

Web Contact Us Submissions 5.28.21 - 6.3.21					
Submitted Time	Completed Time	Modified Time	Full Name	Subject	Message
05/28/2021 - 14:01	05/28/2021 - 14:01	05/28/2021 - 14:01	Tammy Ryan	Public Records Request	<p>Hello,</p> <p>I would like to request copies of the public records related to the IRC. My request includes 1) all public comments submitted through the AIRC "Contact Us", 2) all public comments e-mailed to ircadmin@azdoa.gov or any other IRC e-Mail address receiving public comments.</p> <p>I would prefer electronic copies and if fees are associated, please let me know the cost prior to completing the request. I will not be using these comments commercially. Please respond to this request by June 3, 2021. If access to the requested records takes longer, please contact me via e-Mail or by phone [REDACTED]</p> <p>I appreciate your help.</p> <p>Tammy Ryan</p>
05/28/2021 - 19:15	05/28/2021 - 19:15	05/28/2021 - 19:15	Marilyn Bernhardt	Causus attendance at future meeting (s)	<p>To the Commissioners,</p> <p>I noted with some concern the Commission's apparent intention to invite legislative caucus members to attend its next (and possibly future?) meetings.</p> <p>Legislative presence and potential input into the redistricting process, even at this early stage, is problematic for several reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- First, the Independent Redistricting Commission was created by voters to remove politicians from the redistricting process. Caucus leaders have direct stakes in the outcome of IRC proceedings, which means that their very attendance creates potential conflicts of interest.</li> <li>- Giving politicians meeting access encourages them to provide opinion, guidance or recommendations about redistricting, which is counter to the independence of the Commission</li> <li>- And some caucus members are working to pass legislation that would create certain barriers to voting in Arizona, so giving special IRC meeting access to them, would risk sending the wrong message to underrepresented Arizona voters, communities of color and others.</li> </ul> <p>Please do not invite caucus members to attend Commission meetings, now or in the future.</p>

05/30/2021 - 08:39	05/30/2021 - 08:39	05/30/2021 - 08:39	Kate Angeli	Professional Video Creation for az.gov	<p>Hi there,</p> <p>We'd like to introduce to you our video creation service which we feel may be beneficial for you and your site?</p> <p>Check out a few of our existing videos here:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A video on Covid-19 which was a blog post/article turned into video format: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TaMaDwX7tBU">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TaMaDwX7tBU</a></li> <li>2. A product review for Japanese teapots, including product images: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VqjToeQ6KOc">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VqjToeQ6KOc</a></li> <li>3. Promotional video for Japanese Matcha tea: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y3nEeQoTtOE">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y3nEeQoTtOE</a></li> </ol> <p>All of our videos are made with stock footage in a similar format as the above examples.</p> <p>Some of the things our videos can be used for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Explain your business, service, or product.</li> <li>2. Convert your online articles/blog posts into video footage which allows you to educate people via a different medium</li> <li>3. We can create videos for your social media profiles such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram</li> </ol> <p>Our prices are as follows depending on video length:</p> <p>Up to 1 minute: \$159  1-2 minutes: \$269  2-3 minutes: \$379</p> <p>All prices above are in USD and include a custom video, full script, and a voice-over.</p> <p>If this is something you would like to explore further, reply to this message and we can discuss more.</p> <p>Kind Regards,  Kate</p>
--------------------	--------------------	--------------------	-------------	--	---

05/31/2021 - 13:35	05/31/2021 - 13:35	05/31/2021 - 13:35	Deborah Howard	Inviting Legislative Leaders to	<p>Dear Commissioners,</p> <p>At the May 25 meeting Chairwoman Neuberg raised the issue, explored in a conversation with legal counsel, to invite the legislative minority and majority leaders to an IRC meeting. In response to a question posed by Commissioner Lerner, the Chairwoman explained the intent was "to have those who have been critically involved share with us their vision of our responsibility and have a comfort level with us." Legal counsel added that in addition to appointing the four partisan members of the IRC, the legislature has the right to review and comment on the district maps created by the IRC. This review is an opportunity shared with every resident of the state. It is not a special authority; nor should it be treated as one.</p> <p>The purpose of Prop. 106 was to explicitly remove the personal self-interest of the legislature from the redistricting process. Engaging legislative leadership in your process would be an extraordinarily risky action. It would undermine public trust that the IRC is acting in an a-partisan manner with integrity and the highest ethical standards.</p> <p>I believe the tolerance of your legal counsel, Snell and Wilmer, to continue to advise candidates, consultants, lobbyists, political action committees (PACs), ballot measure and independent expenditure committees, political parties, municipalities, corporations, election-related vendors, trade associations and other tax-exempt organizations, and individual donors and political contributors - is in and of itself risky. Does Snell and Wilmer advise any member of the legislative leadership? I hope you see the legitimacy of such questions and concerns.</p> <p>As to the question of vision - it is answered fully in the intent and language of Prop. 106. With the appointment of the four partisan IRC members the responsibility of the legislature was fundamentally completed. Inviting them to engage further only complicates and already complex and challenging agenda.</p> <p>I appreciate your consideration of these comments.</p>
--------------------	--------------------	--------------------	----------------	---------------------------------	--

05/31/2021 - 14:12	05/31/2021 - 14:12	05/31/2021 - 14:12	Deborah Howard	Presentation of Mapping Consultants	<p>Dear Commissioners,</p> <p>During the May 25 meeting Timmons and NDC presented a powerpoint. I have just looked for that presentation on your website to no avail. When and where will such resources used by the IRC be posted?</p> <p>The IRC has had two full-time staff for several weeks now. And a third person starting this week. I ask that you direct staff to prioritize efforts to update the website. In addition to presentations like the one delivered by Timmons/NDC, the website still has no information about the commissioners themselves, information about staff. It remains an empty shell. Things may be running smoothly from the inside-out - but from the outside-in it appears inadequate.</p> <p>Equally frustrating is the difference in public access to public comments based on how they are submitted. I fail to understand why this is problematic. It is a simple administrative task to merge and make all public comments public. If these very basic tools are challenging, it calls into question the ability of the IRC to complete the far more challenging tasks ahead...</p> <p>I want to IRC to succeed in delivering fair district maps for all the residents of this state. Please accept these comments with that in mind. Your success is a success for the state. And these incompetencies in very basic tasks undermine public confidence. Please address them with the seriousness they deserve.</p> <p>Thank you.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>
06/01/2021 - 07:55	06/01/2021 - 07:55	06/01/2021 - 07:55	Susan Bickel	Thank You Commissioner Watchman	<p>Thank you, Vice-Commissioner Watchman, for your concern relating to the voter suppression bills that are being considered this year in the Arizona legislature. Using unverified and unsubstantiated claims that Arizona elections are rife with voter fraud, the reality is that our elections are quite secure. These bills have been written by conservative "think tanks" which share them with Republican legislatures across the country in an effort to undermine the confidence of voters in free and fair elections.</p> <p>This type of diversion and deflection from the real issues is a typical ploy of the Republican party to disenfranchise Native voters and people of color.</p> <p>Another totally unnecessary diversion came from Chair Neuberg's suggestion that legislators be asked to speak to the Commission. The reason an independent commission was overwhelmingly approved by Arizona voters in 2000 was to remove legislators and politics from the redistricting process.</p> <p>Please reconsider this suggestion.</p>

06/01/2021 - 10:58	06/01/2021 - 10:58	06/01/2021 - 10:58	Suzanne King	Invitation to legislators	<p>Dear Commissioners,</p> <p>I am writing to express my opposition to inviting legislative caucus leaders to address the Commission at this time.</p> <p>First, introducing more partisan politics into the independent redistricting process defeats the very purpose of the IRC, which is to minimize politics in the redistricting process. Since the November 2020 election, Arizona Republican leaders have introduced various voter suppression bills and embroiled the state in a ridiculous and dangerous “audit” of election results in Maricopa County. They have done this in the complete absence of evidence of fraud or irregularities in the election; they are simply unhappy that their candidate for President lost. They ignore facts, including their own electoral victories that allowed them to maintain control of the Arizona Senate and House, and worse, they foster the very lack of confidence in the election process about which they claim to be so concerned. Far from needing information on Republican leaders’ “vision,” which is clear, the IRC should avoid giving them another forum. Inviting them to address the IRC now would send a very bad message to Arizona voters regarding the integrity of the IRC process.</p> <p>Second, the Arizona Constitution, which created the IRC, specifically provides for input from the legislature after the draft maps are drawn. Inviting legislators to address the IRC before the maps are drawn introduces the potential for serious conflict of interest because state legislative representatives all have a very specific stake in the outcome of redistricting. And the entire redistricting process is complicated enough without introducing potential partisanship.</p> <p>Third, the IRC concerns regarding transparency are, frankly, suspect because so much of the IRC’s business has been done in Executive Committee, including the crucial choice of selecting the mapping firm—one with a poor record of map drawing. This was done without explanation to the public.</p> <p>In sum, the IRC should not invite state legislators to address the IRC until the draft maps are completed.</p>
06/01/2021 - 10:59	06/01/2021 - 10:59	06/01/2021 - 10:59	Sharon R Edgar	Mark Flahan's draft project schedule	<p>In the May 25th IRC meeting, Project Manager Mark Flahan presented a draft project schedule that includes a public hearings listening tour this summer and a thirty-day public comment after the grid map is drawn, but I did not see a thirty-day public comment period after the draft maps are drawn. Prop 106 requires a thirty-day public comment period after the first draft maps are produced.</p>

06/01/2021 - 11:56	06/01/2021 - 11:56	06/01/2021 - 11:56	Mary-Jeanne Fincher	public records request	<p>Good morning. I would like to request copies of the following public records related to the Independent Redistricting Commission:</p> <p>All public comments submitted through the AIRC website "contact us"  All public comments emailed to the ircadmin@azdoa.gov email address, or any other IRC email address receiving general public comments</p> <p>My preference is to receive copies of these records via email. If there are fees associated with searching for or copying the records, please inform me if the cost will exceed twenty dollars. This information is not being sought for commercial purposes.</p> <p>Please respond to this request by 6/3/21. If access to the requested records will take longer, please contact me at [REDACTED]  Thank you.</p>
--------------------	--------------------	--------------------	---------------------	------------------------	---

06/01/2021 - 12:06	06/01/2021 - 12:06	06/01/2021 - 12:06	Deborah Howard	Commission Policies - Open Meetings, Ethics, and Public Records	<p>Dear Commissioners, Thank you for the discussion today on the evolution of IRC policies on open meetings, ethics and conflicts of interest, and public record requests.</p> <p><b>ON OPEN MEETINGS</b> During discussion Chairwoman Neuberg exclaimed the sentiment that now "the public knows what we've been talking about in executive session. It's not as sexy as you might think." The point is not whether it is sexy or not. The point is none of these state policy trainings were required to be convened in executive session. The commission regularly expresses its intention to be transparent - until it isn't. There is a natural tension here. However, the IRC default to take any non-routine conversation into executive session is troubling. It reflects a discomfort for doing the hard work of the IRC in public; a misreading of basic open meeting framework; and a false dependence of "advice of counsel." The proposed polices have not yet been posted so I can not make any more specific comments other than to say no matter what you put on paper. the proof will be in the pudding. Or in this case the hopefully open meetings of the IRC.</p> <p><b>ON ETHICS</b> - Commissioner York suggested the IRC adopt the House ethic rules as "they are more onerous." Chairwoman Neuberg agreed that the approach of "whatever holds us to the highest standards." This is admirable, but inadequate unless it also is extended to consultants and staff. I truly can not fathom your tolerance of legal counsel that continues to advise advise candidates, consultants, lobbyists, political action committees (PACs), ballot measure and independent expenditure committees, political parties, municipalities, corporations, election-related vendors, trade associations and other tax-exempt organizations, and individual donors and political contributors. At the very least there must be PUBLIC disclose of the candidates, political parties, municipalities and other redistricting stakeholders that are being advised by the firm and the assigned lawyers.</p> <p><b>ON PUBLIC RECORDS</b> - The sound was not clear so i am not certain I heard the proposal correctly that the IRC would adopt policies that would commit a 30 day response to public records requests - after a 1 -3 day acknowledgment of the request. If a 30 days response window was proposed I ask that you seriously consider modifications. My use of public records requests could not possibly have taken more than a couple of hours (and that is being generous). If some requests are truly onerous, perhaps there could be more differentiation of those requests and a corresponding differentiation for response times.</p> <p>I appreciate your consideration of these comments.</p>
06/01/2021 - 13:30	06/01/2021 - 13:30	06/01/2021 - 13:30	Diane Boman	Inviting Legislators to provide comments	<p>Appointments to the IRC were made by the highest Ranking officer of the majority, minority and independent parties elected by the Arizona House of Representatives. These elected officials have already made their opinions known by their choice of commissioners. The main argument for this proposition was to remove elected officials from the redistricting process. When legislators participated in this process self interest came first and public interest is a distant second. This is the ultimate conflict of interest.</p>

06/01/2021 - 20:43	06/01/2021 - 20:43	06/01/2021 - 20:43	Amber Hilliker	Who to invite to hearings	<p>Hello,</p> <p>I am an extremely concerned citizen of our state. We are learning about possible shenanigans that have been happening in our state for a long time. In the legislative hearing in Nov. a women from Pima County gave sworn testimony that democrats where in Arizona to turn the state blue. They had people in the courts ready to file whatever legal means necessary in order to vote in the last election. The lady was being told by her county recorder's office to call so they can help her verify who could vote and who couldn't. What she observed is her county was her county turned down any republicans to vote that may have come from another county but they allowed any democrat to vote even if they were passed the cut off of registration. She saw people voting in the election who legally were not allowed to vote but got to vote anyways because their registration to vote was done after the cut off period.</p> <p>My point in all this is, many republicans felt like the democrats cheated during the last redistricting cycle. Like the lady from Pima County said the democrats are here to turn the state blue. They pour in millions of dollars into our state. They pour in money at every level of government. We have not been following the laws in Arizona. I would ask you all because the question is who do we invite for the public hearing.....read what the law says and just obey the law. If it only specifies members of the legislature then only do that. This job is so very important for the future of our state. You need to just follow what the law instructs us all to do. We cannot have any mistakes when it comes to redistricting.</p> <p>Many republicans feel as though the democrats are cheating any which way they can cheat just to turn the state blue. The republicans feel that the state isn't turning blue organically but has been turning that way because of the cheating in the redistricting (it may not have been cheating but the republicans feel that it was), cheating by pouring in millions and not obeying voting laws and possible votes flipped.</p> <p>When I say republicans, I am speaking of republican citizens not people in office.</p> <p>I would encourage you not to take guesses about what to do but rather than follow what the law asks of you. Again, this is a very important task. We appreciate your work in this matter.</p> <p>Sincerely, Amber Hilliker</p>
--------------------	--------------------	--------------------	----------------	---------------------------	---

06/02/2021 - 22:50	06/02/2021 - 22:50	06/02/2021 - 22:50	Lynne Hudson	IRC Process going forward	<p>A longstanding pattern of gerrymandering prior to 2000 prompted Arizonans to invest considerable time, effort and expense in developing and passing Prop 106, the ballot initiative that created the Independent Redistricting Commission (IRC) in 2000. Since then, this explicitly bipartisan group of citizen volunteers has replaced the State Legislature as the group responsible for establishing the boundaries of Arizona's legislative and U.S. congressional districts. The goal of this change was to restore the core principle that elected representatives should be chosen by the voters, not by the political party in power.</p> <p>The 2000 and 2010 commissions were not without issues, but they fulfilled their mission. The current commission is likely to face even more challenges given the current partisan climate and heightened levels of suspicion. Every effort should be made to demonstrate both independence and transparency.</p> <p>Regarding independence: I believe it would be a serious mistake to invite input from any legislators prior to the time specified in the law. They already had a role in selecting the partisan commissioners and the list of independents that might be chosen to lead the commission. And they will have an opportunity later to react to your initial maps, at a time when you will be better prepared to put their comments in perspective. Remember this is your job, not theirs. And it is your job for good reasons. The roadmap for how to proceed is specified in the legislation. You can't be criticized for following it, but you can be criticized for not following it.</p> <p>Regarding transparency: As several have suggested, attendees at every stop on your tour should receive the same introductory presentation. The Q and A's that follow will obviously vary based on audience feedback. Since commissioners and staff are all new, I wonder if your preparation might be aided by minutes or other recorded documents from the past commission that could provide some guidance. I hope you will make time during subsequent public meetings to share key things you have learned along the way.</p> <p>I am glad that commissioners have opted to include public comments submitted both during and between meetings. I think you are getting some very helpful feedback, and most contributors have heeded Commissioner Lerner's request to be more civil and positive. I remain concerned with the pace at which key support positions are being filled. This seems especially critical given your truncated time frame. I would imagine that the technical glitches we have observed thus far would be reduced substantially once your IT person is on board. (On June 1st, the sound was poor or missing when I watched live, but the recording was audible when I listened later.) I hope the Executive Director will have your tour itinerary ready very soon, not only so you can learn from constituents but also so that constituents can plan their time as well.</p> <p>I appreciate your willingness to serve and the effort you continue to bring to this very important task.</p>
--------------------	--------------------	--------------------	--------------	---------------------------	--