

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

Location: Florence
Florence City Hall

Date: September 8, 2001
3:00 p.m.

In Attendance:

Commissioners: Steve Lynn, Chairman
Andrea Minkoff, Vice Chairman
Daniel Elder

Commission Attorneys:
Lisa T. Hauser
Jose Rivera

NDC Staff:
Alan Heslop

Twenty-eight persons addressed the Commission at a meeting at Florence City Hall.

Testimony was nearly unanimous that Pinal County should be kept whole. The point was made repeatedly that this County has the population to deserve its own legislative district; and some speakers commented that, if the map had been drawn beginning with Pinal County, it would never have been split up. The most graphic presentation of this view was that Pinal County is "tired of being the pie from which every hungry, gluttonous district from Phoenix, Tucson, Maricopa, Pima Counties grab a slice." In previous years, one speaker claimed, the County had suffered from fragmentation, with its different communities relating to centers outside the County; but now, the County has become more cohesive.

Many suggestions were offered, however, for adding areas to Pinal County or subtracting from it. Thus, several speakers (including two residents of Gila County) emphasized the desirability of linkage between Pinal and Gila counties. They claimed that there is a community of interest between southern Gila County and communities in Pinal County; and there were references to cooperation between the two counties in the Central Arizona Governmental Alliance. There was disagreement over whether or not the Tohono O'odham population and the four metro tribes should be linked to Pinal County. A representative from Casa Grande, indicating that the first priority was the unification of Casa Grande itself, followed by the unification of western Pinal County, re-submitted a map for a legislative district for the County as a whole.

A supervisor of Maricopa County, representing the Minority Coalition for Fair Redistricting, said that there had been a statewide meeting before the Commission's hearing at which the Coalition had agreed to submit maps at the Commission's hearing in

Glendale on September 12. The maps will provide for "more competitive districts without adversely affecting communities of interest," "keep complete the nine strong minority districts" and also "keep Pinal County as whole as possible." Several other speakers, including representatives of the Arizona Community Forum, endorsed the Coalition's approach. The Coalition will submit the maps to the Commission in electronic form.

The lack of competitiveness was mentioned by several speakers, both in general terms (as undermining the two-party system) and specifically in connection with draft Congressional district C. An unsuccessful Congressional candidate spoke of the difficulty of running in a district that is not so extensive and warned that the draft district would sacrifice grassroots politics to electronic campaigning. He submitted a map of a district that he said would be significantly smaller, more compact, and more competitive over the course of the coming decade. The proposed district would yield large portions of Yavapai County (excepting the Verde Valley) to draft district A; it would make up the lost population from the rural areas of Maricopa County (in places where there is little prospect of development). Such a district, he claimed, would remain rural and be free from domination by Maricopa County. Indeed, he suggested that even if all of Mohave County were transferred to draft district A, and further compensating portions of rural Maricopa County were added to draft district C, the latter would still be more than 70 percent rural and would not be dominated by Maricopa.

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.