

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

**Location:** Mesa  
Mesa Community College

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

**In Attendance:**

**Commissioners:** Steve Lynn, Chairman  
Andrea Minkoff, Vice Chairman  
Daniel Elder  
Joshua Hall  
James R. Huntwork

**Commission Attorneys:**  
Lisa T. Hauser  
Jose Rivera

**NDC Staff:**  
Florence Adams  
Marguerite Leoni

A total of 196 persons attended the meeting at Mesa Community College and 34 of them presented to the Commission.

In one way or another, twenty speakers addressed the issue of dividing Tempe – whether or not it should be divided, at what line, and with what effects on competitiveness. There was some remaining sentiment for keeping Tempe in one district and for recognizing that it is a uniquely diverse community that should be kept together. Others, however, dismissed this as a ploy by incumbents to reassure their re-election. The great majority of speakers endorsed the two-district approach, some stating that north and south Tempe are not only different communities, but that “you can’t get to north Tempe from south Tempe.” In terms of the appropriate dividing line, most speakers wanted to return to “the map of August 10” with U.S. 60 as the dividing line between a northern and a southern district. A substantial minority, however, expressed satisfaction with the dividing line in the current draft map and asked that it be kept the way it is.

Competitiveness was discussed by several speakers, both in the context of the appropriate division of Tempe and more generally concerning the State. Most speakers urged the Commission to improve on the competitiveness of the draft districts. Heavy partisan majorities, according to some, produce an ideological skewing and prevent voters from being able to act on issues such as education and transportation. One speaker, commenting on the question of majority-minority districts, said that there could not be enough of them to produce real clout on a statewide basis and that it would be as much in the interest of minorities to have more competitive districts as it would for the State as a

whole. More generally, several speakers said that competitive districts would help to remedy voter apathy. On the other side of this issue, however, there were comments that Proposition 106 had established different priorities, that communities of interest are not balanced in partisan terms, that residents surely knew the partisan bias of their communities when they chose to live in them, and that political self-interest may be behind the push for competitiveness.

Six persons from Chandler, including the Mayor, expressed satisfaction with the draft Congressional and legislative districts, noting a strong preference for division between two districts, one of which the City would dominate while exerting significant influence in the other. There was agreement, also, that Dobson Road is the correct dividing line. The fear they expressed was that future adjustment by the Commission could produce unwanted change in this ideal arrangement.

The President of the Ahwatukee Foothills Chamber and Ahwatukee Foothills Planning Committee said that Ahwatukee's primary goal – to remain whole – had been met; but, that if any change had to be made, the Kyrene School District should be kept together.

A representative of the City Council of Apache Junction expressed satisfaction that the Commission had kept the City in one district, but regretted the linkage so far to the south with Cochise County. He advocated unification of Pinal County.

A representative of the City of Mesa, expressing satisfaction with both the draft congressional and legislative maps, noted the hope that the final product would remain substantially the same. One Mesa resident spoke: he recognized the necessity of dividing Mesa because of its large population; but urged that in future drafts of the legislative plan, the splits of that city not be made any smaller than they are now, the smallest being about 38,000 persons. In fact, he felt that this split and one of about 40,000 persons could be made slightly larger in order not to diminish Mesa's influence in the districts among which it is divided."

**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.