

Redistricting Letter-Worthington

Hola! My family, like many others, moved to Worthington/Nobles County in search of opportunities. My high school looked different for me than it does for my children who attend district 518 and many other school districts in CD1. I feel truly blessed to have my children learn, play and grow with youth and adults from different walks of life. They teach each other words in the various languages, can try foods from different parts of the world, listen to different rhythms, and that truly makes our communities unique. We not only share similar demographics to our neighbors to the eastern part of Southern MN, but we share similar work experiences, living conditions, and transportation issues. Many of the adults in the BIPOC communities work in the ag industry, whether it's in meat packing or farm labor. I urge you to think wisely and listen and read the testimonies of those who live and work here. Sadly, many were not able to attend listening sessions or write a letter because of work, childcare, language, and other common barriers that limit us to be included in these important conversations and decision-making opportunities that we have experienced in school, city, and county. Many of our folks in CD 1 don't work a 9-5 job, but work a 5-5 or a 3-3 job, and that time to take care of self and regroup to present their issues is limited when you only offer an in person hearing in one day with a specific time.

As we all know, many cities in Southern MN are thriving and bringing the economy back into what at one point might have become a ghost town, but the issue is that we are present, we go to school there, play sports there, attend church, shop there, but our voices are not heard. We are not being represented in the school boards, city councils, county commission board, House or Senate seats. It's not because we do not want to be a part of decision making, because many POC have run, but our people's power is being divided by ward and precinct lines. We are not asking this for any party, but so that our shared experiences and needs can be heard because we as a community can move together. We, the community of Worthington, are asking the judges to include us when you are working on the redistricting map. We, Worthington, want to stay in CD1 because we share many commonalities with our Southern MN counterparts. We in Southern MN worked our tails off, door knocking, phone banking, and texting to make sure we did not lose a seat in this state. We understood that if a seat was lost, we in CD1 would be the ones to be spread out or cut in half with our voting power. I ask that you do not split our counties and districts as you would do our communities more harm than good to many Minnesotans. Please note that not all participants felt safe putting their entire names down. But all either live or work in Worthington, MN.

Thank you,

Jessica Velasco
Saleen Thepmontry- Worthington
Vilai Khanya-Worthington
Pamela- student in ISD518
Ms. Mendez-Worthington

Ms. Duron-works in Worthington
Noe Gonzalez-Worthington
Patty Sanchez-Worthington
Boukong Thepmontry-Worthington
Odilia Mendez-Worthington
Rosa Martinez-Worthington
Vilma-Worthington
Adelina-Worthington
Luz-Worthington
Lucia-Worthington
Janet Robles-Worthington
Clara Fuentes-Worthington
Betty Garcia-Worthington
Sna. Lila-Worthington
Sam Cornejo-Worthington
Carmelina-Worthington
Sr. Santos-Worthington
Ann Hua- Worthington
Jake Velasco-Worthington
Sra. Cruzas- Worthington