

Thank you Madame Chair and committee members. My name is Scott Graham and I live in CD5, SD61 in Minneapolis. I'd like to thank you for taking citizen input on our redistricting process. I am pleased to speak to you today.

As we witness voter suppression efforts pass through state houses throughout our country it is especially vital that our redistricting process be a model for the rest of the nation, just as our voter turn-out frequently is. Redistricting should not be a partisan process by which districts are drawn to help partisan allies, hurt political enemies and when elected officials choose their voters before the voters choose them. It should be carried out ensuring equal voting power and fair representation.

I encourage your process to consider a couple criteria that are not always utilized, specifically:

- Communities of common interest, (my example is the Iron Range, which is generally a community interest of economics). Many other common interests exist, and as Mr Harper from League of Women Voters mentioned, they are best described by those individual communities.
- Consistency with natural and political boundaries (county and municipal lines, for example). District borders that do not match these boundaries are inevitable, but they are terribly inconvenient and often unfair. They can suppress citizen engagement in activities like party caucuses and in voting.
- Compactness, districts that metaphorically attempt to be as close to a circle or a square. This is a common criteria for redistricting but since maps so often violate this principal I felt like it deserved special attention in my testimony.

Sometimes competitiveness is included as well, with the goal of creating districts that will be as evenly split in two-party partisanship. My testimony is that competitiveness is a poor criterion, both because it can undermine the representation of minorities and because it requires those

drawing the lines to actively consider the impact of the districts on electoral outcomes.

When you encounter a density of a particular racial make-up or common interest which, because of its population, could create a full district I encourage you to explore not packing this community into a single district but consider splitting the community between two districts so that the community can influence, even create a majority, in each of the two districts.

I encourage further public testimony and public hearings to create the fairest maps possible. I wish you well in your work, and again wish to thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak to you.