

Testimony type: Written-only

From: Elaine Harvey

To: The House Committee on Redistricting
Re: Fair & Equitable Representation in Kansas Congressional Maps
Position: Opponent

Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to supply testimony in support of transparent and fair redistricting.

I am asking that you adopt the Blue Stem map and give no consideration at all to the Ad Astra Map.

We have some issues that are national in scope and yet affect Kansans, issues like clean water and clean air and excellent health care for all and voting rights and gun safety as well as national defense and interstate commerce. Citizens need representatives who will look at the needs of all Kansas citizens as well as look at the larger picture of the whole nation, not just geographically but people of all incomes and personal histories. We need maps that keep communities of interest together to increase the chances that a legislator, once elected, will listen to the needs of their constituents rather than voting however their party leader directs.

We need to have people in Congress who have the interests of all Kansas in mind when they represent us and adopting Congressional districts that allow parties to pick their voters is not respecting Kansas citizens equally and is just plain wrong.

Please, please do not vote the Ad Astra map out of committee.

I live in the 4th district including Wichita and the surrounding areas, even though there is a lot of agriculture in our district many are closely tied to Wichita through work or need for medical care or higher education. Splitting our district would mean that urban needs could go way down the list of priorities for a congressperson, or I guess two congresspeople. We have more poverty in Wichita than one would think for a city with the resources it has, we need more mental health care for one thing. I think communities of interest are important so that the more urban communities should not be split up and the more rural communities should not be split up.

I oppose the Ad Astra map. We live in the Wichita area, Bel Aire, and it would be a serious problem if our Wichita metropolitan region was split apart to reduce the voice of some of our citizens. We do not want Kansas to be like other states who have gerrymandered their

Congressional Districts to benefit or defeat incumbents according to which party was in control of the statehouse the year they redistricted. We need to have a map that is much more similar to the current map for Congressional Districts rather than creating this very bad map. This SB 355 in splitting part of Wyandotte county off from the KC Metro area is diminishing the representation of the Kansas citizens who reside in that northern portion of the county, many of whom have more similar interests to the rest of the KC Metro area than they do to the citizens of the more small town rural citizens. It is also clear on this map that there was intent to diminish the representation of the people in Lawrence by extending the 1st district to include it.

We need to have people in Congress who have the interests of all Kansas in mind when they represent us and adopting Congressional districts that allow parties to pick their voters is not respecting Kansas citizens equally and is just plain wrong.

I think the Blue Stem map is much better than the others. It is more like the current map that ended up being developed by the courts at the time of the last redistricting and that is an advantage for citizens - to continue to have the same representative they voted for in many cases. Also, Johnson and Wyandotte counties are kept together, recognizing they are part of the same Kansas City urban community. The map also doesn't make an effort to dilute the vote of our college town citizens, Manhattan and Lawrence.

Current Congressional maps were created by the courts and should be altered as little as necessary to accommodate population shifts. The Kansas City Metro is currently whole within Kansas' Third congressional district and should remain in a single district as residents have shared interests in representation. The Committees on Redistricting should make their maps, agendas, and deadlines available to the public with at least a full week's notice to allow enough time to review maps, and prepare and submit testimony.

Please do not vote to send the Ad Astra map out of committee, it is clearly gerrymandering. Instead I believe that the Blue Stem map is far better, both for keeping communities of interest together and for being similar to the current map. A final map should keep communities of interest together and be as similar as possible to the current map. Thank you for considering my testimony.

Respectfully,

Elaine Harvey

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