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MICRC

06/01/21 6:00 pm Public Hearing

Captioned by Q&A Reporting, Inc., www.qacaptions.com

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Good evening everyone.

As Chair of the Commission, I call this meeting of the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission to order at 6:03 p.m.

This meeting is being live streamed at you tube at www.YouTube.com/michsosfooffice/videos.

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 translation services will be provided for effective participation in this meeting. e-mail us at Redistricting@Michigan.Gov for additional viewing options or details on accessing language translation services for this meeting.

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

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

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

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

Members of the media who may have questions before, during or after the meeting should direct those questions to Edward Woods III, Communications and Outreach Director for the Commission at WoodsE3@Michigan.gov. For the purpose of the public watching and the public record, I will turn to department state Staff to take note of the Commissioners present.

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

Douglas Clark.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Present.

- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Juanita Curry.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Anthony Eid?
- >> COMMISSIONER EID: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Brittini Kellom?
- >> CHAIR KELLOM: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Rhonda Lange?
- >> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Present; attending remotely from Reed City, Michigan.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Steve Lett?
- >> COMMISSIONER LETT: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Cynthia Orton?
- >> COMMISSIONER ORTON: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: MC Rothhorn?
- >> COMMISSIONER ROTHORN: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Rebecca Szetela?
- >> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Janis Vallette.
- >> COMMISSIONER LETT: She had to step away for a moment and we will have her announce herself as here.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Erin Wagner?
- >> COMMISSIONER WAGNER: If that was Erin Wagner, Present; attending remotely from Charlotte, Michigan.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Richard Weiss?
- >> COMMISSIONER WEISS: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Dustin Witjes?
- >> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Present.
- >> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you, Ms. Reinhardt.

And moving on for our agenda for the evening, if there are no objections, I would like Commissioner Weiss to come to us to provide a presentation a welcome and an introduction.

Hearing no objection, please proceed, Commissioner Weiss.

>> COMMISSIONER WEISS: Good evening. My name is Richard H. Weiss and I'm from Saginaw, Michigan. I live in Saginaw Township.

Welcome to the MICRC public hearing in Flint, Michigan. We are happy you are here to learn about Michigan's new redistricting process and how you can engage throughout this process to ensure your voice is heard.

In looking at the agenda, please note that the vast majority of our time this evening is spent listening to you.

We are eager to hear your ideas, either in person or remotely, about drawing Michigan's Congressional, House and Senate Districts.

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

At this time I would like my fellow colleagues to introduce themselves and share where they live in Michigan, the Great Lakes State. And I would like Ms. Commissioner Lange and Commissioner Wagner and then starting to my right after that.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Welcome, everybody. I'm Rhonda Lange and I'm from Reed City, Michigan.

>> COMMISSIONER WAGNER: Hello and welcome. I'm Erin Wagner and I'm from Charlotte, Michigan.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Welcome. My name is Dustin Witjes and I'm from Ypsilanti, Michigan.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Good evening. I'm Douglas Clark and I'm from Rochester Hills, Michigan.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Good evening, everyone. I'm Brittini Kellom and I reside in Detroit, Michigan.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: Good evening. My name is Juanita Curry and I reside in Detroit, Michigan.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Good evening. Rebecca Szetela. I reside in Wayne County, Michigan.

>> COMMISSIONER EID: Hello, Flint. Thank you for coming out today. I'm Anthony Eid. I'm from Orchard Lake, Michigan.

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Good evening. I'm Steve Lett and I'm from Interlochen, Michigan.

>> COMMISSIONER VALLETTE: Good evening. I'm Janice Vallette. I'm from Highland, Michigan. And I also missed roll, so I'm present.

>> COMMISSIONER ROTHORN: Good evening. I think I'm next. I'm MC. It's good to see you all. I live in Lansing, Michigan.

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: I am Cynthia Orton and I live in Battle Creek, Michigan. Nice to see you all this evening.

>> COMMISSIONER WEISS: In 2018 more than 61% of the Michigan voters intentionally and deliberately passed proposal two, a ballot initiative for voters and not legislators to take responsibility for map fairness, public feedback in the redistricting process creating the Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission, MICRC.

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

Comprised of 13 randomly selected Michigan residents that include four who are affiliated as democrats, five who affiliate as independents, and four who affiliate as republicans through a lottery run by the Michigan Department of State.

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

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

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

Once again, we are glad that you are here and we look forward to hearing from you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you so much, Commissioner Weiss.

Now. Moving forward in our agenda to the purpose of why we are all here today, our public hearings, if I don't hear any objection, I will share a little bit about our public hearings.

Hearing none, I'm coming to you all again, good evening.

As acting Chair, my name is Brittini Kellom. And I'm also a Commissioner of the Michigan Independent Redistricting Commission.

Can you all see that clearly?

Okay, so to ensure fair and impartial maps, the MICRC is required to solicit public input before drawing and redistricting any plan for the Michigan Congressional House and Senate districts through a minimum of ten public hearings across the state.

Well, we are doing 16.

Flint, where we are right now, represents 7 of those 16 public hearings.

I went ahead in the slides.

Sorry, I was trying to keep track. It was on my monitor that you all can't see and I did not realize I was advancing here.

Yep, I went back to this, yep.

All right. Per the Michigan Constitution, the purposes for the public hearings are to inform the public about the redistricting process.

Two, share the purpose and responsibilities of the Commission.

And, three, solicit information from you about potential redistricting plans for Michigan's Congressional, House and Senate Districts.

Every ten years following the U.S. Census, District lines for U.S. Congressional, State House and State Senate must be redrawn in states across the country to accurately reflect their population.

The process of drawing District lines is known as redistricting.

In Michigan, here are the District lines that need to be drawn for the 2022 election cycle.

The first data from the 2020 Census shows that the, excuse me, that the state population as of April 1st, 2020, was at 10,773,031.

Michigan Congressional 13 districts, 775,200 people. Michigan Senate 38 districts, 265,200 people. Michigan House 110 districts, 91,600 people.

The MICRC is the sole entity responsible for drawing the District lines.

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The MICRC operates in an impartial and transparent manner that instills integrity in the redistricting process.

The MICRC public outreach represents fairness, awareness, transparency, and engagement that seeks to obtain at least 10,000 distinct public comments in the redistricting process.

The MICRC must adopt maps from Michigan's 13 Congressional, 38 Senate and 110 House Districts.

The districts should be drawn to meet applicable Federal and State laws including the Voters Rights Act.

As mandated by the U.S. Constitution, equal population refers to the amount of people in the District.

For Congressional districts, it's 761,000 people.

Our criteria also includes for Michigan Senate District, it's between 212 -- 212,400 and 263,500 people. For the Michigan House District it is between 77,000 and 91,000 residents.

Voting Rights Act, Federal regulation that prohibits racial discrimination and communities of interest include arts districts, neighborhoods, businesses, agricultural, education, waterfront communities and so much more.

Although race is important, it is not the only characteristic to identify a community of interest.

So what are communities of interest? Communities of interest may include, but shall not be limited to, populations that share cultural or historical characteristics or economic interests.

Do not include relationships with political parties, incumbents or political candidates.

What does the MICRC want to know about your community of interest? What name would you give your community? What is the common bond that creates your community shared identity? What is the geographic area covered by your community? What governmental policies are important for your community? How would keeping your community intact enhance the quality of your representation in Congress or the Michigan Legislature? Are there nearby areas that strengthen or weaken your community of interest?

And, more importantly, why is the MICRC here? Well, simply speaking, we are here to hear from you about where to draw the lines for Michigan's Congressional, House and Senate districts in Flint and throughout the State of Michigan.

To listen and learn about your community of interest and to hear directly from you about your ideas.

At this time, if there are no objections, I would like to pass the floor to our General Counsel for public comment guidelines.

Hearing no objection, please proceed, General Counsel Pastula.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. My name is Julianne Pastula. I'm the General Counsel for the Commission. And thank you so much for welcoming us to your community.

I would like to briefly cover the public comment guidelines for this evening. In-person public comments will take place first, followed by remote public comments. The time limit for each speaker is two minutes. Please conclude your remarks when you hear the timer. And there will also be a timer on the screen for your convenience.

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

As the Chairperson indicated, please provide public comments and/or submit your proposed maps in the public comment portal, which is available at www.Michigan.gov/MICRC.

Thank you again.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you, General Counsel.

At this time I'd like to move on to our in-person public comment.

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

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

Please step to the nearest microphone when I call your number.

You will have two minutes to address the Commission.

Please conclude your remarks when your two minutes has ended and you hear the timer.

If you feel at any time that you have more to say or maybe you hear the timer and you finished your thought but you want to continue to share with us, please, I want to take this time to let you all know about our public comment tool.

And you are free to share your comments in writing, including any specific area of the map about which you are speaking.

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

By the end of the night, we will all have that memorized. Again, it's www.Michigan.gov/MICRC.

I'm going to call odd numbers to the mic, that is to my left and I'll call even numbers, unless it's too far for you to walk, I'll have even numbers come to this mic to my right, okay? So odd numbers here and even numbers to the mic to my right.

So I'll call numbers 1, 2, 3 and 4.

Numbers 1 and 3 here.

2 and 4 on this side.

Also, we are a warm group and don't let us call you numbers all night. Introduce yourselves, smile, good evening and share with us.

Number one, you can go ahead.

>> Thank you. My name is Martha Hines and for the past 34 years I have resided in Saginaw Township in Saginaw County.

As a Michigan citizen, I'm grateful to be able to participate in this public meeting regarding the redistricting process.

Thank you, Chair of the Commission Brittini Kellom, and all of you who are giving your time and effort as members of this Commission.

It is a significant task you have been assigned, and I pray you will be successful in accomplishing it with integrity, skill and timeliness.

I'm a resident of Saginaw County, which is split between the fourth and fifth U.S. Congressional Districts.

This is very confusing and cumbersome when it comes to elections, both for candidates and for voters.

Please try to keep our counties across the state undivided.

My husband and I have raised seven sons in Saginaw Township, including our youngest who is a special needs young adult.

His schooling and special services are all centered within Saginaw County and fall within the Saginaw Intermediate School District.

Here in Saginaw Township, we are blessed to have a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds represented on the homes on our street.

What binds us together most of all is our physical proximity in our neighborhood.

We are neighbors.

And our neighbors are our friends.

Our church is local within our community. Our work in the field of medical care is local within our city. Our schools are important to us.

Please, please consider our Saginaw Township, City of Saginaw and Saginaw County to be our community of interest.

Please make the geographical boundaries concise and compact.

Please help us have to strong, cohesive neighborhoods and communities so we can have a stronger, more productive state for our families.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you for taking the time to address the Commission, Martha.

Two.

>> Hi. I'm Bill Wright. I'm from Bay City.

I had the privilege to speak with you last week in Midland, but I have come again tonight to ask you also to recognize that watersheds can function as communities of interest.

Since the boundary waters treaty in 1909, the United States and Canada have worked together to address issues involving the Great Lakes.

In 1987 the international joint Commission, which was created by that treaty, identified 43 areas of concern in the Great Lakes and set up responsibilities for restoring them.

The Saginaw River and Saginaw Bay are the largest of all 43 areas of concern and one of the most complex.

Clean water is an important objective for our State and Federal Governments.

That said, improving water quality in our rivers is driven by the actions of the people who live nearby.

For Saginaw Bay, that's 1.4 million people in 22 counties, including here in Genesee County.

The U.S. EPA and several departments of the Government guide and support to clean up the Saginaw River and Bay.

For almost 40 years I have enjoyed working with local groups in that effort as a citizen advocate.

Rivers don't respect local Government boundaries as I asked you to do last week, and as my predecessor did here tonight already.

However, with an awareness of these natural features, it is possible to draw legislative districts that link communities that share waterways.

If districts follow watersheds, people representing those districts will serve constituents who share responsibilities for the same rivers.

Their efforts will contribute to better stewardship of the largest collection of fresh surface water on earth, our Great Lakes.

Given that, the most important thing I can ask for tonight is that you would combine Genesee, Saginaw and Bay Counties, the auto manufacturing urban part of the Saginaw Bay watershed within the same Congressional districts.

These counties share the Flint and Saginaw Rivers.

Whatever you do, I suggest that your boundaries throughout Michigan will best serve the shared interests of their regions by keeping watersheds together.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this to you tonight.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you so much. Thank you for taking the time to address the Commission.

Three.

>> Good evening, Commissioners.

My name is Francis Gilchrist and I'm the president of the Flint Branch NAACP.

I have been a member of this community for more than 50 years.

On behalf of the Michigan State Conference NAACP and the members of the Flint community, I would like to first thank you for your service to each community in Michigan, making sure that we have equitable lines.

We've never been able to enjoy an equitable redistricting.

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We have been gerrymandered, which is something that we fought against ever since the beginning of drawing the lines.

The NAACP's goal is to educate and organize our membership, our supporters, and the general public as a whole regarding the power of redistricting.

We believe that the MICRC hearings should provide specific directions on how to engage all of the citizens as active stakeholders in the redistricting process.

And ultimately to exercise their power to elect the representatives of their choice.

Our primary focus is to ensure that every community, particularly the Black and Brown communities, have their votes properly weighed and not diluted.

In addition to the one person, one vote doctrine, all redistricting plans must also comply with the requirements of the 1965 Voting Rights Act and with the protections of the right to vote found in the 14th and 15th amendments of the United States Constitution.

Why is redistricting so important to the NAACP? Redistricting determines the boundaries of legislative seats from school boards to the U.S. House of Representatives.

The ideology and the philosophical views of policy makers in these various legislative seats, and of the candidates who seek these seats, can influence the types of public policies provided by legislative bodies.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide public comment.

And we will reiterate this request with a follow-up.

Thank you so much and have a wonderfully blessed evening.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you so much for taking the time to address the Commission.

Four.

>> Good evening, Madam Chair, Commissioners.

My name is Vivian Kelly. I've been a resident of the Flint Community in Genesee County all of my life. I am here with a group representing the Flint Branch of NAACP where I serve as first vice president.

I would like the MICRC to adhere to the Voting Rights Act by ensuring that minority voting strengths will not be unreasonably compromised and all efforts to avoid partisan gerrymandering will be applied.

I would also like to address prison gerrymandering and request that the MICRC to consider areas with significant prison populations and inflated minority voting strength in such areas.

The MICRC should incorporate guidelines that account for District statistics that include this population of individuals that cannot vote.

Such measures would account for the actual voting strength of these districts and areas at least until measures are taken to permanently include these individuals in the areas where they are unlikely to return after incarceration.

I appreciate this opportunity to provide public comment.

And I will reiterate this request with a follow-up, with a submission of comments and reports.

Again, I thank you for this opportunity. Vivian Kelly. And thank you, Commissioners.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you, Ms. Kelly, for taking the time to address the Commission this evening.

Five, six, seven and eight.

Five, six, seven and eight.

>> Good evening. My name is Carol Brown. I live in Mayfield Township in Lapeer County.

It's an honor to stand here before you tonight to address the important decision of mapping Michigan districts.

My community of interest is the rural agricultural county I live in with widespread communities of interest in the farming and agricultural industry.

Our Lapeer County boundaries currently makeup our District lines, keeping our communities of interest intact.

44 years ago my husband and I chose to make our home in Lapeer County because of the rural, slower way of living, less hustle and bustle, less traffic, and enjoying weekend drives along country roads, seeing horses and cows corralled in the fields as we went by.

If the redistricting map were drawn, placing my area within an urban area, it would drastically change my community of interest, which is my rural agricultural community with concerns and needs that I and my neighbors would not be able to relate to.

The urban issues may be highlighted over what some might think were smaller scale concerns of a farming community.

I, my neighbors, and friends would feel that our voices would not be heard because our needs, concerns and problems may seem smaller and low scale compared to urban issues.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak and voice my concerns.

Thank you for addressing the mapping of Michigan's districts in a fair way, contemplating the many concerns of citizens that have appeared before you or written to you.

Michigan families are putting their hope and faith in this Commission to map out fair and unbiased districts with communities of interest in mind.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you so much for taking the time to address the Commission.

Six.

>> First, let me say thank you for taking on this task.

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My name is Theresa McGinnis. I'm the president of UAW local 1811 and represent 300 members in this community. I'm asking that you take into consideration in keeping the urban Metro area together.

I like my members live and work in this area, that is connected by manufacturing, hospitals and colleges.

As -- and I would like to see this made fair for everyone.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you so much for taking the time to address the Commission.

Seven.

>> Hello, my name is Sherri Voss and I have resided in Saginaw Township, in Saginaw County for 12 years.

My husband grew up here and his extended family have been in the Township for 55 years.

My husband and I are raising eight sons in Saginaw Township and have educated our children through the Saginaw County Community School District.

Saginaw County is currently split between the fourth and fifth Congressional districts. I have peers and friends through my school and church community throughout the county and have found this division to be confusing and decisive.

When I look at the current lines of our District does not feel like a community I belong to, and just a narrow puzzle piece of neighborhoods that happen to be adjacent on a map.

Please do your best to keep the counties undivided in their districts. Please consider Saginaw Township, the City of Saginaw, and Saginaw County to be our community of interest.

I thank you for taking on this enormous, difficult task that lays before you. I see this as an opportunity to simmer the decisive culture that exists in our political sphere at this time.

Thank you for doing your best to serve the interests of all.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you for taking the time to address the Commission. Eight.

>> Hi. My name is Jerry Koch, but my friends call me number eight.

Full disclosure, I was an unsuccessful democratic candidate for the 82nd State Representative, House of Representatives in Lapeer.

I'm currently the Vice Chair of the Lapeer County democratic party.

So I'm not going to talk about the 82nd District, which is perfectly aligned to the county lines.

What I am going to address is the 31st Senate State House, State District, and the Congressional, 10th Congressional District.

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Currently Lapeer is linked up through Tuscola County all the way to Bay County up to Pincanna, along the Bay there.

What I propose is that the community of interest that I'm interested in is the I-69 corridor from Flint to Port Huron.

People -- you shouldn't just take into account where people live, but you should take into account where people work.

So people in Lapeer work in a GM plant in Flint or in Pontiac or whatever.

So what it seems like people have been focusing on these urban islands in the middle of a sea of rural -- a rural sea.

And, instead, I wish that we could maybe link the two together and kind of have the representatives and the legislatures have their left foot in the city and their right foot in the country.

You know, that way they have to address both sides of the story instead of just one side that I'm just fighting for the urban community or I'm only advocating for the farmers.

If you look at Flint in addition, if you look at a map of the county parks in Genesee County, it follows the Holloway Reservoir and extends all the way into Lapeer County, up to Columbiaville.

So what I wish that when you redistrict these things, make it like a pie where you have an urban point and a rural community access to it.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you.

Nine, 10, 11 and 12.

Nine, 10, 11 and 12.

Remember, you all are free and we welcome you and encourage you to utilize our public comment tool where you can share your comments in writing including any specific area of the map in which you speak about this evening or an area of the map that you're thinking about and you don't speak about this evening.

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

Number eight.

I'm sorry, number nine, if you are ready to speak, you can address the Commission.

>> Okay, thank you.

Good evening.

My name is Michelle G. I reside in the 5th Congressional District in Genesee County. I'm also a retired teacher from Flint Community Schools and I'm a very active NEA and MEA retired member.

I'd like to thank all of you on the Commission for giving your time to create a more equitable District structure, so that all Michigan communities are equally represented.

To facilitate this, you must start the maps over from scratch.

We used to say don't throw the baby out with the bath water, but in this case toss those babies out.

Our current maps are damaging, partisan, gerrymandering puzzles and are a District assault on Michigan's democratic process.

Every community has its own idiosyncrasies, strengths, struggles and contributions. And it's your awesome responsibility to analyze all of these so that Michigan residents, all Michigan residents prosper.

No one area or voter is more important than any other area or voter. No resident should straddle three districts to work, to play and to send their children to school. And neither should a slice of rural agricultural area be shoved into a manufacturing District for purely political gains.

Michigan voters deserve transparency. And our Michigan children deserve to reap the benefits of strong, cohesive districts.

I know you will all do your best. And, again, thank you for participating in this Commission.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: We appreciate you taking time to address the Commission. Ten.

>> Good evening. Thank you for the chance to speak to you tonight and for all the time and effort you're putting in on this important work.

My name is Judy Dobbinmire and I'm from Genoa Township in Livingston County. Although I live in Genoa Township, I have a Brighton mailing address. I buy groceries in Brighton, use the library and Post Office in Brighton, fill my car with gas in Brighton, and attend many recreational events in Brighton.

I also go to the City of Howell for many things, to the courthouse for meeting and for business, to the Howell festivities and festivals and to its many restaurants. Brighton and Howell are the two biggest cities in our county. And face similar issues including infrastructure, budget challenges, policing and so on.

The Grand River corridor links the two cities and extended from Howell east to the Oakland County Line.

Nearly all our major employers are along grand river as are schools, restaurants, healthcare facilities, libraries, stores, gas stations and more.

The people who live in the adjoining townships of Genoa, Hamburg, Green Oak and Brighton rely on Grand River for services, employment, shopping and more. We are an economic community of interest.

About two thirds of us work outside the county. And, as we are ex-urban rather than suburban area, we share the experience commuting and heavy traffic on I-96 or U.S. 23. This makes us different from the rest of the county, and we deserve to have our interests represented by a single representative.

I hope you will take your constitutional responsibilities seriously and draw entirely new lines rather than merely adjusting the old, gerrymandered ones.

And I would also encourage you to strive to create more competitive districts.

Right now so many districts are safe that lawmakers do not really have to compete for votes in the general election.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you for taking the time to address the Commission this evening.

11.

>> Good evening. My name is Sherri P. I live in Heartland Township, also from Livingston County. And I also want to thank you all for the hard work that you are doing. And I just want to reiterate what number nine said, which is throw the baby out.

The amendment that was passed of 2018 and which created this Commission requires you to draw entirely new districts, not just tweak the old ones.

Our districts are so gerrymandered that the State House has not adequately represented the voters of Michigan in almost a century.

The -- you have to start from scratch.

These races need to be competitive.

I kind of like the idea of requiring a politician to have one foot in a rural community and the other foot in an urban community because it will require them to actually listen to voters instead of lobbyists.

So I hope you will follow your constitutional mandate, start from scratch and draw fair and equitable districts. Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you so much for coming to speak to the Commission.

12.

>> Good evening. My name is Dick Warren. I was not planning on speaking tonight, so I just put a number on and said here I am. But I'm glad I showed up and understand what is going on in the county. I'm from Lapeer. I live in Elba Township.

I have to stand behind our citizen on number five, and what she said is to not to divide an area, a rural area with a suburban area.

Try to keep them within each other.

If you want to merge them, I understand that. But don't divide an individual rural area.

Let them stay intact.

We have enough division, so I would like to stand behind number five.

That is all I have to offer you this evening.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: We appreciate you considering sharing your comment this evening, so thank you. Glad you decided to put a number to it.

13, 14, 15 and 16.

13, 14, 15 and 16.

13 and 15 over here.

14 and 16 over here.

Go ahead.

>> Good evening.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Good evening.

>> My name is Art Reyes. I'm a resident of Genesee County. First, I would like to thank you all for coming to Flint to listen to the concerns of your citizens.

The first thing that I want to say is that in what you're doing, which is an awesome responsibility, and I'm so glad that you volunteered to do that.

Competitive districts will allow for needed conversation, needed compromise on things that are going on.

When we have gerrymandered districts the way that we currently have, it does not do the representatives any good to actually cross the aisle, to try to get things done because they play to their base.

It just happens way too often, and we cannot allow for us to fallback.

Michigan faces too many issues and too many concerns for us not to be able to move forward.

I'm a trustee on the Board of Trustees for Mont Community College. So I understand that urban areas and suburban and rural areas have completely different needs. In Mont Community College, our headquartered, main campus, is here inside the City of Flint. But have satellite campuses in Lapeer County, Clio, Michigan and in Fenton, Michigan. And what we find is we cater our programs to the areas in which we have campuses.

But what we also find is that when we have programs that can pull everyone together, that's when we do our best.

I live in the Fifth District.

And my community of interest is in auto work.

I'm an electrician for General Motors. I've been a UAW member for 30 years now.

And keeping Genesee County in the Fifth District whole, combined with Saginaw County and Bay County, allows for us to have the discussion and have the power to be able to talk about the manufacturing base and the things that are necessary there.

The people at the far north end of the Fifth District have less in common with us than do the people in Saginaw County.

Thank you very much.

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

As a reminder, please seek our public comment tool if you feel like you have more to say or you have something different to say than maybe you shared with us this evening. 14, if we have 14.

>> Good evening. My name is Irene Hayes. I'm the Executive Director of Michigan Faith in Action.

I've lived in Flint, well, probably many, many years.

So I've been in this community a very long time.

And I've seen lots of changes.

I've seen spaces where we've had vibrant neighborhoods where now they are abandon home and vacant spaces and spaces, we now call green spaces.

And I do have a concern that as we begin to redraw those lines, that how that will be addressed in terms of population.

I have and want to make sure that you are sensitive that you are not -- this is a community where there are a lot of really vibrant, active people but not to think of that as a rural because of abandon homes there.

I'm also concerned there is full transparency and this whole process is very equitable. I am -- I want to make sure that you address prison gerrymandering, is unfair to those who are incarcerated. And also unfair to our communities, so I really want to make sure that is addressed.

And, finally, I want to make sure that when you are drawing these new maps that you are really considering where we work, where we worship, where we live, where we play, and that there is full, complete fairness in our school districts and into the services that we can have for our children.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you so much for taking the time to address the Commission.

15.

>> Hi. Good evening. My name is Mike Senoco. And I'm a current resident of the City of Fenton here in Genesee County and have been in excess of 20 years.

Prior to that I was born and raised in Saginaw Township.

That has been mentioned several times here this evening.

My father still lives in Saginaw Township in the same house I grew up in.

In my time here, in the City of Fenton, I'm currently in the Fifth District, I could just about throw a baseball into Livingston County, that is how far south in Genesee County I am.

I am literally three properties from Genesee County or, excuse me, Livingston County, which is a different Congressional District than what I currently reside in.

And that has generally been the case my entire time in the city of Fenton.

I have lived in one District and I cross into Livingston County and I immediately am in a different Congressional District.

So, as a result, my community of interest has been split up my entire time while living in the City of Fenton and everything is okay.

My community of interest is Genesee County.

That's how it is today.

My community of interest, if you take a host of other areas that have been mentioned here tonight, economic, racial, prosperity, education, all of these different types of issues, my community of interest has actually been split in two the entire time I have been living in the City of Fenton.

I think that is okay.

I don't envy what you guys have to do.

I respect a tremendous amount what you have to do.

Because thus far what you've heard this evening, a host a very good ideas which are very hard to implement in reality, and that is unfortunate.

What we will likely end up doing is you will end up coming back to a geographic boundary and you will end up more than likely having to split either a county or a local community such as City of Fenton, which again, as I said, borders Livingston County.

Thank you for your time tonight and I appreciate all you have done.

Thank you.

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

16.

>> Good evening.

My name is Kristina Russell.

I live in Alba Township in Lapeer County.

My community of interest is my rural community, and I'm asking that you keep Lapeer County intact.

Thirty years ago my husband and I were living in Oakland County and we decided to build a house. We knew right away we wanted to live in a rural community, and so we selected Lapeer County.

We love the open space,

Being surrounded by farms, and the overall slower pace.

I'm sure people living in an urban Metropolitan area enjoy that type of lifestyle and they choose to live there.

But that's not the choice for me, my family or my neighbors.

I'm asking that Lapeer County remain intact within their county boundary lines. So my community of interest, my rural community, can remain the same.

There are differences in needs, concerns and priorities for those living in the rural community.

If the area where I live was mapped with an urban area, I feel my concerns for my rural community would be overshadowed by the needs of the Metropolitan Area.

I don't feel my voice or the voice of my neighbors would be heard.

Thank you all for your work and your due diligence in working to create fair mapping in our state. And thank you for allowing me this opportunity to speak to you tonight.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you, Mrs. Russell, for taking the time to speak to the Commission.

Can we have 17, 18, 19 and 20? 17, when you are ready, you can address the Commission.

>> I'm going to take this off.

Pesha. I'm the director of an organization called Flint Rising. And organizationally we did endorse what became this Commission during the proposal process.

And I know that there has been a lot of talk about the Fifth Congressional District, so I'm not going to go into that.

My community of interest is Black people.

Black people specifically on the north side of Flint.

And I'm going to spend the rest of my time on the House and the Senate, the State House and the State Senate.

One of the things that I want y'all to hold and be mindful of as you're redrawing these districts is that many times competitiveness can equal not representation of Black and Brown people.

And I know that that is going to be a difficult thing to hold both at.

But you need to hold it.

Because right now we have the 34th House District, which encompass the north side of Flint, which is the majority of Black people kind of concentrated in.

And that has a Black representative.

And whatever map, like, it needs to be Black.

That is all I'm going to say.

It needs to be Black because it's one thing to have -- to live in an area and you have someone that doesn't represent your interests. And it's another thing that they don't represent your interest and they don't look like you. So they don't really know or have any sort of similarities to like how you are living your life.

The other thing is for the rest of the seats, for the House seats and the Senate seats, hopefully that that can encompass the county boundaries because that is important that you have someone representing them.

And then, finally, I just want to make sure that this is not like kind of recreate systemic racism because we have a lot of racist policies in the State of Michigan.

And we have a lot of like very horrible kind of like number ones as far as spatial racism.

And hopefully like this can kind of like through these policies and redrawing these districts, you can kind of break some of that down.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you for taking the time to address the Commission.
18.

>> I want to know if I could file a workers' comp claim here?
Just kidding. I just hurt my hip.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: We invite you to have a lovely seat in one of the cushiony chairs.

>> My name is Ricardo Medina. I live in Bridgeport, Saginaw County. I've been a resident of Bridgeport for about 20 years. And previous to that I lived in the City of Saginaw for 30 years.

People have spoken this evening about keeping the City of Saginaw intact instead of splitting it.

Saginaw has a lot of things in common. But, before I get into, you know, kind of my ideas and I wanted to first of all thank you for serving in this capacity, on this Commission.

It's an awesome responsibility.

You know, the Constitution of the United States guarantees the life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

It's impossible to pursue life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness when gerrymandering takes precedence over doing for fairness and equity for all people.

And I know that you are going to be entrusted with the responsibility of drawing these lines. And I think it's, as other people have mentioned, to throw the baby out with the bath water is not a bad idea.

It's not a bad concept.

You have to start from scratch.

You have to try to do your level best to ensure the equity and the balance so you protect the interests of disenfranchised communities, so that they have some semblance of power, and specifically Black and Latino need to be taken into consideration.

I don't envy the task that you have, but I do want to thank you for serving in this capacity. And when you get done with the State of Michigan, I invite you to move to the state of Texas and help them out.

That's where I came before I moved to Michigan.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you so much, Ricardo, for taking the time to address the Commission this evening.

19.

>> Hello. My name is Judith Priestly and I've been a lifelong resident of Genesee County, living all but ten years of my life in the City of Flint. I'm also a graduate of the Flint Community Schools.

Currently -- I'm throwing out what I wrote. Currently our Fifth District, Congressional District, goes from Genesee County all the way up to Iosco.

I have nothing in common with people up in Bay City, in Bay County. I have nothing in common with Iosco. As a matter of fact, the last time I visited them, I can't even remember when.

However, my area is Genesee County, Saginaw. I shop at Birch Run.

It's not even in my District.

It's a little slice that goes around, into the Fourth District.

I shop in Genesee County, Lapeer, those are my main areas.

So I consider that and ask that you keep those districts intact as much as possible between the cities, the villages, the counties and the townships.

Thank you very much.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Judith, we appreciate you taking the time to share comments with the Commission.

20.

>> Martin Kuznaw, Clio Area, Genesee County.

It amazes me that, you know, I first learned of gerrymandering when I was in civics class as a senior in high school.

And the detriment that it has done to this country for several years, and both parties abused it.

And I'm very, very encouraged by what the State of Michigan has done with passing of this new law or resolution.

And I commend you for stepping up, to try to do the right thing, to make elections fair.

As you know, and you have heard from many people here who have spoken very eloquently about it, there are many issues to consider.

But one of the primary ones is the social economic area of consideration of an area.

And I live in Genesee County,

Northern part, and that presently the northern part of Genesee County is served by three different districts in the State House.

And all three of those districts, the person that represents those districts, lived in the southern part of Genesee County.

So there is absolutely no representation of the northern part of Genesee County.

So I encourage you as you debate this and come up with your final lines that you do what some of the people have said here, start over.

Because the State of Michigan is so gerrymandered up and down, all the way from the State House to the U.S. State or representatives.

And the Fifth District, many people have spoken about that, and that is one of the worst gerrymandered districts out there.

But I thank you for listening. And I thank you for taking the time to perform this duty. Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you so much.

21, 22, 23 and 24.

21, 22, 23 and 24.

21, when you are ready, you can address the Commission.

>> Thank you very much for volunteering to take on this very difficult task.

My name is Paul Burance. I'm from Brighton, Michigan.

And not only thanking you, but thanking my fellow citizens.

I'm very impressed with the kind of information and feedback and effort folks have put into presenting to you.

I would like to second Judy's comments on the Grand River Corridor as a community of interest in the Brighton Area.

But my main concern tonight was the shock I felt when I first learned that our U.S. Congressional representation was not following the votes in the State of Michigan, that there were more votes for democratic candidates for the U.S. house than there were republican.

And when I first heard that I had to research it.

I couldn't believe it.

And I found out it was true recently.

And I went back to even 2012 election and it was true then as well.

So, clearly, the districts that we share today in the State of Michigan have to be discarded because they are terribly gerrymandered where representation at the Federal level is completely skewed to one party over the other.

As a matter of fact, for votes for democratic office holders at the Federal level, democratic votes, half of those were lost, lost in the sense that they voted for candidates that could not win.

And you might ask well how about republican votes? And they turned out to be less than 20% were lost on their candidates.

So it's a skewed system.

Please start over.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you for sharing your perspectives with the Commission this evening.

22.

No 22? Come out, come out wherever you are.

23.

>> Hi. My name is Ellen Ellenberg from Genesee County. I would like to thank all of you for being tonight and volunteering your time. I'm basically here to educate myself on this situation and the needs of my area districts. And it's been very, very informing of some of the needs and some of the reasons why they need to change and the gerrymandering the way it's been set up.

So I'm really learning a lot tonight.

But I just, you know, I'm glad that I came and took the time to hear what's going on, so thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you.

We appreciate you coming out to learn more, and while we are learning more, so we are in this together.

24.

>> Hello.

Thank you, Commissioners, for being here tonight.

My name is Alisa Medina and I'm a resident, homeowner in Saginaw, community leader, and small business owner.

And I'm here to make a statement that our Congressional District and being in the Fifth District with Genesee County, Saginaw, Bay County, I see a lot of communities of interest around industry, work and interests in higher education and schools, all sharing and moving across the 75th Corridor.

And also, I've worked on some teams that have been here in Flint as well as in Saginaw, working as a public health Navigator, trying to make sure that healthcare is accessible and equitable. So I don't want to separate myself from the team. I have interests in keeping us intact.

As far as the State District lines go, I want to make sure our city stays intact because right now, like Township said, separating us between 95th and 94th District is pretty divisive.

And I like the words that somebody said today about racial, spatializing. And it causes quite a lot of decisiveness in the city around who gets resources and who gets ignored. I want to make sure that you keep this in mind when you're addressing the maps. And we need to keep our city whole and we don't want to separate the city, west, east, south.

We also, you know, county, you know, I live in the city.

I live ten minutes away from my in-law's in the fourth.

And then I also have five minutes to my job in the city.

So I just this is very divisive.

I don't like it.

So that's what I'm going to end with today.

Thank you for being here.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you so much for sharing your comments with the Commission.

Without objection, we will now recess for 15 minutes.

So hearing no objections, we will stand in recess until, what is that? 7, bad math, 7:22, thank you, Commissioner Szetela.

It just wiped away.

So you will see us back and come back here at 7:22.

[Recess]

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you everyone who stuck around with us and who is still around.

I call this meeting of the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission back to order at 7:31.

At this time I'll ask that the secretary please call the roll.

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

location by stating the county, city, Township or village and the state from which you are attending the meeting remotely.

Douglas Clark.

- >> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Juanita Curry.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Anthony Eid?
- >> COMMISSIONER EID: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Brittini Kellom?
- >> CHAIR KELLOM: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Rhonda Lange?
- >> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Present; attending remotely from

Reed City, Michigan.

- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Steve Lett?
- >> COMMISSIONER LETT: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Cynthia Orton?
- >> COMMISSIONER ORTON: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: MC Rothhorn?
- >> COMMISSIONER ROTHORN: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Rebecca Szetela?
- >> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Janis Vallette.
- >> COMMISSIONER VALLETTE: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Erin Wagner?
- >> CHAIR KELLOM: Commissioner Wagner? I think they are having audio issues

virtually.

- >> 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: We have a quorum.
- >> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you, Ms. Reinhardt. Without objection we will now

continue our public comment portion of our meeting.

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

As a reminder again, 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.

I should say we will continue the process of being allowed to do so.

You will step to the nearest microphone when I call your number.

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Again, odds are going to be on the left, evens will be on the right, and you will have two minutes to address the Commission.

Please conclude your remarks when your two minutes has ended and you hear the timer.

Again, if you forgot something that you wanted to say or you want to extent or contextualize your public comment in any way, please go to our public comment tool and share your comments in writing, including any specific area of the map in which you are speaking. The public comment tool is at www.Michigan.gov/MICRC.

We will continue our public comment with numbers 25, 26, 27 and 28.

25, 26, 27 and 28.

25, when you get to the microphone, you are free to address the Commission.

>> Hello, Commission. My name is Sergio Medina. I grew up in Saginaw Township, but currently live in the City of Saginaw. And, in retrospect, I can now see more clearly the damaging effects of arbitrary lines through communities.

Saginaw County is already very gerrymandered by race. It's my hope the Commission decides to unify Saginaw County.

It's also my hope that the City of Saginaw is not further divided and isolated after generations of red lining and gerrymandering.

Many people in the City of Saginaw work in outlying areas of the county and likewise people in the county very much work in the city.

People in Saginaw County share access to parks, annual events, and businesses. And I would also like to say that Michigan districts should be redrawn to account for the current disparity that allows for Republicans to have disproportionate representation in regards to actually votes for Congressional seats.

Thanks for your time.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Sergio, thank you so much for taking the time to address the Commission.

26.

>> Hello. And thank you, Chairperson Kellom and fellow Commissioners.

My name is Dave Nance and I live in the Fenton Township in Genesee County. And I've lived in the Fenton Area for 31 years and we have raised our family there. Fenton Township and the surrounding cities and townships in the Fenton, Heartland, Holly, Linden, and Grand Blanc are my communities of interest.

We send our kids to school there, worked and shopped there, as well as enjoyed the local community parks and facilities.

These basic elements of our daily lives are central to our well-being.

To draw District lines that separate out parts of this region wouldn't contribute to the benefit of life in the area,

That will actually tend to isolate that separated piece.

I don't believe this would be beneficial to me, my family, or the other citizens in our local area.

From a development sense, these areas tend to run together.

When you leave the region, you're traveling into farms and countryside.

This is somewhat like a border to the area overall.

My description probably sounds much like that of other citizens, communities of interest.

With that in mind, I would like to make my next point. I believe this to be very important, that is keeping our districts somewhat square in shape.

I believe others may think as I do, that given choices we select an area to reside in that satisfies our needs and wants.

That location is now at the center of where we want to live our lives.

District mapping should reflect the inherent notion that we as citizens have centered our lives in the midst of an overall area.

Typically a location not related to some other area, way off, say, two or three counties away.

Recognizing these areas would benefit us citizens.

I would most like all three of the maps to follow the same layout principle. And so, again, my communities of interest that are Fenton Township and cities of Fenton, Heartland, Holly, Linden, and Grand Blanc are of most importance to me and my family. We would like to have all three of the five Districts to line up as one as much as possible when they are finally determined.

Thank you for your time and dedication to integrity with respect to the redistricting project.

Thank you and have a great evening.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Have a great evening as well. And we appreciate you taking the time to share your comment with the Commission.

27.

>> 27? 28.

>> Madam Chair, I have a handouts. Is Secretary Benson here? I have handouts for Secretary Benson.

Is Secretary Benson here? Is the Secretary here? I need to give this to the secretary. The keeper of the record is the secretary, not anybody else unless you want to sign for them.

Okay, see what that is? That's for the Secretary of the Commission. I'm submitting that as, yes, that is a training module for advanced facilitated to dialog.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you so much.

>> Okay. So my name is James Gallant. I represent the Marquette County Suicide Prevention Coalition and my community of interest is the entire United States of America and its Constitution.

My personal opinion based on facts, we've got the Secretary of State, Joyce Benson, has violated the trust of the people and the Constitution of the State Michigan by overstepping the authority granted her by immediately after convening the first meeting she wrongfully assigned the floor for public comment to her friend and political ally, Dr. Nancy Wang. Then she allowed extensive deliberation without the required motion second before conducting election of the Chair, which happened to be Commissioner Lett, and these meetings are not properly posted at the Secretary of State's Office, on the front door. And it's not on there. And it wasn't there in Lansing.

And also Commissioner Lett immediately breached the precedence when he became the Chair.

This was happening. The new Chair starts and then they get the facilitated, the rules, that is what that facilitated that log is. And it's incompatible with public administration in Michigan and contrary to law.

And Commissioner Lett did that. And when he became the Chair, he immediately started doing a voice vote when Secretary of State said, no, these are virtual meetings, you have to do a roll call vote.

We said, oh, we are just going to do some voice votes.

And then Commission Lett also in January assigned the floor to your attorney. And she brought in a draft Rules of Procedure which came from a secret session meeting of some sort in closed session and not public meetings and she came up with a draft. Then Commission Lett allowed her to continue for three meetings, floating this for three meetings, and then finally approved the third draft on a motion at the end, the third meeting later.

Which is completely a violation.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Your allotted two minutes.

>> I'm finishing my thought, right? You said I could, yes?

>> CHAIR KELLOM: But my call it sounds as though you are continuing a new thought.

>> I have a couple of sentences. I was finishing my sentence. Is that right?

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Please continue the sentence that you were speaking on last and then your two minutes is up.

>> Okay. The facilitated dialog process that you are using is incompatible with public administration in Michigan. And I expect another two minutes after. And you didn't tell everybody they can wait and get in line after and have another two minutes. You haven't been telling the public that. This is in violation of my civil right and my due process.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Your two minutes is up Mr. Gallant.

>> Of the constitution of the United States.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Your allotted two minutes has ended.

Thank you.

29.

>> Again, as a reminder to the public, if you have more to say, in order to honor everyone's time here, we are not as strict as we could be with the two minutes. And we don't want to give you the taboo buzzer sound, but at the end of the two minutes you really must wrap up your thought and you can continue to share anything that you would like to say, including visions that you have for a map, on our public comment tool. By now you should be able to say it with me, but www.Michigan.gov/MICRC.

29, hi. How are you? Good evening. We are ready for you to address the Commission.

>> Hi. First, I want to say thank you for being here and thank you for allowing us to come in and comment.

My name is David Onufri.

I'm a lifelong resident of Genesee County.

I was born in Flint, Michigan; spent my school years and graduated from Grand Blanc. I know live in Davidson Township, and basically the northeastern part of the county.

And I have a cousin that lives in Fenton Township, which is the southwestern part of the county. And I hope that when you guys are all said and done that the county still looks kind of similar to the way it does now.

I've been where I am now for 25 years. And I hope that I still vote in the same place when you're done.

I appreciate your time.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you so much for taking the time to address the Commission this evening.

30.

>> Hello. My name is Lori Welch. I currently live in Lapeer County. I was born in Flint. I grew up in Davidson.

I've lived in Flushing.

I've lived in Lansing.

I have a cabin in Iosco County, so I've pretty much been all over this state.

Right now the members of the State of Michigan are not represented.

You can see that when we have a general election.

And we have no representation in our house and our Senate and our own state.

So I hope that unlike Albridge Gary we do not do this for political gain, that we have the voices represented.

And also, I've heard Lapeer County is all nonurban.

I know of 18 manufacturers that now reside in Lapeer County.

I work for General Motors, which is where we get our parts.

I think we -- I do not envy your job because I think a lot of people go through life with blinders.

They don't realize how mixed their community already is.

And mixing a community does not make it less.

It does make it stronger, whether someone has the same ideas as you, or not.

It will only make it stronger to hear all sides of an issue, whether it's people of color, whether it's people of a different political party, all voices together make the fabric stronger.

Not weaker.

And I think if you make your decisions when you're making these new districts and the fabric is not all red or not all blue or not all yellow, then we will have a lot stronger state when we have a mix of each and every voice in the State of Michigan.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you so much for taking the time to address the Commission this evening.

31.

>> Hi. My name is Doris. I came to the other meeting in Lansing because I just heard about it and I didn't know that I would get a chance and I didn't have anything prepared, so I'm here prepared.

I'm from Flint. I've always had my home in Flint no matter where I've lived. I won't go through that. I'm going to cut to the chase.

Number one, I think that however this is divided up, the districts, they must be by a nonpartisan group.

And the fact that you even exist, because I voted for you, and 60% of those voting did, which means that that kind of representation wasn't reflected in our state legislature for a long time, which is the problem.

And that's why the redistricting is critical.

I had a whole list of other things that are problems that do the same thing that this type of gerrymandering does, long lines and one to possibly have a felony if you give water, which didn't occur, which shocked the hell out of me, to anybody even would try to do that.

I'm concerned where my country is going if this kind of pattern continues.

My bottom line is that however you do it, and a lot of issues have come up with people wanting to about rural, whatever, I don't even think about that. I think about whatever you do to address the issues that people bring to you, however that affects your redistricting, please be sure that when you look at that, that it does not end up doing what gerrymandering did.

That is my most important feeling.

I believe that we believe in democracy.

And freedoms and one is to be fairly represented.

And representation is not happening here. And I know it's across the country, but this is Michigan.

And I really appreciate that we helped bring you into existence. And that you have a tough job, but please look at however you address people's issues that it is representative of how people are represented in the population.

And to be competitive doesn't mean that we give people spots and give them more than they have when they talk about competitive.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you so much for sharing your comments and your perspective.

>> Can I give you something?

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Sure, yep.

>> 32.

>> Good afternoon and thank you for the opportunity.

I understand about the redistricting, and I just want it to be fair.

None of -- I don't believe any of you are from Genesee County.

But at times the voting is difficult for some of the people in Genesee County by changing areas and districts or times in which people can vote.

This past week, I took a sojourn through Genesee County and just was wondering what is going on in my county because I am from Genesee County.

I rode past and I located a beach when we were kids, we used to go to.

They have cutoff the oxygen, the water supply, and now it's just all overgrown.

But still there is a sign out there that says Golden Rod Beach.

And I asked someone that was there, I said, well, can you still swim here? He says, oh, no, they don't allow swimming at the beach.

I said so what do they do out here? Because there was all kinds of picnic areas where families could go and picnic and fellowship. Churches used to go out there and have picnics.

And they turned it into a disc throwing park.

That is all they do out there.

They throw the Frisbees in competitive format.

I said, now, this is a county park.

Why can't the whole county use it? And I hear my bell going off.

But across from that is Sherwood Forest where you used to be able to go, anybody could go and ride horses.

I think it was \$10 for a half hour or \$20 for a half hour, whatever it is.

And that is now private.

They have horses but you got to have a horse to even get into the park in which it was open to the public.

You and I may not have a horse, but we might enjoy to horseback ride or take the grand kids horseback riding.

And I think it's unfair that they have taken so many parks, so many beaches because those were just two that I went to last week.

I planned to go to many more.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Your allotted two minutes is up, ma'am.

>> So any way thank you for allowing me to speak. And I'm going to leave and go help a third grader with homework.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Again, as a reminder, please go to the public comment tool at www.Michigan.gov/MICRC to share your comments that you have maybe shared with us in person via a microphone but share them in writing, include specific areas of the map in which you're speaking or the places in which you live.

At this time we are going to move to our remote public comment.

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

I will call your name and 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. And also please note that if you experience technical or audio issues or we do not hear from you for about three to five seconds, we will move 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 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 your two minutes has ended and you hear the timer.

Please go to the public comment tool and share your comments in writing, including any specific area of the map in which you are speaking.

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

For the purpose of the public record, we were to have seven virtual comments but we only have two present.

We will begin with our first public -- our first remote public comment. And first in line is Devon-Bathish. Excuse me if I mispronounce any part of your name, feel free to correct me.

You have two minutes to address the Commission.

Give a few moments for the staff to unmute you.

>> Okay. Can you hear me?

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Yes. I was going to say that is the first step, I can see you, Devon; and I can hear your voice.

>> Thank you so much, Brittini, and everybody else. And thank you for attempting to pronounce my name. I'm a Flint Arab American. I was born and raised in Flint. I'm also the Executive Director of the Arab American Heritage Council, which is a Flint nonprofit, catering to the Arab American community.

And, you know, we've talked a lot, had a lot of good input around what we want to do in redistricting. But one of the things I want to list is that the Arab American Community has been wholistically lost in the process at a Federal level for basically 70 years. Arab Americans, we can't actually mark a box on the Census. There is no Federal Government data that records us. So it's very important that we actually listen to Arab Americans particularly because Michigan is actually the second highest population in the state of Arab Americans.

And most people know Detroit and Dearborn are the largest populations of Arab Americans. But actually in Genesee County, we have an estimated 20,000 Arab Americans in the area. In Saginaw we also have a growing population as well. And in Mid-Michigan there are a lot of Arab Americans.

So as a community of interest, Arab Americans have historically been underrepresented. We've been intentionally targeted and surveilled by Government. But also, we've been divided politically as an intentional choice.

And one of the biggest things I want to just mention is that an echo, we need to start over, right? We were not intended to be a part of this system when the system was created.

We have to redraw these maps to ensure that everyone is accounted for.

And to also ensure that those Arab Americans, and also all communities, all marginalized communities of color are included in a wholistic and wholistic districts, right? I do not want to see division across, sorry, within Districts to basically pocket out different communities so that our vote doesn't mean anything.

We need to be very kind of intentional about how we go about doing this, but also, we need to have an understanding that Arab Americans are a part of this process.

We want our voices to be heard and we need to be listened to when we are talking about this. And for our voices to finally matter.

So just be very intentional about that as well as keeping the districts together, very much in the same way around Saginaw, Midland, Bay City, and the Mid-Michigan Area. Thank you so much.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you so much, Devon, for taking time to address the Commission.

Our next and final remote public comment for this evening is Channing McKay.

Channing McKay, give a few minutes for staff to unmute you.

You will have two minutes to address the Commission.

>> Ready? Channing McKay. Thank you for having me. I live and work in Saginaw. I'm currently in the office.

I would echo a lot of the points that have been addressed during this meeting, especially in regards to representation for communities of color. Being in Saginaw, communities of color have often been underrepresented and that has been in place for decades.

And I think that it's pretty reflected in the current lines for the State House and U.S. Congress Districts for the City of Saginaw and the surrounding communities. Both of those cut around the City of Saginaw, very intentionally to separate it from the larger Saginaw Township. And more -- I suppose more rural communities in Saginaw.

That said, I think for my communities of interest and what I would like to consider follows a couple different things. The I-75 corridor from Genesee County through Bay County have had similar industries for the past 70 years.

Furthermore, I would like to add the environmental consideration of the Saginaw Bay watershed, which also includes Genesee County and its totality as well as Saginaw County and Bay County.

And they all face pretty similar environmental considerations and recreational uses.

And then, finally, I would like to add in the ALICE population. The asset limited, income constrained employed population.

So in Bay County, Saginaw County, and Genesee County, that population represents 35% or more of the population of the households.

So they are all facing pretty similar socioeconomic considerations.

And with that, you know, thank you for your time and good luck with the work.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Channing, thank you so much for taking the time out to speak to the Commission this evening.

At this time that concludes our remote public comment.

Now that the first opportunity for both in person and remote public comment has concluded, without objection, we will now 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 two-minute public comment.

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

Please conclude your remarks when your two minutes has ended and you hear the timer.

If you feel like you have something more to say, something you forgot to say, please go to the public comment tool and share your comments in writing, including any specific area of the map if which you are speaking about.

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

First in line to provide a second public comment is number one.

You are now invited to address the Commission.

You have two minutes.

>> That's what she said. Okay. My name is James Gallant. I represent the Marquette County Suicide Prevention Coalition. And my community of interest is the entire State of Michigan and its Constitution. And I've handed the handout to you, and that is the training manual from the National Association of County and City Health Officials that is provided to every health department in the State of Michigan. And this facilitated dialog process, in my personal opinion, based on the facts, is incompatible with public administration in Michigan.

Because, well, and I actually I would ask for the Commissioners to please give full disclosure if anyone here has been trained or has studied any of that facilitated dialog process, because this was created in Ingham County Health Department in conjunction with the Michigan Public Health Institute. And it was created, in my personal opinion, in direct contradiction to the Ingham County Board of Commissioner's Bylaws.

The Ingham County Health Department is advisory only. Marquette County is not. They make their own policies. They are independent and they have autonomy like that. But the Ingham County Health Department does not have that. And this guy name Doke just started making these policies. But they didn't get approved by the County Board of Commissioners, so they are completely inappropriate. And I've been working it out with them.

So and I also found out today that the Voters Not Politicians organization, their certification of assumed name was terminated by Dr. Nancy Wang today representing -- not today but on January 6, 2021, representing the count my vote 501C3 Corporation. And so that organization, Voters Not Politicians, does not exist anymore as far as the State of Michigan is concerned.

And I'm concerned about the tax deductibility of my donations now because they were never a 501C3.

They were a like an off-shoot organization as a doing business under an assumed name by Count By Vote.

That was never disclosed to the community. That was never disclosed to anybody.

And so please look into that.

Thank you very much.

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

At this time both our remote and in-person public comment is complete.

I would also like to take this time to extend acknowledgments.

Everything that you see here takes a lot of work, right? It's the work from you all, first, for coming out and sharing this time with us.

And then I would also like to acknowledge my fellow Commissioners for hanging in there and doing the job we are assigned to do, but we do so with great intention and joy coming to each city.

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So I would like to thank the Commissioners.

I would like to thank all of you all, the audio visual team, the entire MDOS staff, and our interpreters. They have been busy this whole time, making sure to the best of their ability everyone understands what is happening.

If I left out anyone, the volunteers out front, those making sure that name tags and numbers were assigned, those photographing, everyone, just a complete and huge warm thank you for the work that went into tonight's hearing.

As the items on the agenda are complete, and the Commission has no further business, a motion to adjourn is in order. May I have a motion to adjourn?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: So moved.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: The motion let's see if I can do it just with sound, has been made by Commissioner Witjes.

Yes, second?

Do I have a second to the motion to adjourn?

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Second.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Second made by Commission Lett.

If all in favor raise your hand and say aye.

>> Aye.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: All opposed? The ayes have it.

And the motion carries.

The meeting is adjourned at 8:04.

Thank you everyone.

Be well and travel safe.

If I lived in Lansing, I would go home.