: I'm sorry I was going to say I would start with taking the rest of Ionia County and putting it in 13 and see where you're standing at from there.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Let's go ahead and do that.

[ Off mic ]

Where would you grab next Rhonda those upper Townships?

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Yes, go upper within the next County.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Lebanon, Essex, Green Bush and I think we will have to go to the next row Covid, yep Duplain.

So Duplain and the next row below that Bingham, Ovid, St. Johns, Bengle, Dallas.

>> MR. KENT STIGALL: It's going to be over now.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Under on five and over let's put back in St. John's Bingham and Ovid.

So let's put in Westphalia.

Westphalia, the one you were just over to the, yep, right there.

Take it out of 5, put it into 13.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: I'm pretty sure that Westphalia and Portland, I think there is a school District there.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: I think you are right.

Does that look a little bitter for 13, Rhonda?

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: In my mind it does.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Okay.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Yeah, what is the -- what are we looking at 5 for their population? .

>> MR. KENT STIGALL: 5 is 213 people, .03%.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: I think you guys did good.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: The challenge here is that that is the Tri-County area, Ingham, Eaton, Clinton. And so what we have done is, yeah, we have sacrificed another community of interest.

It is, yeah, and this is what we have and we are experimenting and it's good to try sed Szetela we can go back up into the Township and go further northwest of language.

What makes more sense? I'm not familiar with those counties that are in the northern part so this Steve and MC this might be where you might want to chime in.

Would it make more sense to assign those Townships in Clinton that are currently in 13 back into 5 and then maybe put more of Ionia the other way? Or.

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Clinton County in the north is really rural.

They have St. Johns, which is in the center, south center of the County.

Dewitt is in the south center St. John is in the north center and St. John is now experiencing some manufacturing.

They are experiencing some growth.

But the rest of the County other than right down around Lansing Dewitt area so if you wanted to do something -- I mean if we are going to split the County, that is not a particularly bad split.

It's not that way currently.

It goes north under with the more rural Ionia Gratiot Montcalm County.

But I mean if the idea is this is what we consider to be reasonable, that is not unreasonable.

You are going to hear some howls you are splitting it though.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: All right, Commissioner Lange. Any comments?

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: I think I'm not completely familiar with Clinton so I will take Commissioner Lett's word on it, but I do think that it looks better and I think that you also accommodated Barry in doing that with the public comment that was received from residents of Barry County.

So I think all things considered it's not bad.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: All right Commissioner Clark?

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: I'm going to ask Bruce east opinion on this.

My perception is that Kalamazoo is reaching out to the southern part of Grand Rapids, which is primarily Black.

No different than when we had Grand Rapids reaching out to Muskegon.

I see a very similar type of situation.

Can I get your opinion on that, Bruce?

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: Let's look at what the population says it's not 31% overall population minority District.

And doing some quick math for the voting age population about 23%, so I see your point as I had said earlier that what you did with your Senate Directors as I recall is having two districts with one encompassing the southern area of Grand Rapids and an adjoining Township Kentwood, I believe that is were identified as having significant minority population.

So I think that the decisions redistricting decisions and this is a good example, one of the questions I always ask, is in the only way to achieve the goal which is of course compliance.

And you know I'm specifically omitting whether they are public comments or oral or written because I'm just looking at what the legalities are.

So if there are other ways of Districting here where you're not potentially and I can't really say more than that, affecting a minority population's opportunity to elect candidates of choice possibly if there is another way to deal with that, I think that is part of what Commissioner Rothorn is said earlier and what I said previously experimenting and look at how to do that.

I would also say that since you have done that with the Senate districts, that that could inform what you're doing here.

Now admittedly the Congressional District is about three times larger than the Senate District.

But with the Senate districts you did focus on a District in south Grand Rapids and Kentwood area to produce a significant minority population.

So my thought is if -- could this be done in another way.

And could this be done in another way.

Could you create a direction that has a higher minority population.

I don't have the answer to that.

To your point although it's not literally analogous to what Commissioner Orton tried uniting, not uniting, combining Muskegon and Grand Rapids in one District. I do agree that there are some similarities, although I think it is different. It's not as obvious a reach.

It is perhaps a medium reach not going as dramatically as the arm to Muskegon.

Does that help?

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Yeah, it does.

This is just one of two other alternatives any way.

And so I think one we have maybe even in both of the others Grand Rapids kind of encapsulated by itself.

And this one is significantly different.

So but this is just you know just one of the alternatives.

Okay thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: All right does anyone else want to work on this map? Okay and Commissioner Orton, I will sent it back to you.

Do you want to do more on this map or do we want to move on to something else? Do you want to pass on to somebody else for a turn.

I don't mean to keep putting you on the spot.

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: I thought I passed on so I am trying to figure something out here.

Maybe make a few tweaks.

But I am not ready yet so.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Okay, so do we want to go ahead MC.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Mr. Adelson while we've got you what I'm thinking about is looking at the numbers, I say the numbers the election results.

And how that could inform us before we have a partisan fairness right so I'm not looking at partisan fairness but VRA compliance and what we can do today and tomorrow frankly with the districts as we tweak them using election results to understand how are we getting closer using the next two days how do we get closer to VRA compliance because what I've heard right we don't have anything but that is what I heard from General Counsel we don't have any maps that are currently ready for partisan fairness because they are not truly VRA compliant.

So in order to get closer to that should we look at the election results before we leave this map, or could we?

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: Commissioner Rothhorn I agree I think it will depend on where we look at them because some districts that really won't be essential but certainly in the Detroit area would very much recommend doing that.

And there may be one or two other districts that I'm missing but clearly the Detroit area districts are require review of the election results, yes.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: So we want to look at the house map? Because I know Mr. Adelson said we had issues there or do we want to look at Ms. Reinhardt.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Sorry about the interruption before you move on to different maps as I prompt you with questions whenever you draw a District, I will also continue prompting you when you make changes to your directcs so I do just have a few quick questions for you as a body and also the Commissioners the individual Commissioners who made some of these changes specifically Commissioner Witjes and Commissioner Lange.

Could you describe I'll start with you if that is okay could you describe why you made the changes that you did to this map?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Sure one the change that I really wanted to make was the District that was going from Muskegon to Grand Rapids.

I thought that was kind of oddly shaped and really didn't fit well for multiple reasons. My biggest concern is fixing District nine to where it's drawn now to take into account overwhelming comment we received multiple times in regards to Ottawa County and also keeping a lakeshore District together as best as I could.

As far as changes I made to 13, I extended it down to try and keep a rural District as best that I could with taking into account rural areas in City ap by definition what a rural would be and fix District 4 at a particular point and figured Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids would be a better fit because we've had conflicting comments between Battle Creek and Kalamazoo.

Not wanting to be together.

We have them in together in one particular map so I was trying to listen to those particular residents of the state and then keep them separate and the only logical choice to me was to go north.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Commissioner Lange the next question is directed to you actually the same question what was the purpose of your modifications?

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: It was twofold.

I was going off from the changes that Commissioner Witjes made which I think he did a good job doing.

There were some tweaks that I felt based off from public comment that could be made, one of which was Barry County.



We received a few different comments from Barry County about how they see themselves as a rural community and would like to be put in rural areas with other rural communities so we tried to accommodate that.

And then we also received public comment from sheriffs from a couple different Counties and how they have a collaborative process and how it would benefit their work if we could keep those areas together, which consisted of Mecosta, Montcalm, Isabella, Gratiot and Ionia. And with adding those it also took into consideration that public comment that we received and it made it so the District was not as long and drawn out as what it originally was.

There was public comment about the current maps stating how the northern districts just went so far south and kind of taking those comments into consideration also.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Thank you no further questions.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you.

All right so I understand there is concern about the house maps so let's open up the house map that we have and take a look at it.

>> MR. KENT STIGALL: Changing drivers here if you have one minute.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: That's okay good afternoon, John.

>> MR. MORGAN: Completed house plan is your starting point.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yes.

>> MR. MORGAN: Give me a moment to load it up.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: While we switch drivers without objection why don't we take a ten minute recess for everyone to stretch their legs it's 2:59 hearing no objections let's take a break until 3:10 p.m.

Thank you very much.

[ Recess ]

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: As Vice Chair of the Commission I call this meeting back to order at 3:13 p.m.

Would the Secretary of State please call the roll?

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Absolutely.

Commissioners, please say present when I call your name. If you are attending the meeting remotely, please announce during roll call you are attending remotely and disclose your physical location.

We will start with Doug Clark.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Juanita Curry.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Anthony Eid?

>> COMMISSIONER EID: Present.

Brittini Kellom?

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

Michigan.

- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Richard Weiss?
- >> COMMISSIONER WEISS: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Dustin Witjes?
- >> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: 11 Commissioners are present.

And there is a quorum.

- >> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you, Ms. Reinhardt.

At this point we will go to the draft house map we have drawn.

Commissioner Rothhorn is going to take his turn Districting the map drawers.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: So John what I'm hoping to do once the map is up is to examine some of the districts in the Detroit area so we are going to Zoom if and what I'm hoping to do with Mr. Adelson right now and General Counsel is get VRA compliance in recognizing we received significant comment about breaking up Livonia as much as we did in order to frankly I think we were that was an effort to achieve VRA compliance so we are hoping to what I'm hoping to do right now is acknowledge some of the COIs maybe and try to adjust our maps and are there districts for example like maybe the place to start here Mr. Adelson are there districts you recognize where you say we are in compliance or there is a compliance you know for District 1 for example?

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: Well you know I'm at your pleasure Commissioner Rothhorn as far as where to start.

There are a few districts in Detroit that I would suggest if you like to start at one we can do that and I have a couple districts in mine.

So whichever where you want to go sounds good to me.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: I guess 1-17 is probably all in the Detroit area. And I think it's 3:15 p.m. and I think we have until I'm not sure exactly but I think we have until 4:00, maybe 4:30 today does that sound right? So, yeah, what I want to offer I would like to try to get through 17 districts in the next two hours.

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: Go through as many as you can and District 18 there were some issues there too.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: District 18.

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: Yes.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: If District 1 in this house map is okay, with the, yeah, and it's a low but it's a high significant Hispanic population and this is a COI that did represent and I remember drawing this one in particular there because a Latin-X COI community of interest and the other I think they call themselves 48217 zip code and this completely allowed both districts both to be in there and so this is a COI specific District for those two.

And with you know significant Hispanic majority or I guess minority.

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: Yes, it's a plurality Hispanic District.

Because we don't have any data on cohesion Hispanic voters and Black voters who really can't analyze that specifically, then and as you said this is a this incorporates COIs from the Hispanic community in this area.

So what I would suggest that we do is well a couple things I'm reluctant to change the Hispanic population and suggest that they can only elect at a certain percentage because we don't really have analysis about that.

But what I would suggest is we look at the bellwether elections for this District and particularly 2018 gubernatorial primary that may suggest some voting pattern differences if there are any between Black and Hispanic populations but we can confirm the elections look good and we can move on to someplace else.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: We did look at elections and we did say yes this is an opportunity to elect District.

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: Okay.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Significant differences and, yeah, so it sounds like what we can't get is yep, it's VRA compliant and won't get that is that true?

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: We won't get that as absolute right now but we can get it looks good for now.

That is about as far as I'm willing to go.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: I understand and we will wait for voting rights compliance.

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: We will wait for Dr. Handley and talk to her later about voting pattern analysis.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Okay.

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: And some additional election analysis but for now I think typically as you know the dispositive issue with Voting Rights Act analysis from two is election results does the minority community have the ability to elect.

So I recall looking at that.

I can't -- I don't know if there have been changes since the last time I looked at this.

So if not, let's look at the bellwether and see what bellwether elections and see what they tell us.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Can we go ahead John can you bring up?

>> MR. MORGAN: Sorry I will bring up the elections.

It will just take a moment.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: I think we are looking at the focused or bellwether.

>> MR. MORGAN: I'm going to stay here on the screen for just a moment before I switch over.

So that Mr. Adelson can just kind of look at the adjacent districts.

He is doing a quick scan of that.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN:

>> MR. MORGAN: Adjacent 2, 3, 5, 9 and some extent 4 only in one area and we will look at the election results.

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: Bellwether election.

>> MR. MORGAN: And we are focusing on District 1.

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: Yes.

>> MR. MORGAN: President 2020 Biden is 85%.

Trump is 15.

Clinton is sorry 87, 88 to 12.

Obama is 92 to 8.

And then in the U.S. Senate Peters is 85 James is 15.

Stabenow is 87.

James is 13.

U.S. Senate 14 Peters is 93.

Land is 7.

Stabenow is 93.

Hoekstra is 7.

For Governor Whitmer is 89.

Schuetz is 11.

Governor 2014 is 85 shower 15 for Snyder.

Attorney General Nessel 88.

Leonard is 12.

For Attorney General 14 is Totten is 86 and Schuetz is 14.

And then for Secretary of State we have 89 for land and 11 sorry 89 for Benson 11 for Lange and then for Dillard is 86, Johnson is 14 for the Governor's race El-Sayed is 36 and 37 and Thanedar is 30 and Whitmer is 33, 34.

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: John can you pull up excuse me the by race for districts the districts you mentioned 9, 5, 3, 2 and 4, please?

>> MR. MORGAN: Looking at the adjacent districts and I guess we are looking at the composition of 2, 3, 5, and 9.

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: Two.

>> MR. MORGAN: Two is up here 54% non-Hispanic Black and only less than 3 per Hispanic three is Dearborn and as you talked about it has substantial white population but some of that is Arab population so it's neither high on non-Hispanic Black nor on Hispanic 3%.

District 5 is 15% Hispanic.

District 9 is.

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: Thank you so a couple things.

Election results clearly this is ability to elect District.

It's a strong ability to elect District.

Because we don't have data and analysis on Hispanic population per se as I said I'm reluctant to change that in any way.

To with John's point before about Hispanic population in adjoining districts.

The only District that has any type of significant Hispanic population I believe is 5.

So that's about a 15% Hispanic voting age population.

Now that may be something that we can deal with later.

It's not suggesting any compliance issues.

And when I say deal with that, there may be some opportunity to move some Hispanic population from 1 to 5.

But not without analysis nor as you know I'll use a clumsy metaphor I don't like to jump first without knowing where I'm jumping.

So I don't know where I'm jumping.

We may be able to do that.

But for now I think one can receive what we talked about earlier it looks okay for what we have now.

I think we can move on to another District.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you so District 2.

>> MR. MORGAN: District 2 is Detroit and also has Hamtramck.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Correct.

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: I know there have been comments recently about Hamtramck and is that -- were they about the State House or the U.S. house?

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: This is where there was a modification that I would like to make that would so there are three districts that the Bengali community and I'll offer the Yemeni community as well.

And so District 8.

And if you can put up the Asian theme, John, that would I think help make sure I'm getting this right.

And then the other overlay that I'd like you to put on after the theme is the Detroit neighborhoods.

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Because I do believe it's called Bangla Town that is currently in District 8 and I would like to you know suggest that it be in either 2 or 10.

Again in order to keep the community within two districts rather than three.

And, yeah.

I don't think it's a significant, I hope it's not a significant change.

And again I think it may have to do with VRA compliance and the community of interest frankly.

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: I think to your point Commissioner Rothhorn I agree with that.

If this particular distinct protected population under the VRA can be united into one District as we've seen in other areas, that is beneficial to the overall VRA analysis because you're not cracking the population or dividing it.

You are keeping the population united to best preserve their voting opportunities so I agree, I think that that is an important goal.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you, John the overlay with the Detroit neighborhoods if you can, please.

If you add the layer and the theme and the name, I just want to make sure I'm not accidentally grabbing another District, another neighborhood I should say, yeah, the neighborhood name, thank you.

Yep so, I believe it's just a little bit north, yes, compile Bangla Town which is in District 8.

Yep.

So I believe because it's you know, yeah, so we got in primarily the Asian population on the theme that we are looking at is in 2 and 10.

And the community of interest that was submitted if we just add Bangla Town.

>> MR. MORGAN: Talking about adding it to ten which is the one that has predominately the rest of the Asian population on the north.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: And I think 2 may accept it better in terms of population.

So.

>> MR. MORGAN: Adding it to two.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Yes, and Bruce did you have a thought?

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: Only if John if you could also show the demographics for District 2 just so we can see where most of the population is now.

Bless you.

>> MR. MORGAN: 10% non-Hispanic Asian in two.  
District 10 is 14% non-Hispanic Asian.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Yeah.

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: Thanks.



>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: The reason I just want to offer to the Bengali and the API the community of interest that has submitted this one of the things we are trying to do is recognize to be VRA compliant District that has Hamtramck primarily because it does help us with compliance at this point and try to offer ones but at this point I want to try to get 8 and Campau and Banglatown in District 2 because District 2 is under populated and then I think we've essentially reduced it from three being split over three districts into reduced it to two districts.

Again it's not one which is ideal but I think it will take significant changing and shifting and at this point I'm focusing on VRA compliance and trying to make small changes, yes, we have to go to the block level.

Thank you, John.

>> MR. MORGAN: You probably didn't want the entire voting precinct.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: True.

>> MR. MORGAN: It's always a little slower at the block level.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Understood.

>> MR. MORGAN: District 2 then is over by 2.98.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Yes so, we want Campau and Banglatown the whole neighborhood there, please.

Added to District 2.

Beautiful and it's a voting precinct too.

So we are within the deviation we are less than 5%.

Yeah, and I'd like to continue.

My goal is to try to get through as many districts until other Commissioners are ready to take over for me.

Just to help with VRA compliance, yeah and I think we identify the first I'm going to try to do the first 18 districts.

Again, if other Commissioners are ready to help me or like take over for me that is great otherwise, I will keep going until I hear some sort of objection.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Eid?

>> COMMISSIONER EID: Well, I think since we are going to have to make, I think are pretty significant changes to 14, 15 and 17, you might want to try putting that whole community of interest into one District and reconfiguring.

I know Commissioner Szetela made some changes too and we could possibly overlay those.

And like see the differences.

But I think you should try to get it in one District now and we can make changes from there.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Okay you were highlighting 14, 15.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: I think he was talking about Banglatown.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: You want me to put together 2 and 10? That would be.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: I would also say I tried that.

And the problem is the reason why Banglatown and Hamtramck are in two right now is to balance out the African/American population.

So if you try to go all the way up into the ten it throws that balance completely off again. Because it's a House District and we are limited on population pulling out Hamtramck to put it in ten works to combine those two communities but it ends up creating a very highly concentrated number two left over and there is just too many people to accomplish both.

>> COMMISSIONER EID: I was saying put it in two just add those because most of that community of interest is in two right now.

I would just add the parts of that community of interest.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Most of the community is in ten.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: They are in Warren, Sterling Heights area.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: You can see that with the Asian population percentages.

>> COMMISSIONER EID: One second, I will look at the map.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Is it okay if I keep going to three.

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: Before we do that, I have a question.

So Banglatown is now mostly in two and also in ten is that correct? Banglatown is mostly in two but there is some in ten.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: So Banglatown is actually a neighborhood that is specific and around but it's outside of Hamtramck.

And the community of interest does extent so the Bangladeshi and Yemeni community quite frankly submitted where John is drawing yep and the theme is you know is recognized there.

You can see the theme.

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: So one distinction is let's with two and ten since part of Bangla Town is now in two and I understand the rest is in ten.

But ten Asian population goes beyond that area of Banglatown.

Into the northern part of the District.

So that Asian population between both districts is relatively equivalent of voting age population.

So that doesn't concern me as much as if there was no Asian population, north of Banglatown.

So am I correct that instead of being in three districts Banglatown is now in two districts?

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Yes, that is correct.

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: Okay should we do you want to look at the bellwether elections for two?

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Yes.

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: Okay.

>> MR. MORGAN: Okay District 2.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Eid?

>> COMMISSIONER EID: I just wanted to point out the map I was looking at.

It is IDP037, that is the one that has been referenced since we have first made this house map.

And it has quite a lot of comments like over 15 here.

Again that is P1037 and to me it looks like most of it is in two right now.

There is just some areas eastward and a little bit yeah mainly eastward that are not included in it.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Okay, I heard what you say and that we might take those little pieces of ten to add it to two and we might keep more together.

Let's review continue reviewing the elections then we will come back to that.

>> MR. MORGAN: Okay so District 2 as drawn with the changes you just made in Banglatown is 93 for Biden 7 for Trump.

In 2020 and 2016 Clinton is 96.

Trump is 4.

In 2012 Obama is 97, Romney is 3.

Peters is for U.S. Senate is 93.

James is 7.

Stabenow 94.

James 6.

Peters is 96, land is 4.

Stabenow 97, Hoekstra is 3.

Whitmer is 95 Schuette is 5.

Shower is 9 is, Snyder is 9 for Governor.

For Attorney General 95 Nessel, 5 for Leonard. Attorney General 92 for Totten, 8 for Schuette. Secretary of State 95 Benson, 5 Lange. Secretary of State 2014 Dillard is 92, Johnson is 8. Then for the Governor's race El-Sayed 2018 Governor El-Sayed is 43.5 and Thanedar is 29 and Whitmer is 27.5.

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: So, yes, clearly the minority candidate of choice sweeps the elections, sweeps them pretty handedly and I think this also brings up one of the...an ongoing challenge because of course in an urban area the population tends to be very concentrated.

Population is very concentrated here.

And are the margins of victory are I think a function more of where the people are living.

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If this were a District that were 2, 300 miles north and setting were different and 95-5% victory margin might raise some thoughts about well perhaps the minority population can be shifted.

I don't know that that's really possible given the reality of concentrated populations in an urban setting.

I just mentioned that.

But I think for now to I think two looks okay and I understand that you may decide later on to unite Banglatown in one District but that is a consideration for later.

I think that elections prove out so I think two for now is okay.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you.

And just acknowledging Commissioner Eid's comment about being able to make take a little piece out of ten.

But because they are both over population is there a way to get the voting precinct totals and where the theme is recognizing the Asian community as John?

>> MR. MORGAN:

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: 2500 so we would add about 4,000 it looks like if, we added the voting presents to two and we would remove 4,000 from 10.

Two is just not going to accept that without, yeah, significant changes.

Again I want to use and do voting rights compliance but I'm just going to acknowledge that is something I do want to come back to.

I will, yeah, work on that this weekend.

Yeah, so let's go to three, please.

And do you know what, Commissioner Szetela may have submitted a map that allows us to look at the overlay of her map.

And that may help us, yeah, I wonder, John go ahead.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: There was just a shape file titled 092621HDRAS revisions.

If you could put that overlay on that so you can see kind of how I repossessed some of these districts to balance things out a little better.

It might be helpful.

>> MR. MORGAN: I'm looking to see if I have that.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Okay.

>> MR. MORGAN: You said RAS revisions.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yes.

>> MR. MORGAN: I think I have it.

Just a moment.

>> MR. KENT STIGALL: I had loaded it up but he had not so it will be just one minute.

>> MR. MORGAN: That is the shape file you wanted me to upload.

It looks like you have a few adjustments in one, all right, and let's and three, okay, so right so what we can't do is sort of run analysis on the shape file on just the drawing.

Okay so I guess what we can do is look at VRA compliance.

>> MR. MORGAN: I could load it as a separate plan if you want to look at the statistics is that advisable?

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: It seems worthwhile because our goal is to do VRA analysis and see if there is another set or a significant changes that will allow us so maybe before you load it up maybe we should write down the numbers or.

>> MR. MORGAN: I think there is a spreadsheet with that information if I'm not mistaken.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: So if you scroll out I can kind of explain what I was doing here and may be helpful before we move on to it so I was trying to fix districts 15, 14 and 17 because they are highly concentrated.

69% -- 76% African/American.

65% African/American.

And then 71% African/American.

And so I was trying to fix that and then also minimize the number of splits that we have in Livonia and Redford because right now we have five splits in Livonia and three in Redford so in order to accomplish that I moved what was originally just a District for Dearborn which was three which is basically almost all of Dearborn. And I grabbed those parts of Detroit that also have significant Arab population so that would be the Warren area and then clay town and then because I was able to do that, I was able to reposition 17, 14 and 15 and then I also had to reposition a little bit of 2 and 1 I did not touch anything only the east side so 10, 12, 6, 4, I did not mess with those at all but readjusted the boundaries so that it brings it down to three splits in Livonia versus five. Two splits in Redford versus three. We still have two splits in Dearborn which is what we had originally. And you now have two splits in Dearborn Heights. And then end up dropping the African/American population by 15% in those three districts.

So the districts come down to one is 50%, one is 61%, and the other is at 56%.

And I think what I'm really curious is Bruce's analysis on that particularly for Dearborn. Because I think with this configuration you are still preserving that community of interest of the Arabic population because there is so much cross over voting I think it should be okay. But obviously you're the expert on that. And minimizing the highly concentrated you know like I said the bacon strip districts that we had because we hadn't gone into Dearborn.

If you go into Dearborn, you can solve that problem and minimize Livonia split and minimize Redford splits.

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: To that point I think that I remember when we looked at District three before and the 2018 gubernatorial primary that really revealed some the potential preference of the Arab American community so we can see if that election result has changed and we can let's just start there.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Start that and what that means we need John to look.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Look at here first.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Do we look here first.

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Look how it is right now.

>> MR. MORGAN: If I'm not mistaken the District numbers are the same.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: We numbered them as much as the same as possible to make it easy.

>> MR. MORGAN: Would it make sense in a spread sheet side by side for some of the information.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Can we look at the election results in the spreadsheet then too?

>> MR. MORGAN: I can copy.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Let's bring it.

>> MR. MORGAN: We bring up Commissioner Szetela's plan up separately if she has the entire active matrix, I can just use the sheet she had or just bring up the plan and then export those you know 10-12 districts and then have them on top of each other so you can look at them together.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: It sound like it's worth -- I'd be interested in seeing it and I think it would be a useful tool please help us do that thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: So I did send over the excel sheet but my caveat on my program I don't have that primary of El-Sayed so I don't know if that makes a difference if you need to separately export it.

>> MR. MORGAN: If I bring it in here then it will add the matrix in and it shouldn't be a problem.

So it will just take a moment.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Eid?

>> COMMISSIONER EID: So if I recall the original plan had two districts in Dearborn that were won by El-Sayed one was like pretty significant and one was right over 50%. It was like 50.2% or something like that.

But generally I like the changes that you made, Commissioner Szetela.

And I think, yeah, let's just see if those election results stand.

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: As I recall with the prior duration of District 3, that El-Sayed won by he had more than 60% support.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: I thought it was 69%.

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: Yeah, so that was we have not seen anything like that. Anywhere around the state.

So I think as we talked about at the time that the election results suggest there is some room to play because it's not like he won by 50% or he lost and he had 48%.

So there is a margin so I think the telling point will be if we are still within the safe zone. If he still wins and if he still wins then I think on that metric that's good.



>> MR. MORGAN: Just want to confirm this looks like the plan that you wanted to import, okay? So then when I go to the election data here, it has your District so we will move the whole Section over to a spreadsheet.

I will just bring up the other plan.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Commissioner Szetela since you are next after me maybe it makes sense to hand it over at this point in terms of taking terms is that okay.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: We can wait to see what he says if what I have done is worse, we may not be making any changes.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Okay.

>> MR. MORGAN: For moving things along let's look at sorry is this election data? No of course I did the wrong one.

Yeah, just a moment.

No, I put the election with the population.

Yep, so elections let's try that again.

It was close.

I think this is what we are looking for.

This is just on the election results.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: And I think in general what I'm looking at is like the democratic republican sort of summary and I think what we are looking for is try to compare the change that right we want to go all the way to the right to get to that primary election and see El-Sayed and the result.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thanedar and I can't remember.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: And Whitmer, yep.

And the Districts 12 and 3 are on the top.

So the summary there is not an appreciable.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: 2% in District 2. 8% in District 3, which I would not say is negotiable but it's still a strong win there.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: That is 8%.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Still it's 9%, that is a strong win.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: How do you interpret the results?

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: I want to make sure I had the right District.

So which is District I see and I did not have the right District so District 3 has 67.6.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: 3 and 7.

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: I think three it's virtually the same.

It may be like .5 higher, so the change did not affect what we are referring to be the Arab American preference for El-Sayed.

And what was the other District?

>> CHAIR SZETELA: 7.

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>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: 7 so let's wait until we can see.

>> MR. MORGAN: The map preference is here we are talking District 3 and District 7 so this orange version of District 3 is what's in the House District plan.

And then this more vertical version of District 3 is in Commissioner Szetela's revisions and this is the revised District 7.

So we will go back to the spreadsheet.

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: I think we looked at three and let's check out 7.

Yeah so 7 appears it's almost 4-1 for El-Sayed who also defeats Whitmer so I think they both show from our inference that Arab Americans elect their candidates of choice in three.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Can we look at it a little closer? What I read on line 15 under RAS for District 7 yep, I'm reading El-Sayed at 46% and Whitmer at 42%. So not overwhelming.

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: No it doesn't have to be.

So if it's El-Sayed won by 2.7%.

So that is correct.

It's not overwhelming but it does not have to be overwhelming.

This is the only election result we have where we can intuit about Arab American preferences.

Again, we are inferring.

I think it's a pretty good inference. So they can't elect handily and free. They can't elect more narrowly in 7, whether or not that is something that you would like to look at later to see if 7 can be shrank a little bit is an initial consideration. But I'm not seeing that that is a problem since they can elect and that is the threshold question that you have to answer.

So clearly, they can.

Whether or not you want to look at that later as something to tinker with a little bit is a different question.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: At this point it's 4:00 and what I'm thinking about Commissioners is you know I think Commissioner Eid has sort of weighted and said he would like to look at it, I feel like I want to do a round Robin part of me knows it's important we as Commissioners be able to make, yeah, expedient positions and I think Commissioner Szetela and Commissioner Eid both had experience in history in this area and because we are dealing with VRA compliance I'm tempted to say I'd like to suggest that we sort of make like a switch.

But again it feels like this is important to talk about because we've got about half an hour left.

I don't want to right this is my turn but I want to frankly like get other considerations and that is my suggestion and I will leave it at that.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: I also would like Mr. Adelson to look at the changes in 14, 15 and 17 in the population there if you have that.

>> MR. MORGAN: To be clear you're talking about looking at the population, not just the election results.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Just the population because the demographics change significantly with that.

>> MR. MORGAN: It's multiple districts you are talking, if you wholesale change like a substitute amendment is completely different.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: I was premature and I will back off and not do this until we get further analysis.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: The entire goal of this was to preserve the Arab American communities voting ability while minimizing some of the concentration in those other districts which and then also minimizing splits in Livonia and Redford which we had because we weren't venturing in into Dearborn so we had no other way to go so I think this kind of accomplishes all three of those.

But I want your opinion on that because you're the expert.

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: And I appreciate that Commissioner Szetela. I think clearly the modifications in 3 and 7 retained what we are inferring as the Arab American ability to elect or El-Sayed primary results. So that has been retained.

The and we can look at the other demographics for the districts that you mentioned and then see where we go from there.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: It seems it's useful to go through John and thank you for helping us compare the districts and using the spreadsheet it feels like this is what I'm going to do when I'm drawing this weekend.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: If you go down to it's 14, 15 and 17 were the ones I with was trying to hit on.

So you can see that it dropped from 74% African/American to 61.

And in 14.

And then 15 dropped from 62.7 to 50.2.

And then 17 dropped from 69.29 to 56.4.

So hopefully a little more balanced.

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: Definitely a little more balanced. I think as I recall I'm looking at the numbers so, yes, there was a significant adjustment. You know, I think that and that yes that is a given.

The percentages are still higher than Dr. Handley's analysis but I think that is a good start to adjusting and to be more in line with her racially polarized voting analysis and the ability to elect.

So while there is the Black population is still higher than her analysis determined it is significantly improved from what it had been previously.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Do we need to look at election results?

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: I think one of the choices that will be you know that's on the table and it's not just for these districts.

The districts the 14, 15 and 17.

It's for probably some others too is what can be done to come closer to Dr. Handley's threshold, which is the threshold that the courts will be looking at.

So as far as the election results, as I recall these districts all proved out pretty well.

I think that I would recommend focusing on the percentages and comparing them to Dr. Handley's percentages for Wayne County which as I recall is 35-40%.

So.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: We are talking about the African/American voting age populations percentages.

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: That is exactly right the voting age population that is needed to elect candidates of choice and her range and what we discuss, what she and I discussed, which I'm comfortable with is that 35-40%.

So there is no question that the districts are dramatically improved for that metric.

But I think there are since the courts will be looking at her analysis that there is some additional tinkering to do.

As I was saying earlier, I think one of the choices that is on the table is of course where do you go.

We've talked about that before.

Where do you go when that is going to impact commenters preferences on keeping communities whole or not keeping communities whole.

That's something that I'm happy to address more going forward.

But the you know as you know the Voting Rights Act is the number one criterion together with one person one vote in the U.S. Constitution.

So that I understand that that policy choice is complicated in a sense.

But then in another sense from my perspective it's not complicated.

But I don't have to decide on the adjustments.

That will be a policy choice going forward.

But it really is the key rhetorical question I think is where do you go.

And what can you do to come more in line with what Dr. Handley concluded.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Eid?

>> COMMISSIONER EID: Well, to me it looks like the only place we can go is into Grosse Pointe all of the Grosse Pointes areas.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Not for reducing the existing districts, Mr. Adelson to reduce them further is that accurate?

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: Yes, literally geographically.

[ Off mic ]

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: If we want to continue working to improve the overall VRA results in the Detroit area that districts I think it's 6, 7 and 8 is that where you were looking at? Thinking about the Grosse Pointe area is that what your comment was related to?

>> COMMISSIONER EID: Speaking to applying the changes that Commissioner Szetela did and from there further improving it by shifting into that Grosse Pointe population and it would shift everything a little bit east, southeast ward, I guess. But I don't see another you know, place with the population that we need, that we could potentially go in to.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for that. I'm thinking so this will be the first time we are right now Commissioners I think what we are navigating we have a proposal and a VRA analysis that is improved and still not finished or finalized. What I think we want and again because we are still trying to figure out whether we take turns or not, right, because it's my turn what I'm trying to do facilitate us making a decision.

I think Commissioner Eid you know sort of suggested let's use or sort of shift from whatever we had the house map that we had to this proposed change RAS and what I'm asking us is can we figure out a way to do that? I don't think we I'm not sure if we need to vote.

I don't think we right we don't want to vote but what we want to do is come to consensus somehow or not and say no we want to leave it as an alternative.

I'm wondering are there any I guess I'm asking for any strong feelings of or let's say without objection I'll try that without objection I'll suggest because it's my turn that we accept the changes and sort of merge the RAS map to our existing map.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Or we can just create a clone and have a second map. That is the easiest way to do it.

And I can also so now I know I'm kind of going the right way I think 6 and 4 could use some adjustments as Anthony suggested.

And I think we could possibly go further into Livonia with 14 and 17 and possibly even bring Livonia down to two splits which is what they have to have based on population. And maybe adjust those numbers further so I mean I can continue to play with this and then we can keep our original map and then just have a version two that has this as kinds of the jumping off point Mr. Morgan.

>> MR. MORGAN: Make a suggestion to help facilitate this, what you might want to consider is look at the outer boundaries of your proposed districts like you're looking at roughly you're not going to make changes roughly beyond the certain boundaries. So obviously Detroit is impacted, Livonia Redford, Dearborn, Dearborn Heights, and then that way you will have an idea of just what the total grouping is.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yeah, that is what I was actually trying to do with the map and why it doesn't have all the districts because I did not want to create a Cascade so I was trying to work in the area to rebalance things.

So that we don't have to adjust 50 districts based on tweaks down here.

Mr. Morgan.

>> MR. MORGAN: Just to follow-up on that at this point since you made the changes to a certain number of districts do you want to review the ones you changed before moving on to other changes just so you can show everyone what districts you did change before stopping and working on your own?

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Seems like we would help the public by reviewing that and making some adjustments or making note of those adjustments.

>> MR. MORGAN: So I have the two side by side here on the screen and if you just point out the areas you know just the areas that have changed then we will move on.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: So the shape file or the outline the blue outline we are seeing is the suggested change that is changed because of to better comply with VRA bringing down the Black voting age population to a range that is closer to 40% actually reducing it and in some cases to 50% but not quite to 40%.

So each of these blue outlines helps shift the districts so District 1 where the cursor is, would be shifts to the blue outline that is also there District 2.

Would be shifts to the blue outline.

District 3 would be shifted to the blue outline.

And the District 3 is currently orange District blue District 2 is green District 1 is purple.

And I think then we are looking at 14 excuse me District 7 there was also yep which is I suppose a green and the District 7 would, yeah, change.

District 15, District 14 and thank you John for outlining those districts in blue where the shift would be and District 17 would change to the blue outline there.

Those are the only districts that we've currently reviewed and are suggesting changing at this point.

>> MR. BRUCE ADELSON: If I could add a brief addendum to that in addition to the shape of the districts, I wanted to say that in determining the minority population that is governed by Supreme Court case called Thornburg versus Jingles, Section Two of the Voting Rights Act considering whether a majority minority District is required by Federal law racially polarized and block voting which Dr. Handley has done so in determining amount of population that minority communities need to elect candidates of choice under the Supreme Court precedent Section Two racial bloc voting analysis is necessary.

Dr. Handley in her analysis determined and concluded that certain percentages of Black voting age population were needed to elect.



So rather than just come and saying this should be majority minority this should be 80%, 60%, 70%, the Commission is following Supreme Court precedent and Federal law in figuring out the percentages to correspondence with Dr. Handley's analysis. So I just wanted I think it's very important for everybody to understand that these percentages are based on data analysis that the Supreme Court the justice department other Federal courts have endorsed as being compliant with Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act and the U.S. Constitution.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for that and the public for review and this was also done by Chair Szetela with regard to trying to minimize the number of splits in the Livonia area and Redford area that's true, correct?

>> CHAIR SZETELA: I was trying to avoid the splits in Livonia and Redford to reduce some of those.

I was trying to I looked in the issue of whether we combine Banglatown in District 2 with District 10 that was not a problem I was able to solve.

Without having downstream effects.

I was looking at Dearborn was also divided twice and looking at dividing it differently so we would not have the sort of long skinny districts 15, 14 and 17 above Dearborn.

While still maintaining that Arabic community of interest and their voting power so I was trying to balance multiple things in doing this so.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: You were suggesting creating a clone.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Create a clone and we can if I'll it in with this and we have that to work off of.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: We know the first map is not as VRA compliant as this one and the reason we would keep the first one I'm trying to help us I suppose as a Commission sort of agree that that is, that there is a better map that is more that allows us to comply with our first priority, the VRA, that and that this next step would help us together right create something that is a little bit better.

Working from one map maybe I guess I'm hoping that we get more consensus around it so if there is people that feel like the first map of our existing map is important to keep even though it's less VRA compliant than let's say the suggested changes, that's what I'm asking us as a can we make that decision rather than just making a clone?

>> CHAIR SZETELA: So you're saying you want us to decide if we want to maintain that for further consideration by the Commission or if we want to move on to another map, that is what my understanding is.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Yes.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thoughts comments questions? Commissioner Eid?

>> COMMISSIONER EID: Well, I think that brings up a kind of further discussion of how many of these collaborative maps do we want to bring with us to the you know the next round of public hearings that was a question that was raised earlier that we never really got to address.

It sounded we will bring however many collaborative maps we want to plus whatever individual Commissioners want to bring as well.

I would be okay with like I said earlier just going with this version, merging it and trying to make it better from here.

But I mean we can also just make a clone, you know, depends what everyone wants but I think we should keep in mind and maybe decide now how many collaborative maps do we want to bring with us.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: I don't think making a clone of this necessarily means we will take both maps moving forward I personally from a document preservation requirement like making a clone and keeping the first map then we have it, I mean it's already been published so we have it for historical purposes if nothing else.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: I'm not hearing a lot of other thoughts so I think just clone it.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: So just clone this plan, please and then we are going to readjust the lines based on the shape file that you have on top of it.

>> MR. MORGAN: Basically, yeah, so you will take this plan and then adjust.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Version two so 9-29 well actually did you copy this already? Is this a copy because it's 9-29?

>> MR. MORGAN: It is and I believe the issue here is we are Commissioner Rothhorn's changes as well. They are in this, I think.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Banglatown.

>> MR. MORGAN: Or maybe not.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: I was going to say we might have changed it the same way. It looks changed the same way.

>> MR. MORGAN: Do you know what happened I think it overwrote, no, it didn't. I don't know.

I'll have to look at it.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Either way I put it in ten the area you were talking about, can you put the thematic dots for Asian Americans?

>> MR. MORGAN: Let me just clarify what we have in this plan.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Okay thank you.

>> MR. MORGAN: To be clear I would say that we would probably want to quickly revisit the Banglatown and adjust it in here if that is what you want to do.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Okay let's do that.

So, yes, and it is a precinct.

So if you add that precinct to District 2, please.

That is 110.

>> MR. MORGAN: That is right it will change a lot of things.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: I believe we may have someone logged in Zoom who is not on mute and the people who are on Zoom check your mute button because we are picking up background noise from someone who is on the Zoom call.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thanks, John.

And for now well, yeah, that is great.

>> MR. MORGAN: Do you want me to spend the time to click this in here or agree I will do that and present it to you?

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: I would agree that you would present it to us later.

>> MR. MORGAN: Okay.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you.

So it's about 4:28 I know I'm pretty tired.

I'm going to stop my turn.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Okay and we will stipulate we will make the changes so if you want to work in an area outside of the areas you have already changed, we can do that.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: You're going to go ahead and make these changes is that what you're saying I'm not following you.

>> MR. MORGAN: It will take me 15 minutes to click through those and rather than doing that I can stipulate I can do that and work on a different area now with your time or do something else.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: We are supposed to stop mapping right about now then we can break for the day.

Do we have our director of communications, is he online? He is over there, I was going to say I don't see him at the table, all right so we are going to pause mapping at this point and we will move on to the next item of our agenda which is approval of minutes we do not have any to approve.

We do not have a staff report from Executive Director or General Counsel however we do have a staff report from our communications and Outreach Director Edward words III so without objection I will ask him for an update.

Hearing no objection please proceed, Mr. Woods.

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I want to remind you tomorrow is our last day of our public University tour across the state and trying to fill in gaps and locations where we have not met. And they are really excited about having us at Oakland University at Oakland University.

You have information from Sarah mar Martinez and we start at 10:00 and 1:00 and again at 5:00 p.m. the public comment period will start at 1:00 p.m. and at 5:00 p.m. at 10:00 a.m. the Commission will continue with its unfinished business.

So just want to alert the public that is where we are on Thursday.

And then on Friday starting at 9:00 a.m. we will be at the Detroit Marriott Troy 200 west big Beaver road in Troy Michigan in the Mediterranean room.

On Friday starting at 9:00 a.m.

So just want to make sure the public is aware of that information.

It's already posted.

And that the Commission has the information that it needs with regards to the meeting at Oakland University, if you have questions feel free to see me after the meeting.

Thank you for your time.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you Mr. Woods Sarah Reinhardt do we have any Michigan Department of State updates correspondence received in advance of the meeting was provided to Commissioners in our packets before the meeting.

In addition Commissioners also review the public comment portal at [www.Michigan.gov/MICRC](http://www.Michigan.gov/MICRC) website on a regular basis.

We appreciate everyone who provides public comment in whatever way they choose to do so and invite people to continue sharing their thoughts community of interest and maps.

All right next is future agenda items are this any future agenda items to discuss? All right any announcements? Ms. Reinhardt?

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Yes, I just want to clarify that tomorrow's meeting, Thursday it starts at 10:00 a.m.

But public comment for tomorrow's meeting does not begin until 1:00 p.m.

However public in person public comment sign up will open consistent with how we have done other meetings one hour prior to the meeting start time.

So public comment sign up for tomorrow's meeting will open at 9:00 a.m. at the venue, thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you Ms. Reinhardt any other announcements.

All right seeing the items on our agenda have been completed a motion to adjourn is in order may I have a motion to adjourn.

Motion made by Commissioner Witjes.

Seconded by Commissioner Rothhorn.

Is there any debate or discussion on the motion? All in favor please raise your hand and say aye.

All opposed please raise your hand and say nay the ayes prevail and the meeting is adjourned at 4:32 p.m.

Thank you, everybody.