

1 transportation, we are -- we love the rural nature of our
2 area and we would like to keep it that way.

3 Thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: I have a comment and a
5 question, if -- you know, please don't go away.

6 My comment is that when you say when you're hiring
7 consultants for the counties, my advice: Come to these
8 meetings, you can have a much more direct impact by
9 articulating your voices right here with the Commissioners.

10 In terms of the -- of the rural communities, is --
11 we've been touring the state; we're learning quite a bit
12 about all the rural areas. We're learning about the five
13 Cs. Is there something unique about this particular rural
14 community; or, do you feel that your needs are more generic
15 and you could be aligned with multiple rural communities?

16 MR. DAVID: Well, we are aligned with multiple
17 rural communities; that is the nature of our district. So I
18 would say I -- if -- if they're spread out even more, it
19 will just make it difficult for people who represent them,
20 political politicians, to -- to make the rounds too.
21 Because CD-1, we go all the way to Sedona, northern part --
22 eastern part of the state all the way to the south, and
23 that's a huge district and makes it very difficult for
24 current legislators to campaign and to touch base with all
25 those people.

1 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Thank you.

2 MR. DAVID: Thank you.

3 MS. VAN HAREN: Thank you.

4 Our next speakers are Anthony Bejarano, Jesse
5 Bryant, and then Matthew Capalby.

6 MR. BEJARANO: Hello. Can you hear me? It's hard.
7 I'm very honored to testify in front of you all
8 today. Truly, it's really cool.

9 I guess background of me, I live in Thatcher,
10 graduated Thatcher High School, go to Eastern Arizona
11 College. My father worked in public utilities pretty much
12 the past couple of decades. My mother worked in both the
13 school district and works at one of the thrift stores and
14 food banks here in Safford.

15 So, firstly, I just wanted to say I -- I appreciate
16 how last cycle we had very fair and competitive districts.
17 I'm very happy that in each of the elections that I voted in
18 my congressional district, my vote has counted, especially
19 here in Graham County. It's -- Graham County is very
20 lopsided, but it's also matched with a lot of diversity
21 around the part of the congressional district; so I did
22 appreciate that and I hope the Commissioners keep that
23 tradition alive.

24 I just wanted to more specifically say something
25 with Graham County relationship in place with our immediate

1 neighbors around us.

2 First off, I think everyone can agree that Graham
3 County and Greenlee County DNA are linked entirely and
4 completely. My mother, we do live in Thatcher, she was born
5 in Morenci; my grandmother graduated from Morenci High
6 School before the mine tore it down -- I won't say when she
7 graduated; I won't reveal her age.

8 So we have people who live here, work in the mine
9 in Morenci; we have people who live in Morenci and Clifton
10 and Duncan who come here to live part of their lives; we
11 have a lot of shopping here; a lot of family -- families who
12 share two counties, so that's the most important
13 relationship that I think Graham County has.

14 I also believe our next important relationship is
15 with our neighbors to the north and west, frankly, Gila,
16 Navajo, and Apache Counties.

17 First of all, I want to say that our county is
18 one-fourth to one-third Native American, and I have to I
19 guess comment there's not a lot of Native Americans here
20 right now, but that's a very important community in this
21 county, and Graham County shares the tribal lands with Gila
22 and Navajo and Apaches in those two Apache reservations. So
23 those are just completely linked really strong and that --
24 and the Native American community is very important and very
25 attached to the entire county.

1 If you go to Bashas', the local store here and I
2 say you should, you can get nice ice cream and popcorn
3 there. They have Native writing and as well as Spanish and
4 English writing on the walls saying what they're selling
5 it's -- and one of the banks here there's Native symbols.

6 So it's very intertwined.

7 Furthermore, I'm not a member of the Latter Day
8 Saints -- I'm not a Latter Day Saints myself, I grew up in
9 Thatcher, heavily Mormon, so I understand how important
10 those religious ties are. Graham County is one of the most
11 heavily Mormon counties in the entire state, I think that
12 gives strong ties to the heavily Mormon parts of southern --
13 of Central South Apache and Navajo Counties like
14 Springerville and Snowflake and all that.

15 And then so taken together I think Graham County
16 shares those stronger ties -- yeah, to those counties.

17 I'll -- then I'll just swing down south and I will
18 just say -- no offense to our neighbors to the south --
19 Cochise County, truly, that's where the nearest Popeye's is,
20 it's an hour and a half drive there. It's hour and a half
21 drive, but for me, my family, a lot of people I know, our
22 closest connection to Cochise is honestly driving through it
23 to get to Tucson to Wilcox and Benson. And I don't -- I
24 honestly don't remember the last time I was in Sierra Vista,
25 if I've ever been to Sierra Vista; and I first went to the

1 historic part of Tombstone a couple months ago, it's way out
2 of the way.

3 And, like I said, a nearest Popeye's is hour and a
4 half there round trip. Just to get to just that connection
5 is very tenuous in some cases for some people like me.

6 So -- yes. That's all I have to say.

7 Thank you so much.

8 MS. VAN HAREN: Thank you.

9 Our next speaker is Jesse Bryant, followed by
10 Matthew Capalby.

11 MR. BRYANT: Hello. So good to see you again.

12 I'm Jesse Bryant from -- from Globe. I've kind of
13 become one of your deadheads following you all over Arizona
14 here.

15 So, again, I would like to emphasize to you the
16 common -- the community interest of the five eastern
17 counties as was mentioned, the Graham, Greenlee, Gila,
18 Navajo, and Apache.

19 My family, I have family in this Valley, they
20 migrated back in the '40s from -- into Wilcox from Mexico
21 and later on moved here, and my grandfather into Globe, into
22 Winkelman which is the Copper Corridor.

23 So I think mainly the people here in this valley
24 who shares that -- that we have family throughout Eastern
25 Arizona for the various reasons, occupational and otherwise.

1 And even before the communities were here, this is the old
2 stage route, the Butterfield Stage Route from the Army
3 installation of Camp Verde to Fort Bowie. And so as you go
4 down 60 and 70, you're going through the old stage route
5 which is that is what led to our communities here. So even
6 before the communities were here, we had this -- this tie,
7 if you will.

8 So, once again, the five eastern counties we're --
9 we have our cultural, our familial, our industrial things
10 that tie us together. We'd like strongly for you to
11 consider that, keeping that -- restoring that rural voice to
12 the legislature so that as one person pointed out, whether
13 the -- whether the representative is from -- from Snowflake,
14 from Globe-Miami, from Safford, the issues and the
15 understanding are basically the same. So we -- we all have
16 that common thread going through us there.

17 So, once again, the five eastern counties plus the
18 Verde Valley and the Copper Corridor, we'd like strongly for
19 you to consider that.

20 Thank you so much for spending so much time in
21 Eastern Arizona. We look forward to seeing you again on the
22 second round trip. And hopefully we can avoid in the future
23 Sunday mornings at 10:00 a.m. for church reasons.

24 Thank you.

25 MS. VAN HAREN: Thank you.

1 Our next speaker is Matthew Capalby, followed by
2 Debbie Hargis.

3 MR. CAPALBY: Good evening, Madam Chair and
4 Commissioners. It's indeed a pleasure to be here.

5 My name is Matthew Capalby; I'm a third-generation
6 Arizonan from Kingman, now living in Flagstaff; and Dave
7 Bell who is here can vouch for that, former prominent
8 newsman from Navajo County, and if anybody wants the dirt on
9 Dave here locally, please let me know. I've known him quite
10 a few years. But a great -- a great -- I'm glad to see he's
11 over here, and your community really benefits from having
12 such a good guy handling the news.

13 But as I stated, I currently reside at Flagstaff
14 but I've been watching the recent hearings with some grave
15 concern and why I made the drive tonight from Flagstaff to
16 be here.

17 I've been witnessing a well-coordinated,
18 orchestrated partisan effort to sway the Commission toward
19 partisan interest over the interests that are contrary to
20 rural Arizona.

21 And so -- just to give you an example, we're
22 seeing, you know, a push to tie border communities, they
23 have very distinct interests in, you know, types of
24 communities with areas such as here, Graham and Greenlee,
25 and further north; I believe that to be highly

1 inappropriate.

2 Ten years ago a lot of the rural mayors and
3 supervisors -- and Supervisor Davis, it's good to see you
4 here as well, sir -- they really did get together, and they
5 looked at the census map and they said we have an
6 opportunity here to create two solely rural competitive --
7 or, I'm sorry, two solely rural congressional districts, and
8 we also have enough population to create nine solely rural
9 legislative districts. And, of course, there's been some
10 changes in -- in Pima and Pinal, especially Pinal County,
11 and such which now is considered metropolitan Phoenix and
12 Tucson too, and I think those can probably go into more
13 metropolitan congressional or legislative districts.

14 But I still think that -- that sentiment applies:
15 That we need to stay together to maintain those two solely
16 rural congressional districts and nine solely rural
17 legislative districts.

18 And also to Supervisor David's points, and I also
19 made this point in Flagstaff, the enemy is not the
20 Republicans or the Democrats when it comes to rural Arizona,
21 the enemy is MAG, it's the Maricopa Association of
22 Governments and Pima Association of Governments. They set
23 up all the resources and all the -- all the legislative and
24 congressional representation as well, and those dominate and
25 the rural areas get the leftovers.

1 So we have to have a united front when it comes to
2 representation coming out of the rural areas. Not a
3 partisan united front, but a rural united front when it
4 comes to those issues. I think that's absolutely key.

5 And, you know, if anybody -- you know, me I live up
6 north, drive I-40, you see what the state of Arizona and the
7 federal government has done to that highway, it's a mess;
8 because it's not important to Phoenix or Tucson, so it's not
9 important to anybody else. So just to give that.

10 And then the issue of competitive districts. It is
11 a political reality when you have a competitive district
12 that you get more attention. You're not taken for granted;
13 you don't have recycling legislators and congressional
14 members that never leave or never under threat of leaving.
15 Elections are supposed to be about ideas and not about
16 partisan dominate -- or domination by a particular area or
17 community.

18 So whenever and wherever -- I know it's not
19 possible everywhere, but whenever and wherever possible you
20 can create legislative districts and congressional
21 districts, it benefits rural Arizona most of all because --

22 MS. VAN HAREN: Thank you. That's your time.

23 PUBLIC SPEAKER: That's my time.

24 With that, in closing, thank you so much. I do
25 hope you take these points under consideration. They worked

1 a lot -- I think very well for rural Arizona ten years ago,
2 I think you now.

3 So thank you. And if you have any questions --
4 comments or questions, I'm available.

5 (Applause.)

6 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: We are very much hearing, you
7 know, the essence of what the rural communities is
8 expressing to us.

9 Just in your comments and in the maps that you're
10 submitting, keep the reality, you know, in front of you that
11 roughly speaking each congressional district will be about
12 800,000-plus, each legislative district about 242,000-plus,
13 where we're awaiting the Census Bureau data.

14 But it's -- it's also, you know, a system of
15 partnering and -- and coming up with the maps that -- that
16 meet the population requirements.

17 So please keep that data in mind as you're
18 expressing your sentiments.

19 Thank you.

20 MS. VAN HAREN: Thank you.

21 The next speaker and the last speaker is Debbie
22 Hargis.

23 MS. HARGIS: My name is Debbie Hargis, and I live
24 here in Safford.

25 My husband and I moved here when our oldest son was

1 a baby to take care of my ailing father-in-law, and we
2 thought we might as well stay and see how it goes.

3 That baby is 19 years old now and he has a younger
4 brother and sister who now attend Safford High School. We
5 put down roots and have been active -- a very active part of
6 this community ever since.

7 My son now attends a university in the east where
8 there are only a handful of other rural kids like himself.
9 When describing his hometown to his classmates -- which also
10 includes Thatcher, Pima, and Solomon, we're all connected
11 here -- he tells them that "It's like those little towns
12 depicted in the movies that are far away from any city where
13 everyone knows everyone, and in spite of any differences,
14 they come together in times of need."

15 Oh my goodness.

16 This is fascinating to his classmates and it has
17 been -- it has reminded me of how privileged I am to live
18 here and have raised my kids here.

19 In Graham County and in Arizona as a whole, it is
20 vital that every group is represented in our community.
21 When the dominant group is constantly in power, the needs of
22 all other groups are not served because those needs are not
23 even seen.

24 In a community where the circumstances of each
25 group are recognized, given value, and approved upon,

1 everyone benefits.

2 And what is important to recognize is that when a
3 group is neglected and is disenfranchised from the
4 democratic process, everyone loses. There are no winners in
5 that scenario, even for the dominate group who seemingly
6 gets everything they want. The community is only as strong
7 as its most neglected and unheard citizen.

8 Also, when any representative can easily be elected
9 with little effort to appeal to all constituents, it is not
10 a true representative democracy. Elections should be
11 competitive, elected officials should always have to reach
12 out to groups outside of their own party; this is
13 particularly important for people of color who are
14 specifically named in the constitution.

15 Also, each district should have equal population
16 density. Cities will have a smaller geographical area while
17 rural areas will have larger swaths of land to be able to
18 have the same number of people; and those swaths of land
19 must be compact, not snaking throughout the state to capture
20 groups that could create voting blocs.

21 Arizona is a competitive state, and its
22 representatives should reflect that. In elections there
23 should be a good chance for either side to win. This
24 protects against extremism of any ideology and promotes
25 moderates who have to answer to every constituent to win

1 votes; most importantly, it promotes bipartisan cooperation
2 and blurs the divides within communities.

3 Thank you for hearing me and for your efforts and
4 time to make Arizona a fairly representative state. It is a
5 heavy burden that you all have taken, and I appreciate all
6 of you for that.

7 Thank you.

8 MS. VAN HAREN: Thank you so much.

9 We have one more speaker, David Morse.

10 MR. MORSE: Hello. Very much thank you for making
11 the time to hear me and putting me in at the last.

12 I group up in Phoenix, lived for a while in Tucson,
13 and then 15 years ago moved here to Graham County; and can I
14 tell you there's a big difference between what matters to
15 you or what you think about between living in a big city and
16 a small town.

17 I hosted many events where we had candidates coming
18 in to speak, you know, gubernatorial candidates, treasurer,
19 everything; and it's difficult to get the candidates to come
20 to a small town like Safford because you can -- you got
21 maybe 10,000 votes here in this whole county and within a
22 one-mile radius in Tucson you get 10,000 votes.

23 As you're pushing this out, put in the back of your
24 mind perhaps that if you were running for office and you
25 only have so many -- much time and so much money to spend,

1 try to think about putting it so that the people who are
2 running for office would want to go to the various parts of
3 those districts to pick up those votes instead of only being
4 able to focus on one small part. You swallow us in with
5 Tucson, they will only spend time in Tucson, they won't even
6 come out here; it won't be worth their drive.

7 So I want to put that in the back of your mind.

8 Sometimes I wish the votes were based on number of
9 square miles instead of population per mile -- per square
10 district, but that's the way it is.

11 Thank you very much.

12 MS. VAN HAREN: Thank you.

13 That concludes our public comment portion. I'm
14 going to send it over to Chairwoman Neuberg.

15 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Thank you.

16 And -- and we are here listening and we're deeply
17 appreciative for, you know, you taking the time to come and
18 -- and share your thoughts. We're -- we're taking note of
19 everything you're saying with seriousness.

20 And, you know, my -- my one comment again is to,
21 you know, dig deeper in your expressions about your needs.
22 If there's something that's not being -- you're
23 communicating well, but some of you if there are needs that
24 are not being met, be specific because we're trying to match
25 needs across many communities, you know, around the state;

1 and the more we understand the specific representation needs
2 you have, the better we are able to put this puzzle
3 together.

4 But -- but we're deeply appreciative for your time.

5 And, with that, as you have seen today and on our
6 website, we have easy-to-use tools for learning about and
7 for sharing information about your community of interest.
8 Rather than relying purely on our interpretation of your
9 comments today, we encourage you to please go online and
10 submit a map to us. This will ensure that we correctly
11 understand the definition of your community.

12 Please encourage your friends and neighbors to
13 share their thoughts too.

14 It really makes a difference more than consultants
15 that you're hiring.

16 Anyone can do this online any time; there's no
17 requirement to attend one of these meetings to be heard.

18 With that, thank you. We'll see you at one of the
19 future events, and we will now adjourn the meeting.

20 And thank you, staff, for your ongoing travels and
21 onward.

22 Have a good evening.

23 (Applause.)

24 (Whereupon the proceeding concludes at 6:06 p.m.)

25

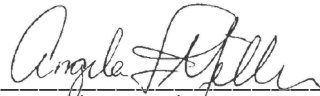
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STATE OF ARIZONA)
) ss.
COUNTY OF MARICOPA)

BE IT KNOWN that the foregoing proceedings were taken before me, Angela Furniss Miller, Certified Reporter No. 50127, all done to the best of my skill and ability; that the proceedings were taken down by me in shorthand and thereafter reduced to print under my direction.

I CERTIFY that I am in no way related to any of the parties hereto nor am I in any way interested in the outcome thereof.

I FURTHER CERTIFY that I have complied with the requirements set forth in ACJA 7-206. Dated at Litchfield Park, Arizona, this 24th of August, 2021.



Angela Furniss Miller, RPR, CR
CERTIFIED REPORTER (AZ50127)

* * *

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