

August 19, 2021

**TO: Committee on Redistricting for Congressional District 5
Rep. Mary Murphy, Chair**

FROM: Larry A. Etkin, 3400 Pleasant Avenue, Minneapolis MN 55408-4334

RE: Public Testimony on coming redistricting

I'm a resident of Minneapolis and have lived continuously in Minnesota since I moved here in 1975 for Graduate School. I identify myself as a "mostly retired" freelance editor, writer and publication designer. I'm 69 years old and I've been civically active since my mid-teens. I'll acknowledge in advance that what I'm about to propose will probably not be well received.

I'd like to take this opportunity to suggest that while the legislature should largely follow the principle of trying to keep "communities" together for **State** Legislative Districts, it should NOT follow those past principles in redistricting for our United States Congressional Representatives.

I advance this viewpoint because I feel that the current practice disadvantages those elected to the so-called outstate congressional districts compared to those elected in the Twin Cities metropolitan region. Because there is obviously a significant travel related burden for those representing outstate districts compared to those for the urban and suburban districts, I would instead suggest that the eight congressional districts be split in somewhat of a pie shaped format radiating out from a central point pegged squarely in the middle of Minneapolis-St. Paul.

If we partition a 360 degree circle around the "central point" I suggest, we might see, for instance, that all eight Minnesota districts can be constructed to include urban, suburban and rural populations. One district radiating through downtown St. Paul might extend out to Stillwater. Another might cut through Roseville and extend right through Duluth and include the Arrowhead region. A third could maybe cut through Brooklyn Park, extend through St. Cloud, and maybe incorporate the International Falls area.

That pattern could be continued through all eight districts providing the dual benefits of somewhat evening out the amounts of physical territory each Representative will need to cover to stay in touch with the communities they represent, AND will likely make all of the districts a lot more competitive, this in lieu of the majority of districts each currently configured to largely guarantee a DFL victor, in urban districts, or a Republican one in those primarily rural.

I know that the kind of district structure I propose would require a lot of lines drawn right through urban and suburban neighborhoods. The practical difficulties of actually determining which blocks, and maybe even which houses on a block go into each district in the scheme I propose, are certainly surmountable with today's computers. They are, after all, going to be employed anyway as each Party attempts to draw those lines to specifically benefit itself.

My scheme would, I believe, instead benefit every Minnesotan. Thank you for your time and attention.