

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

Location: Nogales
Santa Cruz County Board Room

Date: August 28, 2001
6:30 p.m.

In Attendance:

Commissioners: Steve Lynn, Chairman
Daniel Elder
Joshua Hall

Commission Attorneys:
Lisa T. Hauser
Jose Rivera

NDC Staff: Alan Heslop

There were 168 persons in attendance at the Nogales meeting, and several of the speakers had attended the meeting of the Commission at Sierra Vista on the previous evening; and a major focus of comment was on the alternative concepts for linking Cochise County to Graham and Greenlee counties to the north or to Santa Cruz County on the west. Three maps – scenarios 2, 4, and 5 – were cited. There was near unanimity that scenario 5 was the best approach: it provides for a legislative district that links Cochise County, the southern portion of Santa Cruz County and then westward to the Tohono O’odham Nation. The north-south split of Santa Cruz County featured in scenario 5 also drew general approval.

Among those endorsing scenario 5, one speaker opposed “the break-up of border communities:” he asserted that southern Santa Cruz County wished association with such border communities, not with Tucson, while the northern portions of the County preferred linkage to Pima County. Another speaker, explicitly supporting the two-district approach in Santa Cruz County, explained that the County can never dominate a single district and that, therefore, it is better to have influence in two for lobbying purposes. Some speakers noted that scenario 5 would create a new majority-minority district (and that scenario 2 would not) while also reflecting the community of interest and issue needs of the border. Two speakers from northern areas of Santa Cruz County also welcomed the two-district approach, emphasizing their community of interest with Pima rather than Cochise County. Even the author of scenario 4 suggested that the political support for scenario 5 was decisive; and he noted that the linkage between Cochise County and the southern portions of Greenlee and Graham counties was essentially unworkable because the latter two counties were opposed to it. The close cooperation among the SEAGO

counties was mentioned by several speakers and support and official resolutions favoring scenario 5 were cited.

There was discussion of the need to improve competitiveness in the draft districts, with some speakers suggesting that competitiveness should be a top priority, but with others indicating that it should be ranked behind the representation of minorities and community of interest. One speaker suggested that the nature of politics in the area was such that even in districts with substantial minority populations and Democratic majorities, there was genuine competition that sometimes permitted the election of Republicans.

One speaker opposed the congressional district lines for the areas and, noting the very small population of Santa Cruz County, suggested that it be united in a single congressional district. Even he, however, gave support to the two-district approach at the legislative level.

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.