THE STATE OF ARIZONA INDEPENDENT REDISTRICTING COMMISSION

REPORTER'S TRANSCRIPT OF LISTENING TOUR PUBLIC MEETING

Show Low, Arizona
Online via WebEx
July 31, 2021
10:00 a.m.

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Reported By (via WebEx):
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1	LISTENING TOUR PUBLIC MEETING, BEFORE THE
2	INDEPENDENT REDISTRICTING COMMISSION, convened at 10:00 a.m.
3	on July 31, 2021, at City of Show Low Council Chambers, 181
4	North 9th Street, Show Low, Arizona, and online via WebEx.
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6	COMMISSIONER(S) PRESENT:
7	Ms. Erika Neuberg, Chairperson Mr. David Mehle
8	Ms. Shereen Lerner
9	COMMISSIONER(S) PRESENT VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE:
10	Mr. Derrick Watchman, Vice Chairman
11	STAFF PRESENT:
12	Mr. Brian Schmitt, Executive Director Ms. Loriandra Van Haren, Deputy Director
13	Ms. Fortaindra van Haren, Deputy Director Ms. Valerie Neumann, Executive Assistant Ms. Michele Crank, Public Information Officer
14	Mr. Roy Herrera, Ballard Spahr Ms. Jillian Andrews, Ballard Spahr
15	Mr. Dennis Burke, Ballard Spahr Mr. Shawn Summers, Ballard Spahr
16	Mr. Ryan Regula, Snell & Wilmer Mr. Mark Flahan, Timmons Group
17	Mr. Mark Flahan, Timmons Group Mr. Parker Bradshaw, Timmons Group Ms. Ivy Beller Sakansky, National Demographics
18	Corp.
19	PUBLIC COMMENT SPEAKERS:
20	Ms. Judy Begay Ms. Patrice Horstman
21	Representative Walt Blackman Ms. Kristie Blackman
22	Mr. David Peelman Ms. Jodie Humphrey
23	Mr. Eric Kramer Mr. Steven Slaton
24	Ms. Molly Ottman Ms. Sylvia Allen
25	Ms. Laura Doty Ms. Kathleen Dubbs

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          PUBLIC COMMENT SPEAKERS (continued):
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                   Ms. Kelly Meixler
                   Mr. Jim Vance
                   Mr. Clay Howard
 3
                   Ms. Toni Beetham
 4
                   Mr. Byron Lewis
                   Mr. Nicholas Scienski
 5
                   Mr. Robert Hephner
                   Ms. Allison Hephner
 6
                   Mr. Jesse Bryant
                   Mr. Paul Conathers
 7
                   Ms. Louise Liggett
                   Mr. Scott Caswell
 8
                   Ms. Kelly Rael
 9
                   American Sign language interpreters, and
                   Spanish interpreters are also present.
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MS. VAN HAREN: Good morning, everyone.

We don't have microphones here that can amplify, so you'll have to speak loudly and clearly. You'll see I'm holding a microphone but that's going to our WebEx audience who is participating online, okay.

So we would like to get the meeting started. If you will all stand, we have Supervisor Patrice Horstman here; she's going to lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

(Whereupon the Pledge of Allegiance is recited.)

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MS. VAN HAREN: Thank you so much. So now I'll turn it over to Commissioner Lerner who is chairing the meeting.

COMMISSIONER LERNER: Good morning, everybody.

Very nice to see you all here; we're all happy to be here as well.

I now call to order the next meeting of the listening tour of the Independent Redistricting Commission.

We would like to remind the public that COVID-19 is still prevalent and we ask you to follow the Arizona Department of Health guidelines. If you're not fully vaccinated, you should wear a mask in public space.

If you'd like to participate from home, each of

these meetings is being streamed through WebEx.

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Please note that if you would like to make a public comment, you may do so by signing in with staff over in the back where you came in and filling out the public comment card.

If you haven't already done so, please fill out the community of interest survey. There is a QR code on signs at the sign-in desk and on the public comment cards that will direct you to the link. Please see a member of staff if you have any questions.

We have an American Sign Language interpreter joining us virtually and we have interpreters and headsets available for those in attendance. We also have a transcriptionist who will be transcribing every meeting.

Please speak slowly and clearly so we have a clear record of your input.

Will the interpreters in attendance introduce themselves now.

ASL INTERPRETER: Hello. My name is Tiana. I am one of the ASL interpreters today; and my team today will be Katherine Montoya.

PUBLIC SPEAKER: Good morning; my name is Gloria Watson; I'm a resident of Show Low, and I'm here to interpret in Spanish.

COMMISSIONER LERNER: Thank you.

Anyone else? 1 Okay. At this time we will introduces ourselves. 2 3 Again, I am Commissioner Lerner; I represent Maricopa County, and I am a Democrat. 4 5 Chairwoman. CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Hi. I'm Chairwoman Neuberg; 6 7 I'm an Independent and I'm from Maricopa County and I'm 8 super excited to be here. COMMISSIONER LERNER: Commissioner Mehl. 9 10 COMMISSIONER MEHL: I'm David Mehl; I'm from Pima 11 County and really appreciate the public giving us input. 12 COMMISSIONER LERNER: And we have virtually Commissioner Watchman. 13 14 VICE CHAIR WATCHMAN: Thank you, 15 Commissioner Lerner. I am Derrick Watchman; I am the 16 Democratic appointee to the Commission, and I'm from 17 Apache County. So good morning and thank you, everybody. COMMISSIONER LERNER: We're all pleased to be here. 18 19 Thank you. 20 Now we will move to Agenda Item II, which is going 21 to be a presentation on the process. First we will have a 22 representative from our legal team begin. 2.3 MR. SUMMERS: Good morning. My name is Shawn Summers; I'm one of the attorneys for the Commission. 24 25 here from the firm Ballard Spahr. I'm joined this morning

by my colleague Ryan Regula, who is another attorney from the Commission; he's from the firm of Snell & Wilmer.

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And I'm just going to begin today by talking a little bit about what the Commission is, what it does, and what we're here today to do on the listening tour.

So we're going to start with the Constitution. As you probably know, every ten years the Constitution requires the federal government to take a census; from that census congressional representation is reapportioned among the state, but each state is responsible for redrawing the districts within the state to account for changes in population in the state over the previous ten years.

From Arizona statehood in 1912 until the year 2000, Arizona did what most states do still, what pretty much every state did at the time, and the state legislature controlled redistricting. So state legislators drew their own districts, they also drew Arizona's congressional districts in the U.S. House of Representatives.

That changed in the year 2000, when voters approved Prop 106, Prop 106 amended the Arizona Constitution to create the Independent Redistricting Commission. So you can see there, the language of Article IV of the Arizona Constitution says that every year ending in "1," like 2021, there has to be established a new commission to draw new lines for the next ten years.

The Arizona Constitution has some requirements for how the Commission has to be structured. First, it has to have five members; no more than two of those members can be of the same party. Typically how this has worked out is that there are two Democrats, two Republicans, and then those four choose an Independent chairperson. No more than two of the original four members can be from the same county either.

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And you can see there on your screen the -- the names of the current Commissioners, four of whom have already introduced themselves to you.

The constitution also prescribes six goals for how the Commission is to redraw the maps. These are what the Commission has to take into account in redrawing both the legislative districts and the congressional districts.

First, the districts must comply with the U.S. Constitution and the Federal Voting Rights Act; second, congressional districts and legislative districts shall each contain equal population to the extent practicable; third, districts should be compact and contiguous to the extent practicable; fourth, districts should respect communities of interest to the extent practicable -- that's largely what we are here today to get input from you on this listing tour about what you consider your communities of interest to be before the Commission begins drawing the maps; fifth, to the

extent practicable, district lines should follow visible geographic features, cities, towns and county boundaries, and undivided census tracts; and then finally, to the extent practicable, competitive districts should be favored where to do so would create no significant detriments to the other five goals.

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These are the six goals the Commission will be taking into account in drawing the maps.

Next, we have a timeline about what the map-drawing process is going to look like over the next six months or so.

First, in July or August the Commission is going on this listening tour. Like I said, this is to collect input from you about what you consider your communities of interest to be.

In August, mid-August, the Census Bureau will be releasing data from the 2020 census. The Commission does not have this data yet, the Census Bureau hasn't released it, so the Commission can't start drawing maps until we get the 2020 census data. That's later than usual, typically it would be released already but it was delayed because of COVID-19.

In September the Commission will draw and adopt a grid map. A grid map is meant to clear away the old districts line. Whatever districts there are now, they're

-- the Commission has to start from scratch; the old districts will be wiped away. And the Commission will adopt a grid map that only takes into account two of the six factors. It will be -- will contain districts of equal population and they will -- it is compact and contiguous as possible.

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So if you imagine a grid laid over the state with equal -- districts of equal population, that's what the grid maps will be.

From September through October, the Commission will draw and develop draft maps. That is they will adjust the grid map in order to take into account the other four goals that aren't reflected in the grid map.

Then, once the Commission has adopted draft maps, there's a mandatory 30-day comment period in the constitution that's required before the Commission can finally adopt a final map.

So October/November, 30-day comment period on the draft maps; and then from December to the end of the project, the Commission will revise the draft maps and adopt the final map.

So what are some ways that you as members of the public can get involved?

Well, first, all meetings of the Commission are open to the public, they're streamed online, and you can

submit public comments to the commission at IRC.AZ.gov/public-meeting.

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Second, we want to hear your initial input on your communities of interest. We have some tools that will allow you to do that in addition to this meeting today that we're going to talk about in just a few minutes. But communities of interest are something the Commission really needs to know about.

Finally, input on draft maps. So before draft maps are adopted there will be a mapping tool that we'll speak about in a minute that will allow you to draw and input your own draft maps; submit comments on the Commission's draft map once it's adopted; and in the late stages once we approach a final map, you will be able to comment on that map as well.

So with that, I'll turn it over to Mark from Timmons, our mapping consultant, and he'll talk a little bit about information and empowerment tools that we put together.

MR. FLAHAN: Good morning, everyone. My name is

Mark Flahan with Timmons. Part of my team I have up here is

Ivy Beller Sakansky, she's our demographer from NDC and -
Sure.

We have -- my name is Mark Flahan from Timmons Group. Can you hear me now in the back?

1 Perfect.

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Next to me I have Ivy Beller Sakansky, she's a demographer from NDC; and also on my team I have Parker Bradshaw over there also from Timmons as our project coordinator.

So I want to talk to you about a couple empowerment tools that we have put in the hands of you guys that are available on the web 24/7 for access.

The first one is a socioeconomic report. It is an interactive site with geographic and socioeconomic in the data, and we'll talk about that in the next slide.

The two other mapping tools that we have is our community of interest survey which you probably saw on QR codes when you came in today; and it's another 24/7 available online that allows you to submit your community of interest. And we'll, again, talk about that in a future slide.

The third mapping tool that we have that we're currently setting up is the redistricting system and that will allow you to draft and submit proposed map changes.

Okay. So let's talk about the socioeconomic report.

Like I said, it's a 24/7 web app that's available, and you can go to the IRC website and get a link to it. It has 14 different points of demographic data throughout the

entire state of Arizona.

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So you see an acronym up there that says "CVAP," that is citizen voting age population; and then it also has a bunch of other demographics. So rental and renter's housing, other languages at home, et cetera. So that's available to you today.

The next piece that we have is our community of interest survey, which is why we are here today to learn about your community of interest. Like I said, it is available online. You can see on the right side it has a community boundary map, so it allows you to draw your own community of interest on a map to be able to submit back to the Commission. This is really putting the power in you guys' hands to accurately depict what your community of interest is.

With that being said, I'm going to turn it over to Ivy to talk about exactly what a community of interest is.

MS. SAKANSKY: Thanks Mark.

I'm sorry?

Good morning. Can everybody hear me?

Okay. We're going to try this again.

Good morning, everybody. It's great to see you.

So what is a community of interest?

It is a geographic area of people who share a common story or connection. That connection can be common

social interests, shared demographic characteristics, similar impacts from a legislative or congressional issue, or any other connection that leads people in a given area to believe they will be benefit from being kept together, united, and in one legislative or congressional district.

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As you think about your community, think about the factors that Mark mentioned on the survey online. And that survey says: Think about you and your neighbors, do you have similar jobs? Do you rely on similar public services? Belong to the same neighborhood associations? Are you impacted by some regional environmental concern? Is your community defined by similar regional land-use issues, transportation concerns, languages spoken, community celebrations or traditions, or other similar characteristics?

Any of these characteristics could define a community of interest.

Now it is your turn. As they travel the state on this listening tour, the Commissioners want to hear from you. What do you want the Commissioners to consider as they draft and ultimately adopt their maps?

How do you define your community of interest?

Using the various tools that Mark described and in your testimony today, we want to hear: What brings your community of interest together and what are your community's

geographic boundaries?

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Remember, the Commissioners can incorporate your community into their maps only if you let us know where your community is on the map.

Thank you for being here today, and now I will turn this back over to the Commission staff who will begin to take your comments.

Before we move to Agenda Item III, public comment, staff will be reading you the rules of the meeting.

MS. VAN HAREN: (Inaudible.)

In compliance with Arizona's open meeting law speakers should confine your statement issued on the posted event which is before the Commission. Speakers are also requested to leave the comments to the (inaudible).

Additionally, speakers are required to follow proper decorum. Speakers may (inaudible); foul and/or abusive language will not tolerated. Any speaker (inaudible) or any other guidelines may (inaudible) of peace or disruption of the Commissioner's (inaudible) may be cause of report to law enforcement, arrest, or prosecution.

(Technical/audio disruption.) As long as you filled out the survey your input will be (inaudible).

Everyone is welcome to speak if you choose to do 1 2 so. 3 Opposing viewpoints may be expressed by (inaudible). As a courtesy, citizens are reminded to 4 address the their comments to the Chair and the Commission 5 6 and not the audience present. 7 Please show respect for all speakers and avoid personal comments. 8 Remember, the Commission must hear all sides of the 9 10 issue to (inaudible) informed decisions. 11 COMMISSIONER LERNER: Thank you. 12 We are now in to Agenda Item III, public comment, 13 and we will begin the public comment portion. 14 Will staff read the names of the first speaker and 15 the one in the queue. 16 Thank you. 17 MS. CRANK: Madam Chair, (technical/audio disruption). 18 PUBLIC SPEAKER: 19 Hello. I welcome you, the Arizona 20 Independent Redistricting Commission, to our beautiful city. 21 This is a great place to live, a great place to vacation. 22 I would like to welcome the general public for 2.3 attending this and thanking the elected officials that are 24 in our audience today as well.

I just wanted to say, you know, thank you for

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coming up here and doing this; it is very, very, very important. And I would like to encourage the citizens that are here today, the citizens that are listening online to participate in meetings such as this; whether it be online or whether it be in person, I really would like people to get involved. This is extremely important; your voice needs to be heard, and it's going to get heard if you participate.

And that's the biggest thing I wanted to say. And, again, welcome.

COMMISSIONER MEHL: Thank you.

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MS. CRANK: I'd like to introduce in the listening audience Mr. Jerry Smith, the vice mayor of Pinetop-Lakeside, Ms. Whitesinger who is supervisor for Navajo County, Mr. Darryl Semore, supervisor for Navajo County; they will be not be speaking.

And I would like to introduce the next speaker who is Supervisor Judy Begay from Coconino County.

MS. BEGAY: Good morning. I guess I can be heard, right?

Good morning, Chair and members of the Independent Redistricting Commission. My name is Judy Begay and I'm a member of the Coconino County Board of Supervisors overseeing District 4.

And my tribe is (Navajo language - Diné Bizaad.)
Originally from Coal Mine Mesa which is 20 miles

east of Tuba City, Arizona.

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I'm here and I represent the eastern portion of the Coconino County; I also am a member of the Navajo Nation.

My comments this morning focuses on the outreach to the rural citizens of throughout Arizona. While living in rural Arizona on our ancestral lands aligns us with our traditional lifestyle and upbringings that we have on the reservation and in -- within Arizona, we often feel that our voices do not have the same impact as those who live in the populated areas of our -- our state of Arizona.

Unfortunately, rural Arizona suffers from high unemployment, struggling economic development, lack of jobs, and fewer services and resources compared to the urban areas where the opposite exist.

In addition, as the world, the nation, and our state and our region become more and more connected through Wi-Fi, broadband, WebEx, Zoom and Teams, rural Arizona typically does not have the infrastructure or the digital pipeline. While the digital divide has always existed, COVID created it even greater; we need to be connected.

Which brings me to the IRC's listening sessions.

Many individuals who would not have traveled to the cities to participate -- participate did so, they did it by traveling to the satellite locations to listen and provide their comments.

At the satellite sessions held in Page, Tuba City, Chinle, Eagar, Sedona, and Congress as well as state satellite listening in Arizona: You heard from rural Arizona; and this is why it was so important and disappointing to the extent that those two opportunities in Navajo County, namely Keyanta and Teec Nos Pos to the Navajo and Hopi reservation was canceled.

I believe I can speak for my colleagues in Navajo and Apache Counties, that the counties, including Coconino, would gladly assist in the IRC staff in arranging meeting locations for future IRC listening sessions so that the needs and sentiments for rural Arizona, in particular Native American communities, are shared and heard.

I want to thank the IRC for being here today and also the people that are in attendance to be part of these sessions.

Thank you so much.

(Applause.)

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MS. CRANK: Thank you, Supervisor.

Next speaker is Supervisor Patrice Horstman, and after Supervisor Patrice Horstman is Brandon Martineau.

MS. HORSTMAN: Good morning, Chair and
Commissioners and members of Navajo County. Thank you for
the opportunity to provide comments on the redistricting
process for congressional and legislative seats to represent

our Northern Arizona communities. I am here along with Supervisor Judy Begay.

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My district in District 1 encompasses Flagstaff, it goes west through Coconino County to the Grand Canyon to Yavapai County and the Mohave County border. My colleague, Judy Begay's district also serves East Flagstaff and then east to Navajo County border and south to borders of Gila and Yavapai County.

I provide this location orientation to illustrate that while our neighbors -- neighborhood counties are contiguous, each contain various types and sizes of communities of interest. These communities of interest extend beyond county borders.

Creating a redistricting outcome that accommodates communities of interest is daunting. At the same time we are all here attending these listening sessions and benefitted by becoming aware, learning, and respecting what matters most around the state, the county, the region, chapters, villages and neighborhoods.

At the public hearing this week in Flagstaff where I saw most of you, our Board of Supervisors commented on guiding principles or areas of focus that we consider important communities of interest for those of us here in Northern Arizona. They include regional economic development, sovereign indigenous nations, the rural nature

of the counties here in Northern Arizona, and the rich diversity we have up here in Northern Arizona.

While these are important issues to raise and as the Commissioners may find all of this somewhat challenging, in the coming weeks Coconino County, and I'm sure many other Northern Arizona rural counties, will be submitting specific maps that address the four areas that I've mentioned, communities of interest, but also we will be including what we are learning by attending these listening sessions.

This is an opportunity for all of us to hear each other and to come together.

MS. CRANK: Time.

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MS. HORSTMAN: I want to thank you Commissioner and -- Chair and the Commissioner for your important work and your service here in the state of Arizona.

Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

MS. CRANK: The next speaker is Brandon Martineau.

MR. MARTINEAU: Chairman, members of the Commission, I want to thank you for the opportunity to speak. Welcome to Show Low and Navajo County.

I live in Heber and Overgaard community; it is the largest unincorporated community in Navajo County. I am the president of the Chamber of Commerce and have been there for six years. I've been living in Heber and Overgaard for over

20 years, and I have immediate family and close friends in almost every community in Southern Navajo and Apache County and as far south as Safford and Pima and -- and that area.

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And these communities are very close knit, they -we attend church, local and regional church activities
together. Our schools interact on a regular basis with
sports and academics.

We are -- we attend each other's community events, 4th of July's and other events, 24th of July. These -- these communities are very close knit.

And this summer with the Wyrick Fire and other fires burning in our area and recently the flooding, these same communities that pull together to offer aid and assistance to each other, and I just want to emphasize the importance of keeping these communities together in -- in a legislative district so that they can continue to work together in the same way that they have in the past.

I do have two proposed maps that -- that have been put together that I would like to present to the Commission of suggestions that we have of -- of proposed districts.

The first one would be our -- our preferred option, the second one would include the reservation communities together if -- if that's what they prefer.

But just want to offer these suggestions to the Commission and thank you for your time.

(Applause.)

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MS. CRANK: The next -- the next speaker is

Representative Walt Blackman, and after Representative Walt

Blackman is Kristie Blackman.

REPRESENTATIVE BLACKMAN: Madam Chair, members of the board, thank you for allowing me to be here.

My name is Representative Walt Blackman. I represent Legislative District 6, and I also represent Congressional District 1. I've represented LD-6 for the past two sessions.

And typically in this district where I represent in this area, it tends to also come over into as we are in now -- or in Show Low; and I am representing those folks in Show Low that are not in my legislative district that do not have the same interests -- community interest, family interest, religious interest -- as some of the counties that are in the current map that we have right now.

When we're talking about communities of interest, traveling around the second largest district in the United States, CD -- or LD-6, and also Congressional District 1 which is --

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: Oh. You're not going to be able to hear it.

Hold on.

REPRESENTATIVE BLACKMAN: Also Congressional

District 1 --

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UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: Yeah, but it's going in my ears. Hold on.

REPRESENTATIVE WALTMAN: Do I get to reclaim my time?

(Laughter.)

You're watching it, right?

But also a Congressional District 1 which is the size of Pennsylvania, there are a lot of discrepancies in those districts.

So being a rural representative in this area is quite challenging because of the differences that the present map had.

The best fit for this community is to align the districts that have the same interest as you already know. That's going to get the word out; that's going to be able to -- the votes will be counted more. There will be more to say at the table because of the new maps that are being proposed to you for the new districts to include the legislative and congressional district.

I'm going to stop now and let other folks speak.

appreciate you being here and we really do hope that you

will take that in account when you are voting and when you

are realigning these districts.

So thank you.

(Applause.)

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MS. CRANK: Next speaker is Kristie Blackman, and then following Kristie Blackman is David Peelman; following David Peelman is Judy [sic] Humphrey.

MS. BLACKMAN: Good morning. I hope you guys are having a great day. We're so grateful that you're taking the time to consider our input.

Rural Arizona often feels like we're unheard. The current districts leave us with an even weaker voice.

Legislative Districts 6 and 7 are the largest legislative districts in the country; Congressional District 1 is the size of Pennsylvania. I would argue that these districts are not set up in communities of interest and, in fact, I know they're not because my husband is a current state representative and Flagstaff's needs and desires are very different than ours.

In our area you'll find a lot of cattle ranching, farming, mining, and then there's also -- when people generally come up to these areas they come up here because they are family. Snowflake is -- I think it's the best place. I think Show Low is the best place. But most people head over to Flagstaff for recreational. When they come up here, it's more like hunting and fishing and that type of stuff.

So I feel like there's two things I would like you

guys to consider. One, the land mass of the district. It's extremely hard as we have a vehicle that is two years old and it has 80,000 for our Legislative District 6. That's one legislative (technical/audio disruption).

2.3

I don't know who designed the last map but it's like you're popping over each other all the time; and then we have the issue that Show Low, that the representatives who are currently on the Navajo Nation, it's hard for them to get up to Show Low. And so all of Show Low, they go to Walt when they need legislative issues done.

And it's kind of the same thing with Congressional District 1. Flagstaff is also represented by Gosar. Show Low, Snowflake, they call Walt and Walt always connects them with Gosar. We've had a difficult time getting in contact with the current representative. I'm not saying that he's bad; but that's a huge -- the size of Pennsylvania is a big massive district; and there -- the issues are so different, they're just all so completely different, that it's hard to represent as one voice when we -- we feel like a lot of the things that they are representing don't represent what we want. You know, we very much need to align them.

I think it's the responsible thing to do. I think if you align us as communities of interest, it gives a better voice and right now we -- we really don't have that.

Right now it's very confusing. Very, very confusing. And, in fact, I have to argue that these people in Show Low, Pinetop, Quartzsite, they believe Walt is their state representative. And I know this because I field the calls and they're like, "We're not going to vote for you again," and I'm like, well, I don't know how you did the first time, but we'll still help you.

MS. CRANK: Time.

MS. BLACKMAN: So please consider that.

I feel like that Coconino County would probably be better off over with Yavapai, they're all a lot of recreation, a lot of hiking and this type of stuff. The people that come up here are generally more your fishing, your hunting, so it would be almost better.

The Navajo Nation I'm not sure because, man, the Navajos do a lot of --

MS. CRANK: Time.

MS. BLACKMAN: Sorry. Thank you so much.

(Applause.)

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MS. CRANK: Next speaker is David Peelman. After David Peelman, Judy [sic] Humphrey, after Judy Humphrey, Eric Kramer, after him Steven Slaton.

MR. PEELMAN: Good morning, Commissioner, Chairman. Thank you for coming to Show Low.

I appreciate the opportunity to finish the comments

that I started yesterday in Eagar. Yesterday in Eagar you heard many of the problems that are faced between -- or differing problems north of I-40 and south of I-40. You've heard reference to areas as large as states. The Navajo Nation being as large as West Virginia, LD-7 being as large as Indiana, and CD-1 being as large as Pennsylvania. You have a monumental task ahead of you; I do not envy you whatsoever.

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Your decisions will impact the state of Arizona far more than any single legislator, representative, and politician for ten years to come.

As Representative Walt Blackman mentioned, we feel -- I feel, and many on this Southern Apache County areas feel, he is our representative. I will tell you I have called him personally on numerous occasions to help resolve issues, not the least of being the latest incident of COVID spreading among our community and the issues and problems it faced.

You know that the Navajo Nation north of I-40 had a radically different solution for their community as differing from the rest of the state of Arizona. They locked down a portion of the State of Arizona as large as West Virginia, denying the opportunity and access of the rest of the people of Apache-Navajo Counties and the state of Arizona.

Mr. Martineau presented you a map, a generalized map. We don't come before you and tell you these problems without trying to offer a reasonable solution to these problems. He provided you a map of East Central Arizona, which is representative of what you've heard here, what you heard yesterday in Eagar, and hopefully most likely you will hear in other testimony.

The people of the Mogollon Rim, the largest national -- or the largest ponderosa forest in the world; we're involved in cattle, forestry, ranching, farming, business. We have an entirely different structure for creating entrepreneurial businesses here in the White Mountains than what occurs north of I-40.

I would ask you to take the comments you hear today and elsewhere to heart and truly recognize that we all want and deserve representation, but you're here to listen to communities of interest. As LD-7 and LD-6 are currently laid out, they do not represent in any way, shape, or fashion our communities of interest.

Please, you have the opportunity with your wisdom, your knowledge, your abilities to redraw these lines and provide the representative to these communities --

MS. CRANK: Time.

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MR. PEELMAN: -- that we're so sorely lacking. Thank you for the opportunity.

(Applause.)

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MS. CRANK: Jodie Humphrey.

MS. HUMPHREY: Good morning, Madame Chairwoman and Commission.

My name is Jodie Humphrey, and I am a lifelong resident of this particular political district. I lived in Vernon for over 25 years, and I just recently moved to Winslow where I've lived for the past year and a half.

I just want to make one general point and then one specific point.

There are over six distinct political districts within the Phoenix metro area. Anyone who doesn't live there will tell you that Tempe is the same as Mesa which is the same as Glendale which is the same as Phoenix which is the same as Queen Creek; however, the people who live there in those communities will tell you: No, they are distinct; they are different.

However, we in this particular political district have not been given the same courtesy and the same equity.

Anyone who lives here will tell you Winslow is different from Show Low which is different from Heber-Overgaard which is different from Tuba City which is different from White River which is different from Chinle, yet we are all lumped together and counted as one area; and everyone -- and it is assumed that our interests, economically and

geographically is the same. So that is the general point in that we are not. We are all vastly different.

My specific point is I believe that Winslow should be counted as part of Flagstaff's political district. And why that is is because Winslow citizens do not go to Show Low for any of their major needs. They do not go there to go to the hospital; they do not go there for shopping. They do not go to Flagstaff. I'm one of the exceptions, but that's because I have family here.

So we also share the railroad, which is something that Show Low and the other southern part of the district does not include. We also don't have the major forest needs that this southern area has. We live in a desert so therefore the threat of wildfire is not the same as it is here.

So those are my two points. Please give us the courtesy of having the same fair and equitable representation as people and citizens in the Valley have.

And I will also -- I will take advantage of the tools that you've mentioned and I include Winslow in -- as a community of interest with Flagstaff because I believe that our economic values align with theirs.

And hopefully we will -- our voices will be better heard with the redrawing of the district.

Thank you so much.

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(Applause.)

2.3

MS. CRANK: Next speaker is Eric Kramer.

COMMISSIONER LERNER: Thank you very much for your comments so far. These are all wonderful to hear from you.

Just a little note, as you're providing us this feedback it's great to hear how you would like things to be grouped. Keep in mind there is also a population threshold that has to be reached, so if you can kind of think -- think about that as well and provide us with that input because that's one of the issues, right, we have to reach. In rural areas it's a lot tougher to get that population threshold, so we would really like to hear from you how you come up to speak about those kinds of thing of how you hope to get to that.

Thank you.

MR. KRAMER: Thank you for coming to the White Mountains; thank you for the work you do.

I am Eric Kramer from Pinetop, Arizona. I'm here today to speak in favor of the Native American community of interest, and I consider this in Northeast Arizona to be the Navajo, Hopi, White Mountain, and San Carlos Apache reservation; they certainly are the strongest community of interest in the state of Arizona and they -- and they definitely need to be kept together.

Partially to -- you know, you heard from the

Blackmans, one other community of interest I hope you consider is Navajo County, keeping that together as one -- in one legislative district. I think you heard the Blackmans explain how it's hard that the county is -- the middle part of the county is chopped out and connected to Flagstaff and points west; it would be better if the entire county was kept together, it would result in better and clearer representation for everyone involved.

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I think the -- the interest of the Natives being together is -- is obvious. One story I will tell you, we went through this terrible pandemic; we're still going through this terrible pandemic. When the State set up the unemployment program for people in the COVID pandemic, it was absolutely essential that the Natives had representation in Phoenix. If they had hadn't had that representation in Phoenix, we certainly wouldn't have never got those state programs off the ground to serve the -- the Native Americans.

Thank you very much. Appreciate your time. (Applause.)

MS. CRANK: The next speaker is Steven Slaton, after Steven Slaton is Molly Ottman, after Molly is Sylvia Allen.

MR. SLATON: Good morning. My name is Steven Slaton; I live here in Show Low. I work and own with my

wife the one and only pump store here in Show Low.

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I would like to thank Chairman Neuberg,

Commissioners Mehl, Watchman, Lerner, and York for the

dedication to look over this redistricting process and later

decisions on redistricting which will affect so many people.

My wife and I, we represent the White Mountain conservatives. We represent thousands of folks who pass through our store monthly with all having the same community interest.

We currently are in Congressional District 1 and Legislative District 7. Due to the size of both districts is the same state as Pennsylvania -- you heard a lot of that today. With the size of these districts, half our population is bound to feel unrepresentative [sic] and they are. Districts should be compact to actually represent community of interest who live and work together.

A new Congressional District 1 and Legislative

District 7, or whatever you decide to call these new

districts, should actually represent communities of interest
which is required by state and federal law.

I recommend keeping both the congressional and the legislative districts the same size and math which keep both representation on the same on a state level or federal level for common interests.

For example, communities of Saint Johns, Snowflake,

Taylor, Holbrook, Joseph City, Winslow, the Navajo Nation are not part of these communities of interest of the White Mountains. Made up of primarily rock and high desert plateau with a vast valley of ranchland, architectural between the two regions. The culture and the way of life is different than those communities of interest south of these cities.

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The White Mountain community which is outlined on the map which I turned in the other day for you folks, the community of interest is committed to bringing tourism to the region along with common interest with other White Mountain communities. We share rivers and lakes, national forests, winter sports activities with ongoing economic development with the White Mountain Apaches and San Carlos Apaches.

Please do not include us in a legislative district with these northern cities and the Navajo Nation. These will arguably dilute our representation which is commonly referred to as retrogression.

The White Mountain communities need to be with the White Mountain communities of the same interests. These interest are nonpartisan and are for the common good of our locals and region.

I thank you and God bless you.
(Applause.)

MS. CRANK: Molly.

2.3

MS. OTTMAN: Hello. Thank you for letting me speak and welcome to Show Low.

My name is Molly Ottman. I have two bachelor's degrees, one from FAU in mechanical engineering, and the other from NAU in education. I've worked with NASA, and I've also consulted on the space shuttle.

I live in Linden, a part of LD-7. I'm a mother of three and my husband is a firefighter.

Whether it's fire, floods, or natural disasters, we need legislative representation. Many roads in Linden are not maintained by the county, that means if we have a flood or snowed in, no one is coming for us.

So it's very important you understand that. If we have four feet of snow and some roads in Linden or we're flooding, no one is coming for us.

We are on our own.

Have you heard the term "taxation without representation"? It clearly defines the present state of LD-7 and the rural areas of Navajo and Apache County.

And, by the way, we all call Walt.

(Applause.)

LD-7 is a populace that is required to pay taxes to a government authority without having any say in the government's policies. I want to be able to elect a

representative that is from my area and one that understands our community and culture.

You moved the goalpost too far; move them back and redraw $\ensuremath{\text{LD-7}}$.

Thank you.

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(Applause.)

MS. CRANK: Michele --

CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Before you -- I just want to make one comment. It's super helpful when we hear specific information about what fundamental needs are not being met so when we're thinking through all the complex decisions, we understand the specifics of what your needs are.

So -- so thank you for diving into those specifics.

MS. ALLEN: Thank you and good morning. Thank you fellow Commissioners for being willing to serve on -- on this Commission because I know it's a lot of work. Thank you so much.

I'm Sylvia Allen, former Arizona State Senator for District 5 and District 6 and former Navajo County supervisor.

Representation by the people of the people is fundamental to our constitutional republic in forming legislative districts that are based upon communities of interest, geographically compact and competitive is essential to better representation.

Dividing up our counties into multiple legislative and congressional districts impact our representation. When I represented District 5 as a true rural district, and we need a true rule district because rural is different than urban, we have different issues, which I'm going to list nine of them.

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The five Eastern counties are South Apache, South Navajo, Gila, Graham, and Greenlee with small portions of Pinal County. I'm asking that we again have an Eastern Arizona rural legislative district because we are all communities of interest.

One: The copper corridor. Copper is critical to national security and more copper is located in those five counties than all across the country.

We have the largest stand of ponderosa pines and forest and our issues are catastrophic fires and forest health programs like 4FRY, keeping our timber industries and common issues that are common to all of your communities.

Ranching is realized in all five of these counties.

Farming is realized in five of these counties bringing millions of dollars and food security to our state.

Recreation is huge; the Valley comes to our area to recreate, and it brings in over \$50 million as camping, hunting, and fishing is very important to our areas.

The watershed, where the watershed the forest is

critical for the water that ends up in Salt River Lake and irrigation system in the Valley.

2.3

Seven, our pioneer heritage in all five of these counties are -- are similar and connect us. As Brandon had testified, the people in these counties are hardworking, God fearing, freedom loving, constitutional Bill of Rights believing people, and it doesn't matter what party they belong to because we're just this good-ole rural people.

We struggle to maintain our small business; it's really hard to have a small business up here, and it's different and to create jobs.

And we have more federally controlled land than any other area in the state and we must deal with these federal regulations and federal lands and these federal agencies.

And that's what the Eastern Arizona County Association does, deal with all the federal agencies like the Mexican Wolf program, that impact our private property rights and our tax base.

I believe that the Flagstaff area fits very well into the District 7 because they're -- they're closer to them and Flagstaff provides so much for the Navajo Nation. It provides education opportunity. I know the Coconino County provides workforce development for many of -- of the citizens from the Navajo Nation. They have their healthcare needs, a lot of state and federal government

agencies are there to -- to service the tribe; and the tribe has more in common with the Flagstaff City Council philosophically and -- and in goals they're trying to reach than they do with, like, Show Low and Vernon and these other communities.

2.3

Also, the Navajo Nation doesn't have some of our issues like the hunting and fishing and camping, the mining, and all of those other issues that we deal with so -- so completely with -- with these five rural district counties.

Another thing is we -- we do feel like our White

Mountain Apaches really have a lot in common with us. They
have the beautiful forest land, we work with them on the
forest health and the -- the forest fires and forest
recreation. They have the best elk permits in the world.

So they have that in common with us, but they still want to
be in Indian district which I would totally understand.

Then these maps -- and if I can hand this to the Commission.

The maps that -- these are grassroots maps worked on from -- first started down in Gila County. It shows the way that the White Mountain Apache and San Carlos Apache can still be in with District 7 at the same time allowing these other communities of interest: South Navajo, South Apache, Greenlee, Graham, Gila, and parts of --

MS. CRANK: Time.

PUBLIC SPEAKER: Thank you so much for allowing me to speak today, and thank you for your work.

I tried to talk as fast as I could.

Thank you.

2.3

(Applause.)

COMMISSIONER LERNER: Before you -- Ms. Allen, before you leave, I have a quick question, follow-up question if I could.

It's okay. It's all right. I couldn't go above the applause, the applause was great.

Could you just for all of us, we heard a lot about the copper corridor as we've been traveling the state. Can you give us what your definition is of that.

MS. ALLEN: Yes. The copper corridor is historical communities that were founded on these copper deposits. So you've got Superior, you've got Miami, Globe; you've got Kearny, Winkelman, Oro Valley. All of that is the copper corridor.

You got, of course, Greenlee, Morenci, Graham

County. They have -- Morenci is the largest copper deposit in the world. So that is the copper corridor that has historically been founded, and those communities have depended greatly upon the jobs over the years of the up and down of the copper market.

COMMISSIONER LERNER: Thank you. I just wanted to

make sure, and that way everybody is on the same page as well.

MS. ALLEN: Yes.

COMMISSIONER LERNER: Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

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MS. CRANK: The next speaker is Laura Doty, Kathleen Dubbs, Jim Vance.

MS. DOTY: Thank you very much for being here and taking the time to listen to what we have to say.

I've been a resident here from -- for about the last 17 years, and during that time I have noticed that there is very little opportunity for the people of the White Mountain communities to be adequately represented in the state legislature and the -- because of the size of the congressional legislature as well, congressional area.

I agree and I would call attention to what

Mr. Blackman said, Representative Blackman, Mr. Perlman -
Peelman, excuse me, what he has said, in the fact that we

are not adequately represented.

Some of the major issues that we have, we cannot afford another Rodeo-Chediski or wildfire. I was reading an article not too long ago, in the past two weeks, that the ponderosa pines in our area, here in Northern California [sic] are diminishing, the forest is diminishing tremendously. We need good forest management. We can only

get that through good legislative representation, and I hope that you can find it in a way to get the representation when you draw the maps that will show good, adequate representation and forest management for our communities.

Thank you.

2.3

(Applause.)

MS. DUBBS: Hello. I'm Kathleen Dubbs. It's nice to see you all in person instead of in little boxes on the screen. Your -- the job you're doing is just tremendous. can't imagine all the work that you've been doing, and the Independent Redistricting Commission is -- is the pride of Arizona and I'm -- I'm just so glad that you're doing this job to make it independent and fair.

What I have to say is very simple. When I bought my home up here five years ago I was amazed to look at the districts and see that there was this huge chunk of Navajo County that wasn't in the same LD, and I just think that all of Navajo County should be in the same LD.

I also agree that the $\mbox{--}$ that the Native American Nations should also be in the same LD so that they have a voice.

And that's all I have to say. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MS. CRANK: The next speaker is Kelly Meixler, after Kelly is Clayton Howard, after Clayton Howard is Toni

Bee- -- Beethman.

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MS. MEIXLER: Hi. Thank you for this opportunity to speak. Thank you for coming to our lovely community.

I am a business owner up here and I want to just tell some anecdotal stories but I want to agree with the eloquent and thoughtful Sylvia Allen on that map, I think that gives us the right population.

But I want to talk about my experience.

So COVID, Executive Order 202043, and this is on point, immediately shut down my business and it shut down all my friends here, right? I have friends from Oro to Sanders, people who are from Heber, they're spread throughout this region that we're discussing; it's all rural, ranching, lovely people who have the least number of HOAs in the whole country -- that must say something about us as a community of interest.

So I -- when this happened we went into like panic mode, a friend of mine we started talking about how are all these bands that are suddenly out of work, how are they going to feed their families and what are they going to do?

And we put in our community action network before the federal government, before the state government, before anybody else. And that region that she's showing on that map, that's the group, that's the area that we were trying to cover helping our friends and our neighbors.

And so I want to say another thing about the White Mountain Apache, about these reservation that are in our schools, they're our friends. When I hire bands and I'm hiring people from White River, I'm not thinking that they're Natives, I'm thinking they're my friends; they're the ones I pray with, they're the ones I play with, they're the ones that I work with. So I very much see them as part of our community.

2.3

And in fact from the world of music venues, bands rarely get the night off to go out and party themselves, they're always working Friday and Saturday nights. And last night one of the founding members of The Apache Spirit, the oldest, longest running reservation band up here was partying at my bar because I'm her local date-night bar. We're just -- we're like this and we can't be torn apart because it looks like -- it looks like -- well, here's what I've been told.

Is that there's a reason we have such a dominance of one side, one party, and that that was like -- it's like we have to go to court so I can be equally represented by my legislative district which doesn't seem fair. Who -- who made it so that my vote counts less than anyone else in Apache County, or anyone else here in Arizona? If they're a percentage they're trying to hit, then aren't you predetermining?

Anyway, that's my point, I hope you guys all have a great day and come live with us in Apache County, Southern Apache County, Southern Navajo County, and our region again.

(Applause.)

2.3

MS. CRANK: Jim Vance.

Jim Vance. Or could be Jay -- is it Jim Vance?

MR. VANCE: Chairman and members of the Commission, appreciate you being here today and listening to the comments that have been made.

I do know that there were people that came here today who were turned around because they felt there were too many people in here. We've got seats that aren't available here that they would have liked to had their voice heard also.

I don't have a whole lot to say because most of what I have to say has already been said. There are a few things which I won't take your time to discuss, but I'll write them in.

But one thing that I'm kind of concerned about is we didn't have a change in the number of representatives in this state and things are going to be -- remain basically the same as far as the number of representative and other -- and representatives that we had. So the simple thing to do was just leave the boundaries as they are and continue -- and continue as normal.

That's what I'm afraid of, but there are areas of interest that just are not being taken into consideration the way things are.

Those boundaries need to be changed in order for some people to be represented and to have their voice heard, and I'm thinking specifically of parts of Apache County. So that's my -- my main concern, and I'll leave it at that.

I definitely do want to change the boundaries, I noticed Senator Allen's changes in the maps that she gave you, they look very good to me, especially the first map. But, you know, I'd hate to say Apache -- the Apache people and their areas to be completely neglected. And if they want to join the other Native Americans in their -- in their legislative district, that would be -- that would be great.

But we do need a change.

Thank you.

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(Applause.)

MS. CRANK: Next speaker is Clay Howard. After Clay Howard is Toni Beethman, after Toni is Byron Lewis.

COMMISSIONER LERNER: Just as a reminder, thank you for the comment about people who did not attend, if you know folks who did not attend today, they can submit their comments online, so please remind them to do so because we'd love to hear from as many people as possible.

Thank you.

MR. HOWARD: Thank you for coming; we appreciate you being up here to look at our area, you're probably going to have little things a little bit different from me.

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I'm what I consider a common man. I was born and raised in Kansas. My parents and grandparents lived through the Dust Bowl.

I was born and raised on a farm. Your farmers need representation; your forest people need representation. You probably have the most difficult job that there is -- and to be fair, is more than difficult -- but you need to look at an area and understand that your milk doesn't come out of the store. You may buy it at the store, but it is grown on a farm and it is raised, and the meat you eat is raised by ranchers and people of that speed or nature.

The thing is, is that in doing what you do -- or what you're going to be required to do, is going to be very, very difficult, but you need to look at the people that you are placing in these particular areas and see what their needs are and also, you know, what the state or the county or the country can provide for them to assist them in making the best that they can with what they have.

These areas, a lot of them are not destitute, but they are approaching that area, and from my standpoint you need to pay attention to individuals or a group of individuals and analyze the areas or the situations that

they are in.

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I guess I -- you may have heard something that you really didn't expect out of this area, but we have forests, we have mining, we have mining that should be going on. We have resources that can be used if the proper representation is given and people are represented as they should be.

Thank you very much for being here and thank you for listening to me.

(Applause.)

MS. CRANK: Toni, I think it's Bethham -- Beetham.

MS. BEETHAM: Good morning. Thank you for being here.

I'll be very brief. I've been reading a lot about the redistricting, and my main is concern is just that things be done fairly without gerrymandering, and I'd like to see rural communities remain rural.

Apache and Navajo County are vast because the population is vastly spread out. Much of the population is tribal, and I strongly believe that the tribal nations could be kept as a whole when you consider these maps.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MS. CRANK: Next speaker is Byron Lewis, after Byron Lewis is Nicholas Scienski, and Robert Mayhanher or Hephner.

MR. LEWIS: Madam Chair, members of the committee, thank you very much for being here on a Saturday. I'm sure there's other fun things that you would like to be doing, but it's doubtful that there would be anything more impactful or long lasting than what you're hearing today and the decisions you're going to make, which will impact us and not only our voting but our social interactions and the way we conduct our business.

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With that in mind, I do feel the weight of your responsibility. Four of the 11 largest counties in America are under your -- under your immediate consideration.

Coconino is number two, Apache is number six, Mohave is number five, Navajo is number 11. Throw into that mix, the Navajo Nation is 22,000 square miles which is approximately the size of the Nation of Israel, and you have a very daunting task.

As you look at the county map, Elbridge Gerry would be very impressed at the way the county seats or the counties themselves, largely the county's boundaries have been ignored.

One of the main issues that are facing us here in this area as you've asked for specifics is water adjudication. The way the legislative jurisdictions are set up right now, neither entity, those of the Native American population or those of the civil -- of the civil communities

such as Snowflake where I represent as an elected official have adequate representation. That means both entities at the table are lacking and that has perhaps precluded a solution that will solve a decades-old conflict where hundreds of thousands of dollars are being spent every month for water adjudication.

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The map proposed by Sylvia Allen has several advantages. One is combining the nonreservation areas of Apache and Navajo Counties with Yavapai, Gila, Graham, Coconino, and Greenlee preserves county boundaries and communities of interest. That is something that is very, very significant.

It's also worth mentioning than here in the White Mountains -- and, by the way, again, welcome, when you are on the top of the mountain, you are a little bit closer to heaven. But when you're here, you are part of a lot of contingency people that come here to get away, and we are providing citizens of the individuals who are not necessarily part of our voting district.

Again, I thank you for your time. I will urge you to remember the thing that unites us all is that we belong to the same country. We may have different outlooks; we may have different views -- certainly in terms of water adjudication, and that one of the best ways to -- to handle that would make sure that each -- each interested party

would have adequate representation.

2.3

Thank you and I wish you well in your daunting task.

(Applause.)

MS. CRANK: Nicholas Scienski.

MR. SCIENSKI: Good morning, Commissioners.

I'd like to remind all of us that the point here is representation. And I had an experience a couple of months ago that may reveal some of our frustrations.

My wife and we have property both in Navajo County and Apache County; we've been living here for over 30 years. And it's only been in the last two years that we've seen more interests and activity and real estate being bought and sold than we have had in over 30 years.

We're in the midst of a great change in -- in the mountain -- in the White Mountain area. So I reside in Vernon, and we are experiencing the impact of that influx of folks. The infrastructures are being strained; we're working -- we're unincorporated, and I was encouraged and I did, I wrote a letter to our representative of LD-7 inviting her to come to a community meeting, that she might get to know who we are in Vernon and what our concerns are; and if she was able to help us, to lead us, to give us some insight and understanding as to how we can develop a community that we as a people who live there who thought we would like to

have and not just helter-skelter.

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Well, I wrote the letter and three or four weeks went by and I received no response, so I was encouraged to call her office; and I did, talking to her secretary and explained who I was, the letter I wrote, and I had not heard anything. The office said: I will pass the message on to her, and she would respond back as quickly as she could.

To this day I've had no response.

So in my investigations, I discovered how large LD-7 is. And whether it's the size of Pennsylvania or Vermont, I don't know, but it's big. And I can understand physically why she's not able to respond to our needs in the Vernon area, the Show Low area.

So I would like that to be -- I wanted to share that in the -- in the simple understanding that the geography here is quite different than any place I think anywhere else in Arizona.

So the cultural and the common social interests of a people group, i.e., the Navajo Nation and us that are not -- do not belong to that nation, there is a line,

Interstate 40, that seems to be a wonderful place to start;

and economically and socially the interests that we have as a people should be recognized and kept and considered in any other --

MS. CRANK: Time.

1 MR. SCIENSKI: -- district.

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So I want to thank you very much for your coming out and hearing us this morning.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MS. CRANK: Our next speaker is Robert Hephner, after Robert is Allison Hephner, after Allison Hephner is Jesse Bryant.

MR. HEPHNER: Madam Chair, Commissioners, thank you for your time. I understand the -- it is a time give that you're giving to the community; I appreciate that very much.

So I want to talk about two things, one is the districts as they are now and hopefully a solution to help you understand the community, the divider that you need to do.

One, obviously the congressional or legislative districts that we have are kind of wonky. This area specifically I would say to you that Navajo Nation really has less to do with us than the White Mountain Apache Tribe. White Mountain Apache Tribe, Snowflake, Taylor, those should be within our state legislature district, that's who we are as a community.

Secondly, you know, you look at the congressional district that runs all the way over. If you look at all the congressional districts, there's only one congressional

district in the state of Arizona that's actually an area and that's 2; everything else has part of Maricopa County in it, and that's because of population. I get it, you got to divide it out by population.

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I would rather Maricopa County have four districts and you put rural out to everyone else. So how do you divide that? How do you figure that out and how do you get population in?

I think your best way to do that is you use school districts. School districts will be a way to identify communities very easily; they already identify the communities. And if you're crossing or cutting through school districts to create specifically a legislative district, you're probably not representing the community they should be representing.

So that's the thing that I would -- I would say look at that as -- as, you know, everything else can be hard. I can't tell you -- I can't give you the map because I don't know what the data is. I can't give you a map now when you don't have the census data.

So good luck, thank you, and appreciate your help. (Applause.)

MS. HEPHNER: Madam Chair, Commissioners, thank you so much for being here.

I've been a resident of Navajo County for 28 years

living all throughout southern Navajo County, Snowflake and down. I've been in population health for 18 of those years either serving as a firefighter for the Show Low District, emergency manager in Navajo County, public health for Navajo County, so I've seen a lot of social determines of health, and that's kind of what I want to talk to you today.

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We are extremely under represented in our area, and I'm saying Southern Navajo County. I, too, utilize Walt, Representative Walt Blackman all the time in trying to get resources to our community.

During COVID we created the Community Feeding
Collaborative, it was a collaborative to address our high
poverty rates. Our poverty rates about three years ago were
going up, we were reducing; we were doing really good; and
then COVID hit and we went back to very high, we're about
30, 34 percent poverty in our areas. And what this does is
it puts a very big stress on our resources; and when we're
not represented, we can't get the supported resources we
need.

So during the feeding collaborative we ended up trying to create -- it was just going to be Southern Navajo County, but we found we needed to include the whole county and we did, but when we did that a lot of the food and a lot of the resources we couldn't tap into because they were all: Oh, we serve the 40, north of the 40; we can't serve your

area. So it really limited our ability to access those resources.

2.3

Other things that ended up happening and that people need to understand, White Mountain Apache Tribe is not San Carlos, San Carlos is not Navajo Nation, Navajo Nation is not Hopi. To be culturally competent is to understand that each one of these tribes has their own beliefs, their own cultures that need to be respected.

So when you say: Oh, it's going to work for White Mountain Apache Tribe and Navajo Nation, it's not; it's two completely different things. And in public health we were constantly brought through cultural competent training to understand. We have -- I've worked on every single reservation providing services, and I can tell you right now that White Mountain Apache tribe is completely different than Navajo Nation, not just in their -- in their belief structure, but in their topography, in what they -- their needs are and -- and what their -- and how their people -- it's a beautiful thing. I work more with White Mountain Apache Tribe now that I'm not with public health anymore, but it's a beautiful community that needs to be seen, and they're not when you lump them together.

So the other thing is I worked with Walt Blackman on trying to address our substance abuse rate up here. We are three times -- this is preCOVID numbers -- three times

the rate of substance abuse disorder in Navajo County than in the state of Arizona. Now, I bring that up because you're looking, oh, Navajo County as a whole.

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Well, the difference is is Winslow actually has a treatment center, Winslow actually has housing for it, Winslow actually has these things because what we -- what I find is Winslow and Navajo Nation -- I'm sorry, Flagstaff and Navajo Nation end up being this suction. And when I tried with Walt -- and he tried hard -- to get funding to stay here and address the substance abuse in our -- justice system, and actually ended up going to NAU. And we have to wait and see if they -- what they came out with it and if it's anything that's going to actually benefit us.

Because Flagstaff rural is not Navajo County rural, it's not Apache rural, we're completely two different rural places. In fact, I would say they're a little bit urban/rural.

So I'm asking you today, you have a big job ahead of you, obviously. I'm asking you to look at the redistricting that does not exploit and disadvantage our nontribal and tribal areas; because right now with what happened ten years ago, I have watched our population health diminished; I have watched our resources reduced. We had a minimum wage increase that cost so much money to where our government resources, all of our other resources, cut them

in half --1 2 MS. CRANK: Time. 3 MS. HEPHNER: -- we couldn't serve. 4 So thank you so much, I appreciate your time, and 5 wish you guys all the best. 6 (Applause.) 7 MS. CRANK: Next speaker is Jesse Bryant, after Jesse Bryant is Paul Conathers, and after Paul is Louise 8 9 Liggett. 10 MR. BRYANT: Guess I'll have to bend over. 11 Thank you all for the opportunity to be here. 12 (Technical/audio disruption.) 13 COMMISSIONER LERNER: We had a glitch in our 14 connection so we just got back online. So we are -- you did 15 not miss anything for those of you that are online. We are 16 going to get back on track with our speakers. 17 So thank you everybody for your patience. (Technical/audio disruption.) 18 MR. BRYANT: 19 One of those resolutions that was adopted ten years 20 ago from the -- from the town of -- of Pinetop and Lakeside, and they said that the communities of interest in Eastern --21 22 Eastern Central Arizona have strong ties, mutual interest, 2.3 and recent history of legislative district representation; 24 and the town of Pinetop-Lakeside is closely associated and

identified with the immediately adjacent unincorporated

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county and in particular those areas that use either Pinetop or Lakeside postal addresses. And the town of Pinetop-Lakeside are closely associated and actively working with the other municipalities and entities in Navajo County, but in particular the city of Show Low and White Mountain Apache Tribe.

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I'll leave it -- I'll leave it there to give you a sense of how we see ourself in this region here.

And where I'm from, we have -- we have the San Carlos Apaches are our neighbors and we have the economic exchange. We need to understand that rural Arizona, we -- we have the same issues and concerns as mentioned in urban areas, but we have to approach them in a unique fashion. And in our region we do so, we have that common thread amongst ourself, it transcends all other demographics.

So we care about water, we care about education, we care about infrastructure but we are kind of the forgotten part of Arizona, and that's not a complaint, we have to be more self-sufficient and we prefer to be that way.

Perhaps you heard about the floods that hit Miami a day or two ago. Well, yesterday morning the people of that town, not -- not the local governments necessarily, although they were there, the people went out with shovels and started digging the mud out of their streets and sidewalks.

I spoke to a gentleman I believe here today from

Vernon, and he told me during the flooding the past few days him and his neighbors are out there digging out the drainage ditches. You know, we can't always rely on emergency services, we have to rely on ourselves, and that's the nature of our region.

So the five eastern counties -- the five-plus eastern counties, we strongly recommend that to you and hope that you'll be hearing that same message and I'll see you again in Safford as well and you're going to keep hearing that message from our region.

As far as the maps, I'll speak to that very quickly that were -- that were given to you today. If the Apaches so desire that they wish to remain with the Navajos, certainly they should have the right to do so. We feel they are our neighbors, the White Mountain and San Carlos Apaches, we very much enjoy having them as part of our representation, we do business together and so forth.

But they -- they can be connected as you'll see on one of those maps.

MS. CRANK: Time.

MR. BRYANT: There's an uninhabited area that connects them.

I will leave this resolution for your people here for your review.

Thank you very much.

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(Applause.)

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MS. CRANK: Next speaker is Paul Conathers, and following Paul is Louise, following Louise and the final speaker is Scott Caswell.

MR. CONATHERS: Good morning.

Yes. I'm Paul Conathers; and I live in Pinedale community which is about 20 miles west of here on the 260 on way to Heber-Overgaard. My office, I'm an insurance agent and Realtor, my office is on Deuce of Club in Show Low, just a stone's throw from here; and my clients range from Saint Johns to Concho to McNary to Whiteriver to Cibecue, Heber-Overgaard over to Winslow and Holbrook is my marketing area which I have clients.

And right now we're in District 7, and just a few minutes away I'm in District 6 for legislative district which is what I want to speak about.

So our community, right now our community is split, and that makes no sense at all. And the reason that I'm going into reasons why that happened, but I think that's a mistake. Because in the rural areas of Apache County, the rural areas of Navajo County, we all work here in Show Low most of us. The big employers is, you know, Walmart and hospital are here in Show Low; and people commute from Vernon where I'm at, Heber-Overgaard, they commute here to work. There's a common -- there's a common interest.

I would implore you to put those -- our communities back together and like was mentioned, so I'm just kind of echoing what was mentioned before me.

And like Walt Blackman, yeah, some people in Show Low, they think of him as theirs and he's not. So I ask you to really consider that. Specifically it makes sense to -- and also in congressional district have south of I-40 be one district combined, and I think that will better -- give us better representation.

So thank you for your time.

(Applause.)

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COMMISSIONER LERNER: Thank you.

MS. LIGGETT: Good morning. All Commissioners for being here for us. Can you hear me?

COMMISSIONER LERNER: Mm-hm.

MS. LIGGETT: Okay. I am new to this area; I came from North Phoenix, Cave Creek, lived there for almost 20 years; loved living there, but it just got too crowded so my husband and I moved out here to the rural area.

We live in -- just north of Snowflake and we love it. We love it. There's so little traffic, there's less people; and people talk to each other. It's awesome and it's wonderful; people are real.

They know their neighbors, they want to know their neighbors even though they're -- we have 36 acres and our

neighbors have property too, but we gather together because we want to be together not 'cause we're squeezed together into a city together on the same block. You know what I mean?

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So we are learning to live the country life and we love it. It's harder but we love it. We have space, we have air, beautiful clouds, we love Arizona.

And we believe that Sylvia Allen, Walt Whitman -- I'm sorry, Walt Blackwell -- I'm new here.

But we believe that the northern and the middle eastern sections should be separated and grouped the five counties together that -- that Sylvia noted; we think that they have more interests in common.

And I also want to say that there's a lot of people moving here. There's a lot of people from the cities moving here, and they're going to have to learn Arizona ways.

And the people coming to the country, they need to be together and they need to think -- think neighborly, I guess you would say, and to work together. We want to work together and we want to have these five areas together so we can work. Whether they're white men, whether they're Natives, whether they're Europeans or whatever, whoever they are, we want to work together, and we want to have common interests.

And also the legislators they don't need to be

going all over, you know, crazy areas, we want a more compact area also.

Thank you for listening. Have a great day and thank you for all your hard decisions you're going to make and listening to all the people and caring.

Thank you.

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(Applause.)

MS. CRANK: Next speaker is Scott Caswell and the final and last speaker is Kelly Rael.

MR. CASWELL: Hello.

Our problem now is that we are taxed without representation. Taxation without representation is not American, it is not for my child to live up -- to grow up being taxed without representation.

Our taxes are taken and very little benefit comes to our people; that is slavery. We want our people to be represented by our people. And if a foreign nation, the Navajo Nation, they are unite and other nations, they have no right to tax us. They can take care of themselves; we'll take care of ourselves. We can no longer permit a foreign nation to tax us and not give us any benefits.

We need representation for our taxation here. They have different values, they have different school systems, they have different police system, they are separate. They are their own nation, let them be their own nation.

Thank you.

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(Applause.)

MS. RAEL: Hello. My name is Kelly Rael; I'm from Florence, Arizona, but after serving my time in the military and after my husband retired 30 years in the military, we chose this place out of the whole country to come live and raise our family. This is truly God's country.

And as soon as I came here I saw the dysfunction of our representation. Last year when businesses were being forced to shut down, I reached out to our state representatives, Arlando Teller and Myron Tsosie. I called their office numerous times, sent numerous e-mails, no response. I'm not even a business owner, but I could feel the pain.

Out of desperation I created a BOLO alert for our leadership "missing leadership." Because they were missing. And I shared it on every Navajo Nation yard sale page, every yard sale page in this area, and throughout the White Mountain Apache Tribe.

In that, in the responses I saw that no one was getting representation. It's very easy to sit on the Navajo Nation and virtue signal (phonetic) but not do anything.

So I believe Sylvia's Allen proposed map is adequate representation; it would make this area competitive again.

If you want a point of reference to look at what would make us communities of interest, the first place I would start, looking at the DES office locations.

White River recently closed their offices, Show Low closed their office, they moved it to Pinetop-Lakeside so it would be fair for -- for people looking for work and looking for assistance.

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On the Navajo Nation they can go to Tuba City or they can go to Flagstaff; and based on the data, a lot of Natives are -- Navajo Natives are going to Flagstaff and Tuba City for services.

Here at the Show Low office, they are seeing over 50 percent members from White Mountain Apache Tribes as their clients.

Secondly, another point of reference would be looking at the VA Medical Center the way they have their maps laid out. Navajo Nation is part of Northern Arizona VA medical program. Here in White River, San Carlos Apache tribes, Payson, they are all out of the Phoenix VA tribe -- or, excuse me, Phoenix VA health center.

I believe that this would be a lot more competitive. It's very disheartening to look at the voting ballots and not seeing any conservative representatives because there's no point. As Dave Peelman has said many times "Jesus Christ couldn't even win LD-7 at this point."

I believe that we do deserve better representation, we --

MS. CRANK: Time.

MS. RAEL: Okay. Thank you.

(Applause.)

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COMMISSIONER LERNER: First of all, I want to just say thank you to everybody for coming out on a Saturday morning. It's a beautiful day; I'm sure there were a lot of other things you could have done.

But we really appreciate you being here. We very much appreciate hearing from you and want -- so I just wanted to say thank you, this was a great morning.

As you've seen today, on our website we have some easy-to-use tools for learning about and sharing information about your communities of interest. We are all very appreciative of the maps you all have been talking about, clearly you have been sharing those. We would appreciate all that kind of feedback from you.

Rather than relying purely on our interpretation of your comments today, we encourage you to go online and submit a map to us or provide any additional feedback that you would like to. This will ensure we are correctly understanding the definition of your community.

Please encourage your friends and neighbors to share their thoughts as well. Anyone can do so online at

any time, there's no requirement to attend any one of these meetings to be heard. We are appreciative of you being here, but we also want to make sure that you know we are not -- this is not the end of hearing from you in terms of public comment. So, again, I just want to say thank you very much from myself and other Commissioners and our staff, and I will now adjourn the meeting. Thank you. (Applause.) (Whereupon the proceeding concludes at 11:45 a.m.)

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3	STATE OF ARIZONA)
4) ss.
5	COUNTY OF MARICOPA)
6	
7	BE IT KNOWN that the foregoing proceedings were
8	taken before me, Angela Furniss Miller, Certified Reporter No. 50127, all done to the best of my skill and ability;
9	that the proceedings were taken down by me in shorthand and thereafter reduced to print under my direction.
10	I CERTIFY that I am in no way related to any of the
11	parties hereto nor am I in any way interested in the outcome thereof.
12	I FURTHER CERTIFY that I have complied with the
13	requirements set forth in ACJA 7-206. Dated at Litchfield Park, Arizona, this 17th of August, 2021.
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15	Angela Furniss Miller, RPR, CR
16	CERTIFIED REPORTER (AZ50127)
	* * *
17	I CERTIFY that Miller Certified Reporting, LLC, has
18	complied with the requirements set forth in ACJA 7-201 and 7-206. Dated at LITCHFIELD PARK, Arizona, this 17th of
19	August, 2021.
20	MCR
21	Miller Certified Reporting, LLC
22	Arizona RRF No. R1058
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