

DECEMBER 2, 2021

THANK YOU FOR A TRANSPARENT & ACCOUNTABLE PROCESS

We are grateful to the members of this committee and particularly Chair Murphy for the work that went in to making these hearings accessible and accountable to the public this committee serves.

On behalf of our members, allies, and grassroots democracy partners, who tirelessly worked on redistricting, we'd like to recognize that each member of this committee has had opportunity to hear directly from the constituents they serve and the public. Each has had a meaningful opportunity to ask questions and propose ideas that best serve their constituency.

As you continue to work on proposed maps, I urge Chair Murphy, Vice-Chair Klevorn and Minority Ranking Lead, Rep. Torkelson, and members of this committee to continue putting Minnesotans ahead of partisan interests.

The 2021 proposed maps are an opportunity to create inclusive Minnesota maps that capture and fairly reflect the demographic-shift our state demographer, Susan Brower, has documented with census data. Symbolic gestures lacking substance in proffered good faith ideas, recommendations or solutions do not serve Minnesotans.

PROCESS & TRANSPERANCY

On behalf of our 18,000+ stateside multipartisan members, allies and supporters thank you the work that went into making sure this process was transparent, accountable, and provided space for Minnesotans to be heard regardless of partisan affiliations or zip code.

- Thank you for hosting well over 12 hearings allowing for direct public input, not just for lobbyists or local government officials to be heard, but anyone who wanted a say.
- Thank you for an amazing redistricting committee website that allows anyone to access the information and not go through layers upon layers of links before getting what they are looking for.
- Thank you for hosting hearings in every single congressional district.
- Thank you for posting the proposed maps and providing a historic opportunity for the public to submit written testimony OR testify through zoom.

As someone who is similarly working with the Senate's counterpart of this committee, I want to thank you for including them in this process. I remain cautiously hopeful that there will be authentic engagement between the House and Senate in working on maps that put Minnesotan ahead of self or partisan interests.

COMMON CAUSE MN's LEADERSHIP IN REDISTRICTING – organizing & mobilizing

As I've shared before, we've met with dozens of statewide local chambers of commerce, farmers market growers/small farmers, industry associations, rotary clubs, and other civic organizations. We've knocked on

thousands of doors during this time asking Minnesotans what they wanted from this process and their district voting maps.

Two key messages emerged; 1) Minnesotans expect their interests to come first in this process, ahead of party and partisan interests and 2) Minnesotans are invested in strong and healthy democracy, believe in a transparent process, and want and want political accountability to constituents – that didn't change because of partisan affiliation. **That was not defined by partisan banners.**

I continue to urge this Committee to not link Convenience and Compactness as one principle. Much like an arbitrary standard deviation, Compactness is not required by the constitution, and we have already heard several community members testify over the last few weeks that compactness does not necessarily lead to maps that respect communities of interest. If compactness is included, please consider putting it as a separate and/or last principle.

Lastly, Common Cause and our allies are disappointed the bill does not include any provisions ending the practice of prison gerrymandering. Black Minnesotans constitute about 12% of the state population but make up about 36% of the incarcerated population. Prison gerrymandering unfairly inflates a block of voter's power at the expense of others. This is a civil rights issue, as the current system deprives individuals of their right to have their interests represented.

We are grateful to the members of this committee for dedicating your time to this important issue and authentically engaging in getting to a good bill that puts Minnesotans first.

We remain available as a nonpartisan resource should you have questions about the work we are doing and have done to make sure Minnesotans understand this process and how they are being represented.

Respectfully submitted,

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Common Cause MN
Holding Power Accountable for 50 years