

April 3, 2024

Common Cause MN is a nonpartisan grassroots organization working to create open, honest, and accountable government, more information about our work at www.commoncause.org.

We are grateful to Rep. Ginny Klevorn, for moving HF4593 the With Us, For Us Redistricting Amendment community bill. **Close to 2500 Minnesotans from across the state have submitted written statements supporting HF4593.**

Over 300 written statements, and counting, have been submitted to members of the MN Legislature and leadership asking members to boldly stand with community and join the Chief Authors as coauthors in support of HF4593/SF4894.

We are asking members of this committee to boldly stand with grassroots and communities that have worked for over 5yrs to move a grassroots-facing clean independent redistricting commission reform bill. Building a “multiracial democracy” requires co-creating it partnership and allyship with constituency - particularly those disparately impacted by redistricting. HF4593 is MN specific and community driven. We leveraged national partners to align national best practices and lessons learned with community’s vision. National perspectives do not replace local experience.

HF4593 has been in the making since 2018. It is the ONLY bill before the committee that contains recommendations and ideas from across the aisle and chambers. It is also the ONLY bill before the committee that is the direct work of Minnesotans directly impacted across the state, their authentic allies and stakeholders. Together we proved in 2021 that community CAN lead the work of drawing its community of interest maps, negotiate among themselves what those maps ultimately represented AND informed the statewide Unity Maps. We came together moving the needle for many BIPOC communities across the state; particularly for the largest four Native Nations in central MN.

Politicians failed our communities for 6 decades. Now politicians move a bill they believe is “best” for us and our most disenfranchise communities. Politicians, and their allies, define what *We The People* get, and they control the process of deciding what it looks like, who is “overseer” to their process they are comfortable with and to what extent community’s interests are centered. This is exactly why these reforms must come from Minnesotans and not politicians. Co-creating an inclusive democracy doesn’t mean we rely on partisan benevolence. We don’t need benevolence; we need authentic allies and partners working alongside communities AND standing with us. Power doesn’t give up power easily.

Key factors we consider when assessing proposed reforms or making sure our work is aligned with our values are below. **No other bill presented on redistricting meets these to the scope and breadth that HF4593 does.**

- where did the proposed bill language come from,
- whether proposed policies allowed for direct and meaningful participation from impacted Minnesotans, and trusted community voices outside of the traditional stakeholders,
- whether the final bill includes the voice and experiences of impacted Minnesotans,
- whether there is inclusive and equitable representation that is meaningful among those making the decisions on what the bill proposes, and

- whether there is parity in power among those decision makers at the table creating proposed policy.

To our knowledge, having been working in partnership with a network of BIPOC partners, members, allies, and stakeholders since 2018 - The Establishment Bill also being heard today, primarily moves politicians' ideas stemming from the Ohio reform model being informed by the same national partners we've engaged. It also contains minor clarification language from the community's HF4593, the With Us, For Us Redistricting Amendment community bill however nothing meaningful to impacted communities who worked so hard for the past 5yrs to co-create HF4593.

We respectfully ask members of this committee, and Rep. Long, to boldly stand with community members – and statewide Minnesotans, close to 2500 who've already sent written statements in support of the community's bill, and over 300 calling on their senators and representatives to support HF4593 by jumping on as co-authors instead of moving a separate bill.

We respectfully ask you to ally with Rep. Klevorn and Sen. Hawj, Senate Assistant Majority Leader, in co-creating a people not politicians redistricting reform bill that is standalone and meets the legal requirements for a valid constitutional amendment for the 2024 election.

Thank you for your dedication to all Minnesotans as you work in committee.

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