

Dear Redistricting Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today about the important topic of Redistricting. I would like to speak today as a resident of Hutchinson, in the 7th Congressional District. There are three areas I would ask you to consider when it comes to redistricting, 1-Historical precedence, 2-Creating a district based on compactness, not gerrymandering and 3-Building districts based on common interests.

1-Historical size and direction CD7 has taken in the last 50 years.

As you can see from these maps I have brought in, CD7 has been a western-agricultural district since Minnesota began 8 districts in 1970. This concept, in my opinion, makes the most sense and is the fairest way to draw a Congressional map. As you can see, Congressional District 7 always has moved south as the population has left, leading to a larger geographical area. In the last two redistricting cycles, CD7 has moved east and south almost to the Iowa border.

2-Compactness, not Gerrymandering.

Gerrymandering has been around since the early 1800's as a way to flip districts for the benefit of a political party. We have all seen the odd looking districts, created for political power and purpose. In my opinion, compactness is a much better way to set new lines for our state congressional districts. Please consider how you have done this in the past years. CD7 has always been a rectangular, north to south agricultural district.

3-Common Themes and Interests.

My third and final point is that districts should be built on common themes and interests. CD7 is primarily an agricultural/manufacturing district. Agriculture has a huge role to play in the economy of our district. It makes sense to have a western agricultural district where people have the same common interests and values. Small town values are the backbones of our communities here. As a whole, people in CD7 value the sanctity of human life, a traditional view of the family, and a very independent spirit not depending on the strong hand of the government to help.