

Dear members of the Redistricting Committee,

I read recently that Kansas House Republicans proposed a series of congressional maps that severely gerrymander Wyandotte County. One map puts Wyandotte County -- an urban, racially diverse area -- into the 1st District. The second map rips Wyandotte away from Johnson County and places it into the 2nd District. In no way do these maps follow the legal requirement of maintaining communities of interest.

It has also been said that House Republicans intend to rush these maps through the Redistricting Committee at lightning speed, tearing through hearings without appropriate public notice (much like the 5-day, 14-city Redistricting Tour in August).

Kansas's 3rd district has a very diverse population and as such diverse needs. As the Star's editorial put it, "We have socioeconomic needs in our urban neighborhoods that are very different from those in agricultural towns. While we have no doubt that those who serve in the U.S. Senate work hard, they simply do not understand the economic or cultural needs of people from Johnson and Wyandotte counties." I could not agree more.

It sounds like this blatant gerrymandering would divide the 3rd District expressly to consolidate political power. Former Kansas Sen. Susan Wagle was caught on microphone last year, saying that redistricting was intended to put Congresswoman Sharice Davids out of office. Rushing this through seems to lend credence to that sentiment. This appears to be nothing more than a short-sighted and partisan endeavor that should not be pursued and would result in a skewed, gerrymandered district.

Please do not vote for this blatant power grab. Do not let the Kansas Legislature further strip 3rd District residents of representation by dividing our congressional district. Voices in the Wyandotte and Johnson County metropolitan area deserve to be considered.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Susan J Thomas

4500 Eaton St

KCK / WyCo / District 3