

1 we do not have Internet until that line is repaired, it
2 effectively shuts down our commerce. An outage of the one
3 line can lasts hours and hours; days.

4 This includes your mobile phone access. So just
5 think of having no Internet and no mobile phone.

6 As you can see, some of our concerns are not the
7 same as those in a metro area. I ask that you please keep
8 our royal -- rural voice intact.

9 In the last redistricting, Gila County were divided
10 into two congressional and three legislative districts.
11 Counties are a community of interest that predates the
12 founding of our nation and state. For example, 14 of the 15
13 were created before Arizona become a state; the 15th county,
14 La Paz, was created by the demand of the residents to be
15 independent of Yuma County, that speaks of a community of
16 interest to me.

17 So to keep us in a compact district, we belong in a
18 rural district with the Eastern Arizona rural counties.
19 Please do not discount the value of rural counties. Please
20 don't dilute our rural voice by splitting the rural counties
21 in different districts and treating us as a suburb of the
22 larger cities.

23 Thank you so much for listening.

24 (Applause.)

25 MS. NEUMANN: The next speaker is Jane Evans,

1 followed by Robert Hershberger.

2 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: I have a -- can I ask a
3 follow-up question?

4 Maybe you'd like to share a little bit more about
5 Rim Country, what -- what those boundaries are, so that we,
6 you know, can -- can make sure we're understanding exactly
7 what you're referring to.

8 MS. DERKS: Payson as they call it -- Payson is the
9 center, and there's a lot of rural communities out, if you
10 get out on the forest roads, they're all below the rim. So
11 when you see the rim, the flat -- the flat peak up here,
12 there's on top of the rim, and I was driving up on the rim
13 last -- yesterday, and I noticed up on top they call it Rim
14 Country up there as well, even though Payson kind of calls
15 it Rim Country down below; and because of the rim, it also
16 affects our weather.

17 But the rim goes all the way to, like, near
18 Show Low. So Rim Country is very wide, it's the
19 Mogollon Rim, and it even -- I've even seen it referred to
20 over near the Verde Valley.

21 Did I get -- was there any -- so it goes all the
22 way from Verde Valley all the way to the eastern part of our
23 state near Show Low.

24 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Okay. So up to the 260?

25 MS. DERKS: Well, the 260 will take you towards

1 Show Low and the 260 will take you over to Camp Verde. So,
2 yeah, it's kind of -- that's the corridor, that highway.

3 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Thank you.

4 MS. EVANS: Yeah, first, I would like to thank
5 Erika Neuberg and the rest of the Redistricting Committee
6 for coming up here and scheduling these public hearings.

7 Rural Arizona often feels overpowered by the
8 Maricopa and Pinal and the rest of the urban centers, so we
9 appreciate you coming to listen to us.

10 My name is Jane Evans. I live here -- I'm an
11 Arizona native, I've lived here in Payson for 12 years,
12 before that I lived down in the Valley.

13 Ten years ago, as people have talked about before,
14 our county was split into three legislative districts and
15 two CDs. So when we have a -- an election, we have county
16 candidates, we have LD-6 candidates, we have LD-8
17 candidates, we have CD-1 candidates, and we have CD-4
18 candidates all running in Gila County.

19 It creates confusion, it's very, you know, hard for
20 people to understand, and we really need to get our county
21 back together.

22 The average person is just left scratching their
23 head.

24 Our community of interest is our county and it
25 needs to be put back together. We help each other in time

1 of need. For instance, this last fire season we all helped
2 each other with evacuations in one thing or another; we do
3 have a lot of common interests, and we love our county and
4 we love our rural way of life.

5 In Northeastern Arizona our critical issues are:
6 forestry, water, ranching, tourism, and mining. These are
7 completely different from issues in those urban centers.

8 Right now CD-4 incorporates part of Pinal County,
9 part of Maricopa County, and part of Yuma County as well as
10 some of the northern counties; I see little of community of
11 interest. Certainly, Yuma, a border farming community, does
12 not have a district that has little in common with forest
13 management and the wildfire and issues we have up here in
14 Northern Arizona.

15 Following the natural boundaries and reflecting
16 communities of interest is mandated. Gila County should be
17 aligned with the rural counties of Graham, Greenlee,
18 Southern Navajo, Southern Apache, and Coconino, and the
19 Copper Corridor of Pinal County.

20 I urge you to respect our communities of interest
21 and reunite us.

22 Thank you.

23 (Applause.)

24 MS. NEUMANN: The next speaker is Robert
25 Hershberger, followed by Darla Carlisle.

1 MR. HERSHBERGER: Yes, to the Commission, I really
2 appreciate your community and public service in this regard.

3 Excuse me.

4 I appreciate your community service and public
5 service serving on this Commission; I know it's a tough
6 task, and I support you in every way. So, thank you so
7 much.

8 I would like to echo a little bit what Chris Senko
9 said, one of the first speakers, that it is -- it's
10 important that we don't create districts where candidates
11 select their districts and move to it in order to win an
12 election. It shouldn't be so firmly in one political camp
13 that you end up having outside politicians come in to the
14 district and win in the district against local politicians.

15 I think that's something that you should consider
16 very much in -- in the redistricting process.

17 I think pretty much the rest of the things that
18 have been said.

19 I do consider the Rim Country and all of
20 Gila County and the forestry, the mining, and those -- the
21 cattle interest -- interests are kind of common, they're
22 rural interests, and they should be kept together.

23 So I do appreciate your coming.

24 Thank you so much.

25 (Applause.)

1 MS. NEUMANN: And our final three speakers are
2 Darla Carlisle, Mireille Green, and Andy McKinney.

3 MS. CARLISLE: Good morning, Madam Neuberg
4 Chairwoman and Committee members. Thank you for letting me
5 speak regarding this important subject.

6 A key part of our area is tribal communities. I
7 feel the tribal should be contained in the Legislative
8 District 7, this area would be Cochina, Gila, Navajo, and
9 Apache counties. Legislative District 6 would be the
10 nontribal areas, which will be the counties of Coconino,
11 Gila, Southern Apache, Southern Navajo, Graham and Greenlee;
12 it should also include the Copper Corridor of Superior,
13 Kearny, and Globe.

14 Regarding the congressional district, the current
15 area contains most -- the most manipulated part of the
16 state, running from Window Rock to the outskirts of Tucson;
17 the rural areas have been chopped in too many parts.

18 I'm advocating for combining the rural parts of the
19 state running from Cochina, Yavapai, Gila, Navajo, Apache,
20 Greenlee, Graham, and Cochise. All of these counties are
21 similar in issues and in needs: forestry, water,
22 preservation of our land, education, and public
23 transportation.

24 I'm a child advocate; I have taught school for
25 30-plus years in all types of settings. The rural schools

1 need our representation. They have different needs from the
2 curriculum to sports, et cetera. Our children deserve the
3 same education that they can get in a large city. It can be
4 done, it just needs a lot of brainstorming and
5 representation.

6 My granddaughter plays volleyball for a large
7 school in Phoenix; she has several schools across the USA
8 coming for her offering her scholarship; she has wide
9 exposure. A girl in Payson a couple of years ago who is
10 6'3" and a fabulous player did not get any offers; I felt
11 really bad for her.

12 Our schools up here need to be competitive when
13 something like this happens; our students should be equally
14 prepared to go to college as the students are in a large
15 school.

16 We need to keep our county seat of Globe in our
17 district as it is similar to Payson. It is extremely
18 important to keep rural areas together, then we can have
19 equal population, natural boundaries, a community of
20 interest, contiguous and compact districts; it will follow
21 the constitution and Voting Rights Act.

22 In my proposal no county would be divided, we would
23 not be dominated by Phoenix or Tucson which have very little
24 in common with us.

25 I truly love Arizona and the people here. I hope

1 you will consider my request, and we can be the best that we
2 can.

3 Appreciate the opportunity to speak with you,
4 Madam Chair Neumann [sic] and your committee.

5 Thank you.

6 (Applause.)

7 MS. NEUMANN: Next speaker is Mireille Green, and
8 our final speaker will be Andy McKinney.

9 MS. GREEN: I apologize for that.

10 Good morning, Commissioners -- sorry. (Inaudible)
11 sometimes.

12 Madam Chair, appreciate the opportunity to speak
13 here today.

14 This is a very important project, the
15 redistricting, the redistricting the lines and all of that.
16 I understand how difficult this must be for all of you.

17 I've a newcomer to this area, and I heard some
18 folks talk about purple state. Well, I guess I am a purple
19 midget because the podium is as big as I am; and I'm an
20 Independent, so I must be purple.

21 It's not a question of party lines at all. It's
22 not a political issue.

23 I'm a newcomer in the area. I chose Payson because
24 my children and grandchildren live down there in the Valley,
25 but I prefer a more rural area.

1 The first thing -- oh, well, maybe not the first, I
2 think I opened my accounts first. One of the thing I did
3 when I got here was change my voter registration to the
4 district. As an immigrant I think that -- well, not I
5 think, I believe. I strongly believe. That the right to
6 vote was the most important right that was granted when I
7 became a citizen.

8 And, by golly, I am going to defend my vote, and
9 I'm going to defend my voice, and I'm going to be heard as
10 long as I can stand up.

11 But I was very surprised to realize that our rural
12 district is actually not totally representative of our rural
13 area. Living in a rural area is presenting some different
14 challenges than it does when you are living in the city.

15 By the same token the people who are in the more
16 urban area of our district, they deserve to have our votes
17 not impede their needs. We don't have the same need, it's
18 that simple.

19 It's therefore important that the districts be
20 homogeneous, and by that I don't mean we should vote the
21 same, God forbid, it would be so boring; we need to take
22 into consideration the need of the communities first and
23 foremost.

24 A rural district needs to have boundaries as much
25 as it is possible that include counties and towns with

1 similar concerns. Some of the concerns: Forest management,
2 well, I don't know anything about it so I'm not going to
3 school you on that, but I understand this is a major, major
4 problem around here.

5 I know a little bit more about schools. Schools in
6 a rural area we know have a larger number of students or
7 children in low-income households. We also know that few of
8 our students will continue on to college.

9 I'm sorry?

10 MS. NEUMANN: Time.

11 MS. GREEN: It's my time?

12 MS. NEUMANN: Yes.

13 MS. GREEN: Oh, my God.

14 (Laughter.)

15 Well, we need unique solutions -- I will wrap it
16 up.

17 We need unique solutions for problems which are
18 different from theirs. I thank you, ladies and gentlemen,
19 for listening to us, and I hope you will give our concern
20 some considerations.

21 Thank you.

22 (Applause.)

23 MS. NEUMANN: And our final speaker today is Andy
24 McKinney.

25 MR. McKINNEY: Chairman, I would thank you for

1 coming all the way up here to hear us today, as it's very
2 refreshing and in a clear distinction from the previous
3 panel ten years ago. So, thank you very much.

4 I would like speak specifically to the issues of
5 Gila County.

6 We are small in population. There are less --
7 there are less people in Gila County than there are in
8 probably in a two- or three-mile area in Maricopa, there's
9 less than 60,000 of us, so there's not very many of us. And
10 we're also poor. Gila County is the third poorest county in
11 Arizona.

12 When -- when Peter up in Pine or when Angel down in
13 Miami or me in Star Valley needs the assistance of the
14 sheriff, we all call the same sheriff. But the sheriff's
15 revenue base in Gila County is three and a half percent of
16 the surface area of the county, all of the rest is owned
17 either by tribal entities or by the federal government and
18 we're not allowed to tax that.

19 So when we call the sheriff, Peter lives way up in
20 Pine, two -- two and a half miles -- or two and a half hours
21 from Globe; we have people in Young, two hours from Globe,
22 that the -- the county seat; and the sheriff because he
23 doesn't have enough deputies, he doesn't have enough trucks,
24 he doesn't have enough cars, and because our -- our cable
25 system is so defective, who knows when a sheriff is going to

1 be out there to -- to help him.

2 And then the previous board made this even worse,
3 he divided right through -- right kind of at a naval of Gila
4 County. The top half is one in congressional district and
5 one legislative district, the other half of the county down
6 in where the county seat is in a different legislative
7 district and a different congressional district; and to make
8 matters even worse, the previous board saw fit to reach into
9 a specific neighborhood down by the -- down by the Roosevelt
10 Dam and grab that neighborhood, tear it out of Gila County,
11 and put it into a third legislative district.

12 Now where's the community of interest there?

13 When I call the sheriff and I live in that splot
14 that they ripped out -- well, thank you very much.

15 For the record, I am -- I live in Star Valley, town
16 of less than 3,000, I'm the Vice Mayor there, I'm also an
17 official in the local Republican party.

18 So thank you for your time.

19 (Applause.)

20 COMMISSIONER MEHL: On behalf of all of our -- my
21 fellow Commissioners, we want to thank you today.

22 You don't know how valuable this input is to us; we
23 are listening very closely, the things that you're saying
24 matter to us. They will be taken into account; we will have
25 tradeoffs and not everyone is going to be happy at the end

1 of the day, but we will listen very closely to the testimony
2 we've heard here and at the other places that -- that we're
3 having hearings, so I want to thank you.

4 As you've also heard earlier in the presentation,
5 on our website we have easy-to-use tools for learning about
6 and sharing information about your community of interest.
7 So rather than relying purely on the testimony today, we --
8 we encourage you to go online and you can even go as far as
9 to submit a draft map that you would like to see but -- or
10 you can just submit a map of your own community of interest
11 as you perceive it.

12 This will ensure that we will correctly understand
13 the -- your definition of your own community.

14 So we encourage you and your friends and neighbors,
15 to share your thoughts through these web tools that didn't
16 exist ten years ago, and that we're really trying to take
17 advantage of to get more input from you.

18 So anyone can do this online anytime, there's no
19 requirement to attend one of these meetings to give us
20 feedback and, again, we want to encourage that to occur.

21 So thank you very much for your testimony today;
22 thank you for taking the time and your interest in this
23 really important endeavor.

24 Thank you.

25 And, with this, we will adjourn the meeting.

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(Applause.)

(Whereupon the proceeding concludes at 11:23 a.m.)

C E R T I F I C A T E

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 23rd of August, 2021.



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

* * *

I CERTIFY that Miller Certified Reporting, LLC, has complied with the requirements set forth in ACJA 7-201 and 7-206. Dated at LITCHFIELD PARK, Arizona, this 23rd of August, 2021.



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