Summary of Public Hearing
of the
State of Arizona Independent Redistricting Commission

Location: Tucson
Amphitheater High School
Date: June 20, 2001
7:00 p.m.

In Attendance:

Commissioners: Steven W. Lynn
Daniel Elder

Commission Attorneys:
Traci Riccitello, representing Jose Rivera

NDC Staff:
Marguerite Mary Leoni

Twenty-two speakers addressed the Commission at a well-attended hearing and touched upon a variety of topics.

Three speakers urged the Commission to ignore political boundaries and to draw district lines based on geographic boundaries such as mountains, rivers, and roads; one mentioned in particular that River Road, Campbell Avenue, and the Interstate constituted such geographic boundaries.

Two speakers urged that the Amphitheater School District should not be split into separate legislative districts and that the lines of the school district and any new legislative district should be kept identical so far as possible. Another speaker addressed the same issue more comprehensively and argued that the Commission should draw legislative districts along school district lines because “by far the greatest function of the state legislature is . . . the financing of schools. It makes up the largest part of the state’s budget and they have more state statutes dealing with schools than with any other issue.”

Two speakers argued that the creation of a maximum number of competitive districts was more important than the creation of districts reflecting a community of interest. One went so far as to declare: “Find out what most competitive is. Then you can put the other factors in.” Still another urged the Commission to spell out “some baseline definition of what you’re looking for” concerning a community of interest and offer “some discussion as to what constitutes a fair district.”

One speaker reminded the Commission of the urban/rural split in the state and of the need to protect the rural communities from urban domination. One argued that all of Tucson should be included in a single congressional district, and another asked that central Tucson not be divided into several legislative districts: “We’re always at the point where
the pie wedges come together, being flipped back and forth, and it actually demobilizes politics.” Still another argued that “an older neglected part of Tucson” (bounded by “King Road down to Irvington, off the Interstate, over to Campbell”) is a separate community of interest, characterized by a mid-to-low income population, an industrial base, and many small businesses that are struggling.

Another speaker offered several specific impressions of various communities of interest and argued (1) that Sun City and Sun City West should be kept together in the same legislative district, (2) that Saddle Brooke in Pinal County and Rancho Vistosa in Pima County form a community of interest and that the county boundaries separating them should be ignored when district lines are drawn, and (3) that the Rillito River is a significant geographic barrier and that there are significant differences between the people, communities, and interest north and south of the river.

Two speakers urged the Commission to reprint Citizen Input Forms in the state’s newspapers. Another asked that the minority population of the grid districts be made available to the public.

One speaker criticized the Commission for having no minority member; two worried about how the Commission would resolve the Hopi/Navajo question; and one noted that the Tohono O’Odham Nation would have no representation.

Seven speakers asked specific questions of the Commissioners including (1) how they could find out what people were saying at the other public hearings; (2) how the consultant was chosen; (3) whether the Commission could increase the number of legislative districts, given the growth in Arizona’s population, (4) how the grid would be adjusted to take into account the six criteria spelled out in Proposition 106, (5) why there were no numbers on the grid’s legislative and congressional districts, and (6) whether there would be eleven minority legislative districts and three minority congressional districts, given that the state’s minority population is thirty-six percent.

AURs: Undivided Amphitheater School District
School District lines
Undivided Tucson

NOTE: These summaries and excerpts were developed for the Independent Redistricting Commission by its consultant, National Demographics Corporation, and have not been reviewed by the Commission prior to posting. They are not official statements of the Commission and represent only the consultant’s best effort to identify major themes and highlights of each public hearing. The excerpts were chosen by the consultant in an effort to identify common themes and especially noteworthy statements.
These materials are placed here for citizen review and with the hope that they will encourage comments. Comments can be made on the form provided.