

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

Location: Yuma, Arizona

Date: June 11, 2001

In Attendance:

Commissioners: Andrea Minkoff, Vice Chairman

Commission Attorneys: Jose Rivera

NDC Staff: Florence Adams, Alan Heslop, Marion Porch

Without exception, citizens who spoke at this hearing supported plans for new districts that would keep Yuma County intact. The audience also gave every sign of sympathy with this position.

Many speakers emphasized the close economic and social ties that constitute a Yuma County community of interest. Among the ties cited were: common agricultural interests; border problems, developments and opportunities (NAFTA and trade with Mexico, immigration, maquiladoras); Colorado River water rights and other water issues; Yuma County's important and growing Hispanic community (which has only recently begun to exercise electoral muscle); Department of Defense installations; and the integrity of County-based irrigation districts. There was unanimity on the importance of respecting Yuma County as an undivided community of interest in the design of both legislative and Congressional districts.

Because Yuma County's census population falls slightly short of the ideal population of a legislative district, several speakers recognized the need to identify possible areas for addition to the County. The majority opinion was that IRC should "consider other border communities rather than to take in Mojave County." The rationale for this request was the importance of recognizing "the communities of interest along the International Boundary." The view was also expressed that the IRC should "consider the Colorado River as the growth engine to Arizona and form a district as it goes up the River to hopefully take care of the River and protect Arizona's natural resource;" but the same speaker also urged creation of three Border districts. Another speaker identified "a natural community of interest between Yuma and La Paz County." Yet another speaker suggested that a community of interest could be maintained "either along the Colorado River or along the southern border because we have both of those interests."

The importance of keeping Yuma County whole in the development of new districts was the overriding concern of this hearing.

AURs: Yuma County

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.