

Excerpts From the Independent Redistricting Commission Public Hearing at the Heard Museum in Phoenix, AZ: August 30, 2001

1. Chairperson Nora Helton: "Non-Indians oftentimes view tribes as special interest groups that share commonalities while federal and state governments remain public and state entities. We have sovereign rights, and as such, we each act to protect them sufficiently from infringement on national and international levels."
2. Gary Bohnee: "The first principle is to, if at all possible, in Legislative redistricting, keep the four metro tribes together.... The current Legislative District W does include the four metro tribes: Salt River, Gila River, Ak-Chin and Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation. The other principle, if at all possible, ...is to keep, as much as possible, the communities of interest intact."
3. Gary Bohnee: "Perhaps the Commission could consider moving south instead of southeast, but southwest, in that the goal would be, at least from the communities of interest perspective,...to keep not only the four metro tribes together, and many parts of Pinal County, which would include a large number of Hispanic groups in Pinal County, the Hispanic population, perhaps look at picking up the Tohono O'odham Nation as well. That's a significant community of interest in terms of the cultural ties that we share with the Tohono O'odham Nation, as well as other communities I just mentioned."
4. Chairman Wayne Taylor, Jr.: "First of all, the Hopi Tribe wholeheartedly supports the Independent Commission redrafted Congressional map from the Commission,.... We strongly oppose the Hopi Tribe in the same Legislative District as the Navajo Nation."
5. Frank Seanez: "Currently, there is a contiguousness achieved for Congressional District A, which is obtained only through a total abandonment of the compactness standard. The linkage of Hopi Tribal land base of including less than 7,000 Hopi individuals is achieved only through a hundred mile and over two-sided vertebrae of corridor which simply does not meet the compactness standard."
6. Frank Seanez: "The current Legislative District, Legislative District Three, bench mark plan, infused with 2000 Census data, contains a Native American voting age population of 70.5 percent. Under the current proposed Legislative District A, that would be reduced to 60 percent. That is, again, a 10 percent drop in Native American voting strength. The Navajo Nation remains extremely concerned that that kind of drop would not sustain itself against a challenge under Section Two of the Voting Rights Act and even under a Section 5 pre-review by the United States Department of Justice."

"The Navajo Nation maintains inclusion of both the San Carlos Apache Tribe and White Mountain Apache Tribe in the same Legislative District as proposed by the Navajo Nation and as supported by resolution of the Tribal Council of the White Mountain Apache Tribe is necessary to bring the Legislative District within the same numbers as

are contained now within the bench mark plan, Legislative Three, as infused with Census 2000 data."

7. Frank Seanez: "There is no indication whatsoever, no statistical information presented, to my knowledge, nor generated by the Commission, nor consultants, which indicates the Hopi vote is in any way different than the Navajos."

8. Louise Benson, Chairwoman Hualapai Nation: "Looking at the maps, proposed maps, you can see the Hualapai, Havasupai up in the northwest. The Hualapai, a bigger tribe from the Havasupai and Kaibab. In -- I think in the Legislative, we were always split. But it looks like both the Congressional and Legislative areas that are proposed, C and A, I think it includes my whole reservation now. We really don't have objections to that. I think that that will work for us."

9. David G. Ramirez, Vice Chairman, Pascua Yaqui Tribe: "The tribe objects to the district plan. The proposed alignment violates the spirit, if not the word, of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Specifically, the proposed map divides the community of the tribe into four different districts, thus leaving the members of the tribe with less opportunity than the members of the electorate to participate in the political process and elect representatives of choice. Members of the tribe live in four areas of the metropolitan Tucson area: in Pascua Pueblo, in south Tucson, in Marana, and the area which has come to be known as Old Pascua. The proposed map places each of these communities in distinct districts."

10. David G. Ramirez, Vice Chairman, Pascua Yaqui Tribe: "I don't have the numbers with me. Old Pascua, close to 300 members. In the South Tucson area, about 150 members. And Young Pueblo in Marana, about a hundred members."

11. Ivan Makil, President of the Salt River Indian Community. "We are unique because of our location, and we have, because of the growth around us in the metropolitan area, and having to respond to more urban issues than many other tribes, many of our issues relate to transportation corridors...utility corridors. We have common boundary issues with almost every one of the surrounding jurisdictions that I mentioned, joint projects, both federal and local projects.... So most of our issues are urban issues. Therefore, it's what our interest is, and again, respecting the idea of working together with tribes, it is that we need to be in District E as opposed to District C, and for the reasons that I just mentioned on the Congressional side. On the Legislative side, we believe that the position can be maintained in District W.

12. Ivan Makil, President of the Salt River Indian Community. "We probably have -- while we have issues and agreements with the Mesa portion, part of what our growth is telling us is that we have even more issues, particularly with the City of Scottsdale, particularly because we have extensive interaction with them on our western and northern boundaries. And that is good and both negative and positive. But it is important for us to be able to work out whatever those issues come about, especially Congressionally, with the city."

13. Edward D. Manuel, Chairman. "From the Tohono O'odham Nation, we don't have a problem the way it is drafted. The only thing not included on the nation lands is the San Tano Districts up in Gila Bend. While we knew there would be a problem with it anyway, because its so far off the nation's land, with so many speakers, while it violates the Florence community, we've never had the Florence community in with us in our history before, so that's good.... On the Legislative District, the way it's drafted is fine. But I'm hearing that there is another draft floating around somewhere about changing the south eastern corner of Arizona, which is W, into -- pulling it into Y. We would have a problem if that happened. We would prefer what Gila River proposed earlier, from Mr. Bohnee, that he stated that he would prefer that we be included as part of their district, which if a change, should be a change at the northern portion, because we have a lot in common with the Gila River and the Ak-Chin Tribe. In fact, we culturally were the same, the Tohono O'odham Tribes. We have a lot in common with them but don't have anything in common with the southeastern portion of the state. So we would object to that."

14. Dallas Massey, Sr., Tribal Chairman, White Mountain Apache Tribe. "As we look, we ask you to look again at the borders of the Northeast Congressional District which in the past is Apache land. Historically, we have shared Congressional representatives with all Phoenix metropolitan tribes. We are concerned about the new disconnection between Apache lands, the Gila River, and Ak-Chin Native American communities. It is the position of the White Mountain Apache Tribe there exists commonalities shared between our tribes. We also agree with the Navajo Nation, their proposal about keeping Indian tribes together, the San Carlos, White Mountain Apache Tribe Legislative Districts."

15.. Herb Yazzie, Yavapai Apache Nation, attorney presenting the Chairman of the Yavapai Apache Nation. "We wish to be in the same district as the other Apache Nations and the other Indian Nations in northern and Central Arizona. The nations is also concerned that all of its five parcel lands and lands it owns in Verde Valley be kept in the same Legislative District. We mention this because proposed boundaries of both Congressional District C and state Legislative C are very near to the nation's lands. We urge you maintain the nation in the same districts if you make further changes in the process."

Tom LaPahe, Navajo Nation Council Delegate: "I'm a member of the Navajo Nation Council, representing two communities. I live immediately north of the Hopi Reservation.... Our leadership, both tribes, we have differing views. Our children go to the same schools, share the same health care outlets and food outlets. Currently, today, with so many inter-tribal marriages taking place, I feel the Commission should put us in the same Legislative and Congressional Districts."

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

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