

Dear Chair Murphy & Members of the House Redistricting Committee:

I am submitting my written testimony as a 28 year resident of West St. Paul and over 37 years living in Dakota County. I currently am a West St. Paul city council member.

West St. Paul and other similarly situated cities in Dakota County are currently developing thousands of housing units with many of these developments being affordable for families and seniors. This anticipated population growth further justifies keeping Dakota County whole for its districts so that it remains reflective of the population and character of all of our Dakota County communities.

Regarding deviation, districts need to be equal in population to ensure equal representation. Please keep to no more than 1% deviation. A greater than 1% or up to 5% deviation is essentially voter suppression. It could mean some districts would have more people with less representation and other districts could have less people with more representation. We need to support our residents having access to voting, not land.

In *Reynolds v. Sims* 377 U.S. 533 (1964), the U.S Supreme Court decided that Alabama's legislative apportionment was unconstitutional because it violated the 14th Amendment's Equal Protection Clause of the U.S Constitution. This case set the standard for the notion of "one person, one vote" and asserted that legislative districts should be apportioned in ways that are very much closely, if not uniform, in population.

In an 8-1 Decision, Chief Justice Warren wrote: The Constitution protects the right to vote. This right "can be denied by a debasement or dilution of the weight of a citizen's vote just as effectively as by wholly prohibiting the free exercise of the franchise."

Thank you for allowing me to submit this written testimony.

Julie A. Eastman
West St. Paul