

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

Location: Phoenix
Heard Museum

Date: August 30, 2001
1:00 p.m.

In Attendance:

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

Commission Attorneys:
Jose Rivera

NDC Staff: Florence Adams
Marguerite Leoni

Eight-four persons attended the meeting at the Heard Museum and fourteen representatives of Native American tribes addressed the Commission. The chairperson of the Fort Mojave Indian Tribe expressed support for their inclusion in draft congressional district C and draft legislative District B. A representative of the Gila River Community said that the Metro tribes should be kept together and that draft legislative district W does so; but he suggested the possible advantage of linkage in Pinal County with Hispanic populations and the Tohono O'odham Nation, with which his community shares a significant commonality.

The chairman of the Hopi Tribe, although expressing support for the draft Congressional map, strongly opposed inclusion of his tribe in the same legislative district as the Navajo Nation. Noting the unique culture of the Hopi, he said that draft District A would permit the Navajo voice to drown out the Hopi voice, leading to unfair and ineffective representation of his tribe. The Governor of the Village of the Upper Moenkopi asked for inclusion in the same legislative district as the Hopi. A member of the Hopi Tribal Council traced the history of the Hopi lands from the 19th century through the 1996 Navajo Settlement Act.

The attorney for the Navajo Nation, citing the elongated neck made necessary in the Congressional draft by exclusion of the Hopi from the Navajo area, said that the district involved a total abandonment of the compactness standard. He charged that the separation would fail to assist the Hopi and their voting strength, since it would result in their inclusion in a district with a small percentage of Native American population. He repeated the Navajo Nation's continuing strong support for the legislative district that they had proposed, noting that the benchmark requirement was for a population of 75 percent Native Americans in the district. Draft legislative district A, however, has a

Native American population of only 65 percent and, therefore, would be subject to challenge under the Voting Rights Act. He further noted the Navajo Nation's recommendation to include the whole of Apache County, including the White Mountain Apache Reservation and the San Carlos Reservation, within the same legislative district; and he suggested that only their inclusion would make it possible to achieve the benchmark standard. The chief of staff in the office of the Speaker of the Navajo Nation noted that the Native American tribes share the same issue concerns of roads and schools.

The Chairwoman of the Hualapai Nation gave general support to their inclusion in draft Congressional district C and draft legislative district A; but she also endorsed the Hopi request.

The Vice-Chairman of the Pasqua Yaqui Tribe said that the draft legislative map violates the spirit of the Voting Rights Act by separating the lands of his tribe among four legislative districts.

The President of the Salt River Indian Community said that his tribe is centered in the Phoenix Metropolitan area; thus, its urban concerns (such as transportation and utility corridors) bring them into cooperative projects with the surrounding jurisdictions. He suggested, therefore that the tribe be located with Scottsdale in the Congressional plan.

The Chairman of the Tohono O'odham Nation accepted that there might be a problem, given the distance from the main reservation, in including the San Tano lands in the same district. He warned against linkage of the Tohono O'odham with the southeastern corner of the State. Noting strong cultural links with the Gila River and Ak-Chin tribes, he said that there was no community of interest with the southeast.

The chairman of the White Mountain Apache Tribe, noting that historically they have shared Congressional representation with the Phoenix Metropolitan tribes, expressed concern over the disconnection with the Gila River and Ak-Chin tribes with which they have community of interest. He supported the Navajo Nation's proposal for keeping Indian tribes together. A representative of the Yavapai Apache Nation said that his concern, also, was to keep as many of the Indian communities as possible in the same Congressional district; that his tribe wished to be in the same district as the other Apache Nations; and that the lands owned by the Tribe in the Verde Valley be kept in the same legislative district.

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.