

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

**Location:** Sierra Vista  
Sierra Vista Library

**Date:** August 27, 2001  
6:30 p.m.

**In Attendance:**

**Commissioners:**

Steve Lynn, Chairman  
Daniel Elder  
Joshua Hall

**Commission Attorneys:**

Lisa T. Hauser  
Jose Rivera

**NDC Staff:**

Marguerite Leoni

There were 476 persons from Sierra Vista and Cochise County, both residents and public officials, in attendance at Sierra Vista Library. A few residents of Santa Cruz County also attended.

When the meeting commenced, proposed maps of alternative legislative districts including Cochise County had been posted. They were labeled Scenario 2, Scenario 4 and Scenario 5. The maps had been prepared at the direction of the Cochise County Board of Supervisors by Cochise County Informational Technologies Department. The Board had been unable to agree on a single map to present. A brief description of each map follows:

Scenario 2: Cochise County, Graham (southern portion defined by the boundary of the Indian Reservation), Greenlee (southern portion defined by the Indian Reservation), and a portion of Pinal County including Mammoth in order to balance population.

Scenario 4: Cochise County, Santa Cruz County, and the Tohono O'odham reservation.

Scenario 5: Cochise County with Sierra Vista split in the area of Fort Huachuca, the southern portion of Santa Cruz County including Nogales, and the Tohono O'odham reservation.

Demographic data was presented with the scenarios. According to that data, Scenarios 4 and 5 would most likely be majority-minority districts, although NDC could not confirm this during the meeting.

The maps were presented by the Chair of the Board of Supervisors, who also presented numerous letters and resolutions of Cochise County public entities which support a district keeping Cochise County intact in a single district. Another speaker in favor of Scenario 2 noted that the Commission's deference to the proponents of the EACO district conflicted with the desires of the residents of Cochise County. Yet another speaker supported Scenario 2 with an amendment to exclude the portion of Pinal County and include the Hispanic portions of Santa Cruz County.

Some speakers expressed puzzlement at why the residents of southern Graham and Greenlee Counties wished to be together in the EACO district. The commissioners invited them to attend the hearing in Thatcher to learn more about the desires of these residents.

The presenter of Scenarios 4 and 5, a Cochise County Supervisor for District 2 and a former State Representative for District 8, described the community of interests represented by these scenarios and emphasized border issues and commerce issues, among others. Scenario 5 includes the Nogales portion of Santa Cruz County. He noted that this scenario protects minority voting rights because it is a majority-minority district. He also noted that northern Santa Cruz County residents prefer to be with southern Pima County. In this scenario, some Fort Huachuca precincts are included with southern Pima County. He noted that this configuration has the support of some people and increases representation in the Legislature for Cochise County. He stated that Scenarios 4 and 5 are under discussion with the affected Native American groups, the Tohono O'odham and the Pasqua Yaqui.

Another former legislator presented a map similar to Scenario 5 and recommended that the IRC review racial block voting data in determining the proper configuration for a district including Cochise County. He noted that his proposed district and Scenario 5 will not cause "retrogression" and enables southern Arizona to continue to elect a Hispanic representative.

Although a few persons spoke in opposition, three key themes emerged from the meeting:

1. Cochise County, including Sierra Vista, should be united in one district.
2. The extension of that district into Maricopa County and to include Indian reservations was inconsistent with the interests and experience of the county.
3. Cochise County is best united with the southern portions of Graham and Greenlee Counties and whatever territory in south eastern Pinal County necessary to balance population.

On this last point, a show of hands was requested by Chairman Lynn about which map was favored by those present, Scenario 2 or the Scenario 4/5 configuration (because of

their similarities, these two maps were treated together). Those in attendance overwhelmingly supported Scenario 2 both in the show of hands and in the public commentary.

Comments on proposed District W in the Draft Legislative Plan emphasized the lack of community of Sierra Vista with Tucson, the lack of community of Cochise County with interests in Pinal County and Maricopa County, the inexperience of Cochise County government in dealing with issues pertaining to Native American Reservations, the extreme difficulty and expense of campaigning in such a district, the near impossibility of representing the diverse interests included in the proposed district, and the extreme difficulty of citizens becoming involved in government issues because of the distance spanned by proposed District W.

The comments also emphasized the community of interests among Cochise, Graham and Greenlee Counties including, among others, mining, agricultural and ranching issues, border management issues, water run-off and flooding issues and programs, school attendance patterns, patterns for provision of medical care, and the need to secure social services.

There was little comment about proposed Congressional District 8. One speaker believed it was gerrymandered; another noted that the current incumbent would be safe there; and yet another felt that although not ideal, District 8 was workable for Cochise County.

Speakers who characterized the Proposed District 8 as “gerrymandered” distinguished the exclusion of the Hopi from proposed Congressional District A as responsive to the desires of that tribe.

**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.