

To Mr. Robert Frost in his capacity as Committee Assistant to the Kansas House Committee on Redistricting,

I am writing as an OPPONENT to the currently proposed redistricting map introduced as HB2520 last Thursday, June 20. This map does not address the concerns of the Kansas residents of either rural Kansas or the Greater Metropolitan Kansas City area in that by placing the urban areas of Wyandotte County into District 1 it does not keep the principles of respecting communities with common interests and goals. Much of Wyandotte county would be in the same district that contains the entire rural area of Northern Kansas. This serves neither the residents of Wyandotte county, nor the rural residents of District 1.

My opposition stems from two separate considerations . First, I am a resident of the greater KC metro area, and my concerns regarding matters ranging from public transportation to roads to school funding to social services are largely the same as those encountered by residents of Wyandotte County. Our communities share the cultural, workplace, and recreational concerns as the rest of the KC Metro area. The citizens of Wyandotte are my friends and coworkers. By placing these urban areas into District 1, you are placing their concerns in direct conflict with those residing in the rural districts, making it very difficult for the same elected officials to adequately represent the interests of both.

Second, while I moved to the KC metro area in my late teens, I grew up on a dairy farm in rural western NY, where much of my family still resides. I know the difficulties encountered by rural residents in having their concerns adequately represented when they are placed in a mixed district, with a heavy concentration of urban residents. The result was a deterioration of services that are unique to rural areas where realities such as access to medical care, agricultural zoning, and watershed maintenance have an importance not understood in urban areas.

I am also writing as a PROPONENT of HB2519, because this redistricting proposal ensures equitable representation while respecting the interests of both of the major constituencies that make up the state of Kansas. It maintains the integrity of the portion of Kansas within the KC metro area, while placing the rural and largely agricultural areas of Northern and Western Kansas within one district. From a community concern standpoint, this proposed map is logical to anyone who understands the demographics of Kansas.

I am concerned that the members of the redistricting committee are allowing national politic interest to override local concerns, when their first and most important priority should be to have elected representatives that can adequately represent ALL of their constituency. The districting proposed by HB2520 cannot be explained by the principles of common interest and will result in a division that does not serve the people of Kansas.

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