

Redistricting and Political Representation of the ALANA communities in Minnesota

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The ALANA (African Latino Asian and Native American) economy is an estimated \$1.4 trillion dollars. This estimate includes lifetime earnings/talent of the current ALANA workforce, businesses, residential real estate and rental payments of tenants. The ALANA economy generates an estimated \$3 billion in annual state and local taxes in Minnesota. In each of the redistricting deliberations, in 2001 and 2010, we raised the issue of adequate political representation of these economic interests. The imbalance of power continues through these 20 years and is reflected in an estimated \$287 billion-dollar racial economic gap in Minnesota.

Today the ALANA population is 24 percent of the total population in Minnesota, or over 1.35 million people. If adequate political representation and power sharing were to occur, there would be at least 16 ALANA Senators and 32 ALANA Representatives in the Minnesota Legislature. This unfortunately is not the case.

Why is political representation important?

1. The \$1.4 trillion ALANA economy (bigger than the economy of Mexico) needs political representation to preserve and grow. If done right, the global networks of the ALANA communities and the local talent of its workforce and youth will help grow the Minnesota economy and tap into new global markets, technology and resources bringing jobs, income, and wealth to all Minnesotans. This potential remains untapped, especially over the last 20 years.
2. One of the barriers to effective political participation is the different lived experiences of ALANA and that of non-ALANA elected and appointed leaders. As such there is the inability of these elected and appointed leaders to understand the issues and opportunities the ALANA community offers. Having a critical mass of ALANA elected and appointed leaders will ensure this barrier to effective political participation is removed.
3. Our observation, especially in the most recent legislative sessions in Minnesota, was that when ALANA leaders had power, they were more successful in securing meaning solutions and opportunities to address the huge racial disparities in Minnesota. Shared governance matters.

The 4th Congressional district and the legislative, county and municipal districts it encompasses offers an illustration of the challenges that redistricting needs to address. The ALANA economy in Congressional District 4 is an estimated \$280 billion which is in relative terms is bigger than the economy of Finland.

While ALANA communities have made progress in political power in pockets where they are a critical mass of voters, in Congressional District 4 overall, there is an imbalance of political power. ALANA communities make up 38 percent of the population of Congressional District 4 - this implies that the possibility of implementing policies and programs that benefit the ALANA communities is quite high. Unfortunately, racial disparities remain very high in Congressional District 4 (similarly in Congressional District 5).

The table below show the importance of Congressional Districts 6, 7 and 8 where the ALANA population has crossed double digit levels and should be reflected in relevant political opportunity districts. Congressional District 1 continues to see growth in the ALANA population. ALANA political power should not be diluted in these areas. ALANA communities in these areas report lack of political power and access to resources – yet they are playing a critical role in those regional economies. Greater Minnesota ALANA economies need improved political representation.

Redistricting Principles

May I offer some redistricting principles to consider:

1. **Do no harm to ALANA communities** – Current political victories by ALANA candidates derives from a core base of ALANA supporters and partnerships with other communities. It is important to preserve those communities of interest.
2. **Grow ALANA opportunity districts** – such to enable that at least 24 percent of the Minnesota House and Senate as well as our Congressional representation can be elected from the ALANA communities.
3. **Grow Politically Competitive Districts** – Because the lived experiences of people are different and influences decisions, it is important to create structurally, opportunities for collaboration, listening to the other and developing appropriate solutions. These competitive districts can be the glue that holds Minnesota together around shared sustainable prosperity for all.

The data below supports the arguments above. (One thing that this committee can do better if it wants citizen partnership is to make redistricting data available in a user friendly and disaggregated manner. It took hours for me to find out data on ALANA percentage of each Congressional district, for example. If we are serious of closing racial disparities in Minnesota, we should have good data in a user-friendly manner accessible to all).

Congressional District	2021	ALANA Percent of District	Growth 2010-21	2010	ALANA Percent of District	Percent of Total ALANA population 2021	ALANA Economy
1	124022	18%	6%	76726	12%	9%	\$ 126,000,000,000
2	175226	24%	8%	104635	16%	13%	\$ 182,000,000,000
3	203479	28%	9%	126366	19%	15%	\$ 210,000,000,000
4	273018	38%	9%	192564	29%	20%	\$ 280,000,000,000
5	293736	40%	5%	232085	35%	22%	\$ 308,000,000,000
6	112912	15%	7%	57484	9%	8%	\$ 112,000,000,000
7	96398	14%	5%	61705	9%	7%	\$ 98,000,000,000
8	73823	11%	4%	47218	7%	5%	\$ 70,000,000,000
Total	1,352614			898,783			
Percent of Total Population	24%			17%			

Sources: Percentage of ALANA (African Latino Asian Native American) population derived from redistricting data from the State Demographer (<https://mn.gov/admin/demography/data-by-topic/population-data/2020-decennial-census/redistricting/>). ALANA economy estimates by author (see <https://empoweringstrategies.org/the-minnesota-solution-to-close-the-287-billion-racial-economic-gaps/>)

ⁱ ALANA (African Latino Asian and Native American) Brain Trust is a statewide network of individuals and organizations working to build capital and capacity in the ALANA communities in Minnesota. This testimony draws from comments and is supported by members of the ALANA Redistricting Committee - Brett Buckner (Managing Director, OneMN.org), Annastacia Belladonna- Carrera (Common Cause), Roy Taylor, Pamela Standing (Executive Director, Minnesota Indigenous Business Alliance), Jane Leonard (President, Growth & Justice), Dr. Bruce Corrie).