



Opponent Testimony of Free State 3 House Map

For the House Redistricting Committee

Wednesday, March 16, 2022

Chair Croft and Members of the Committee,

Mainstream Coalition opposes the Free State 3 House Map.

Mainstream Coalition has worked with residents of Johnson and Wyandotte Counties for nearly 30 years to promote a more representative and responsive government for all Kansans. This entire redistricting process has illustrated how important it is for Kansans to have a voice in our democratic process, as once again this KS Legislature is moving legislative maps quickly and without allowing adequate time for public review and feedback.

We strongly encourage this committee to work in a bi-partisan manner to create a House map that meets the agreed upon guidelines set forth at the beginning of this session. Specifically, we call on you to recognize “Communities of Interest” and the inclusion of the “social, cultural, racial, ethnic and economic interests common to the population of the area” into compact, contiguous districts that don’t dilute minority voting strength.

Without the time to fully engage our members - those who live and vote in these districts and have the best insight into how new district lines will affect their communities - we do not have a fully detailed analysis to provide on Free State 3. We are concerned with the shifting of Rep Brandon Woodard’s district, potentially making this a highly competitive district for one of only four LGBTQ Representatives in Kansas. We are also concerned with the statewide pattern of splitting cities and neighborhoods unnecessarily. We see this most dramatically in Overland Park and Olathe where the cities are split between nearly double the number of districts than the population requires. Cities are communities of interest with a distinct set of interests, services, systems, and history. To split them apart unnecessarily betrays the commitment of this committee to its own approved guidelines to recognize communities of interest and accommodate interests as identified by residents.

We’re already heading down the wrong path with the three lawsuits challenging the racially gerrymandered Ad Astra 2 Congressional map. We encourage this committee to do the work and allow for fruitful dialogue so that we may have a more transparent process and fair House map that is free of partisan and racial gerrymandering.

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Mainstream Coalition is a nonpartisan nonprofit dedicated to creating a more representative and responsive government by empowering informed participation and meaningful action in the political process.



Michael Poppa
Executive Director