

Excerpts From the Independent Redistricting Commission Public Hearing at the City Council Chambers, Flagstaff, AZ, September 6, 2001

1. Jed Jorgenson: "District C is a perfect example of what I'm talking about. Currently, District C is the most competitive district on the map. Because District C contains most of Yavapai County, it may not remain competitive for more than four to six years. Yavapai County is one of the fastest growing counties in our state. Currently there are almost twice as many Republicans in the County as Democrats. If current growth trends continue, Yavapai county alone could change the competitiveness of District C, much as we saw the competitiveness of District 6 change in the last ten years."

2. Jed Jorgenson: "I support moving most of Yavapai County, with the exception of Verde Valley, into District A. District A is already overwhelmingly Republican, so Yavapai's growth will not change the competitiveness of that district. Keeping the Verde Valley in District C helps to ensure that the votes of Tribal communities located there will not be diluted. I have several suggestions for regaining the population lost to District A. First, I suggest moving the Fort Mojave Reservation out of District A and into District C. I would also suggest incorporating the tribes of the Gila River Reservation and the mining communities of Eastern Pinal County, District G, into C. District G, which is currently bullet proof for a Democrat, might be able to recoup some of its population lost from District A without significantly changing the competitiveness of either district."

3. Alan Everett, Mayor of Sedona: "As a community of interest, I think Sedona, I won't speak for all of Verde Valley, but a large majority of Verde Valley is considered associated with the Flagstaff area. Of course, that's the way you have it right now. I'd like to see it continue that way."

4. Alan Everett, Mayor of Sedona: "Now, I live in Yavapai County. I do know that there's a situation on the other side of the mountain which you heard a lot about last evening, I'm sure, that's to get the Tri-cities back together. I would also support that. I think that can be done just by moving maybe three communities. If you moved Prescott Valley into, I think, it's District B, move Bullhead City into District A, and Kingman into District C, which, and Kingman would be tied with the Flagstaff Verde Valley area, . and Bullhead City tied with the Northern District, and you would have the Tri-Cities still all together there."

5. Bruce Green: "If I read your maps you projected correctly, my precinct, as a precinct committee person, my precinct is split in half in two Congressional Districts or a Legislative District. That's just a precinct that takes in from the north of the railroad, just south of the tracks railroad, to kind of over here on the old town, south of the railroad tracks, and the north end of the university. The way you guys are using Route 66, my precinct is in two pieces with two -- you go to the same precinct and are voting in two separate ballots. Talk about great inefficiency on fine lines. Cut any piece of Flagstaff out from any other piece of Flagstaff, it has to be a worse idea."

6. Bill Reilly: "While new districts will be formed, there needs to be a greater emphasis in two areas. The first being federal trust land being utilized as Indian reservations, and the second being a setting aside of rural Arizona from heavily populated urban areas such as Phoenix and Tucson."

7. Bill Reilly: "While Arizona is fast becoming a second or third home to many out-of-state residents, it is also becoming a service-oriented economic base for rural residents. Present laws developed and voted on by city dwellers make rural residents unable to develop their own identity and economic base, whether ranching, timber harvesting, or a multitude of other industries that would better serve rural dwellers. Rural Arizonans and the Indian Nations need their own unique representation."

8. Teri Grier: "The Chamber Board of Directors would like to ask the Commission to support both the Congressional and Legislative draft redistricting maps.... I have to say in looking at the proposals, my heart started skipping a couple of beats because I really believed had the citizenry of Flagstaff known tonight you meant to have Flagstaff split, you'd see three times the number of people here tonight."

9. Teri Grier: "Both the Congressional and the Legislative districts should preserve areas of similar interest recognized through cooperative interests. Flagstaff, Verde Valley, and the Red Rock country are closely tied to tourism and economic development. Flagstaff, Williams, and Sedona have a cooperative development. Flagstaff could funnel tourism through an area of tourism as a driving force for the northern Arizona economy, which is important for the Commission to keep in mind."

10. Bill Cherry: "I would argue very strongly for keeping all of Coconino County intact and argue with the Navajo Reservation we approach, we're just somewhat over the ideal of 171,000 roughly ideal for a district. The non-reservation population of Coconino County is 93,000 and reservation residents are a little over 104,000. However, the Mayor of Sedona pointed out their affinity with Verde Valley, and Verde Valley being closer to the Tri-Cities, which is a larger city than Flagstaff, and they are closer to, it's one of the places to find closer more parity and the numbers you need. I'd also suggest if let the Havasupai and Hualapai tell you, they are people of the river and have more affinity with the river and are not people of the desert.... To not have Flagstaff and the Navajo Nation in the same Legislative District, I'm speaking Legislative District, would disenfranchise 11,000 people from that Legislative District. Ecologically we are linked to the Nation, Navajo Nations, all in Coconino County. When you get down off the high mountain here, you're essentially in a high desert community."

11. Rita Johnson: "My concern with the Congressional District is that it is unrealistically large, an impossibility, I believe, for a representative to fairly represent, to visit with the individuals and communities across that district. I think it would be a nightmare."

12. Jack Doggett: "Taking the university, split it from the center of government, that's shocking and unacceptable. You'll hear a lot about Flagstaff's community of interest. We're quite unified and can't imagine anyone disagreeing. I believe we're much like Ms. Johnson said, much more tightly tied to the Reservations and Mogollon Rim. We're tourism first, surrounded by the national parks, forest, and national lands, if you assume that the Navajo and Hopi Reservations are classified as federal lands. With all due respect to the Mayor of Sedona, I disagree about the Verde Valley community of interest. We have many, many different issues, substantially different patterns of growth. Someone could characterize the Verde Valley as being more of a sprawling type development simply because they have land. Certainly there are different water issues."

13. Joan McClelland: "Verde is the beginning of tourism for the whole area and all other areas of the community which are as involved as Sedona, Flagstaff and Grand Canyon. It all starts together, the Verde and Flagstaff. You've done, I think, a really good job recognizing the community of interest when you put the Verde in with Flagstaff.... Even though I don't live there, I consider Tri-City an area that should not be split."

14. Carlos Taylor: "In a nutshell, I take issue with draft Legislative C and would recommend instead you look at a unified Coconino County combined with the adjacent Reservation. Draft Legislative District C is detrimental to the greater Flagstaff area. It does not reflect a community of interest. In fact, it severs the natural economic, environmental, historical, and physical entity that exists north of the Mogollon Rim.... The proposal fractures both Coconino and Yavapai Counties. Flagstaff, the county seat of Coconino County, is separated from much of the county. The division of existing political entities would put a representative in a bind with the likely result that Flagstaff's representation would fall short. The educational system is chopped up at a time when we are making strides in collaboratively sharing resources and addressing the needs of northern Arizona. Economically, Flagstaff is closely linked with the Grand Canyon. The Grand Canyon is the economic engine for most of this region. This plan severs this historic and economically crucial link. Flagstaff has a historic, cultural and commercial relationship with the reservations to the north. Approximately one-fifth of Flagstaff's population is Native American, and over one-fourth of Flagstaff's retail business is attributable to the reservations. Flagstaff shares water interests with the lands to the north and northeast."

15. Peggy Toomey: "This current draft that we are looking at fractures both Coconino County, cuts Flagstaff out of Grand Canyon, and the Native Americans north both of which are crucial for the economy and county. Its not competitive and does not serve the best interests of Arizona or Northern Arizona."

16. Linda Stratton: "One reason that I liked the June map better is Coconino County unified. I thought then Coconino County would have a stronger political voice. I was happy. I have to say that this now, happy the map did not combine Flagstaff in the same Legislative District with the Mojave County communities of Kingman, Bullhead as experienced before in that Legislative District which had some real differences of interest."

17. Supervisor Liz Archuleta: "First of all, in regards to the Legislative Districts, the Havasupai Tribe has expressed to us a desire to be located in same Legislative District as Flagstaff and Williams. With the population of the Havasupai precinct totaling 505, it appears given the relatively small population, this request could be accommodated if the Commission chooses to do this. We recommend the entire Havasupai precinct be moved from Legislative District A to C rather than moving a portion of the precinct. In the Board's original position paper to the Independent Redistricting Commission, concern was conveyed over Coconino County being included in a district that would also include any Phoenix Metropolitan area. In reviewing maps, it appears the Legislative District does not extend into the Phoenix area, and we appreciate that."

18. Kris Waite: "In reviewing the maps, it appears to us that the proposed Legislative boundary between districts A and C don't match the precinct boundaries we have for the Grand Canyon and Tusayan area. We couldn't determine if this was intentional because of population or if this was just a mismatch or error in data. We are concerned if it is not corrected, that it would create confusion and inconvenience for voters in this area. We estimate there are about 240 residents that would be affected by this mismatch in the boundary lines. There is another similar mismatch in lines down in the Fernwood precinct along the eastern boundary with the Leupp precinct. We would appreciate you taking a second look at that. Finally, another proposed legislative boundary creates a split for residents in the Leupp precinct, specifically, the area north of I-40. The proposed map shows the boundary following the Navajo Nation boundary rather than the existing precinct boundary. Given the relatively small number of residents in this area, approximately 50 people, we would recommend the Legislative boundary follow the existing precinct boundary between Leupp precinct and Flagstaff 20, I-40. A lot of that is the distance these people have to travel to vote."

19. Supervisor Archuleta: "In formulating the Board's original position paper to the Commission, concern was conveyed over Coconino County being included in a district that would include of the Phoenix metropolitan area. The proposed Congressional plan includes an area northeast of Scottsdale encompassing the Fort McDowell and Yavapai Nation. And in terms of a Congressional District, the Board of Supervisors, we had considerable discussion about it, and we certainly would like for it to be a rural district. We'd like for it to be more compact. But at the same time, we, once again, want to stress we want a district that would not include the Phoenix Metropolitan area."

20 Kris Waite: "Coconino County questions the logic in creating a path (from the Hopi) of Census blocks and wonders if it would not make more sense to use other features, such as roads, highways, and interstates, to create that path."

21. Ruben Jauregui, Mayor of Cottonwood: "I'm here tonight to thank the members of the Commission for actually listening to the concerns of Verde Valley in keeping us whole. One of our main concerns, we urge you to keep us whole. We urge you to keep us in a district with Flagstaff and Sedona."

22. Representative C. H. Johnson: "So we do not want to be in any district, be it Legislative or Congressional, which is controlled by the Navajo people. And also, I think that the criteria you should follow is common interests. Common interests is very important to these districts. The Hopi Tribe has more common interests with Coconino County, particularly Flagstaff, than with anybody else. We recently purchased 340,000 acres in Coconino County. That's of great interest to us. We hope that eventually that will become part of the Hopi Reservation. As at some point, the Hopi Reservation will extend into Coconino County. And that would become part of C in the proposed maps. We also purchased two malls in Flagstaff. So we have some great economic interest in the City of Flagstaff. And we recently bought a motel in Sedona, so we do have some interest in Sedona."

23. Frank Seanez: "The Congressional District, which is currently proposed, is not compact insofar as it contains a gerrymander that is created solely to allow the Hopi Tribe to exit its natural community of interest, its adjoining land base, the community which it shares in Northern Arizona with the rest of Northern Arizona in order to be attached to, to an urban and very dissimilar community. The Commission heard down in Phoenix at the Heard Museum last week the wish of the Salt River Community to be joined in a Congressional District with what they consider to be a closer community of interest with Maricopa County. Surprisingly, the numbers which are involved in a switch between the Salt River Community and the Hopi Tribe, including the ostrich neck corridor, is approximately the same number, approximately 7,000 individuals. The inclusion of the Hopi Nation within the Congressional District, which also includes the Navajo Nation, would join people who have much more in common than they do in dispute. And, the Navajo Nation continues to advocate for that.... With regards to the Legislative District, the Navajo Nation is pleased to see the Commission still being open to different ideas which are necessary to increase the Native American population within the proposed district to somewhere close to the percentage which is now contained in the last legally enforceable plan, that being the 1993 Legislative District as it means to the 2000 Census numbers."

24. Scott Canty: "There was a case recently, Dawavinwa vs. Salt River Project, and in this case, the federal district court decided that based upon national origin arguments. It was possible that one tribe could discriminate against another tribe based on national origin. The court went back and looked at the case Chief Justice Marshall wrote in 1832, the Wirster vs. State of Georgia case. In that Justice Marshall pointed out Indian Nations always considered as distinct, Indian political communities. Note, he didn't say all Indian Nations are together a political community. He said they individually are distinct, independent political communities of retaining their original natural rights. That principle has survived to today. The principle Hopis are arguing today and continue to argue in the future."

25. Stacie Wagner: "The size of District C makes it impossible for a Congressman to effectively represent the district and provide services to it of all areas of the district. District C is roughly twice the size of District Six, and persons in District Six rarely see their Congressman now. They'll rarely see their Congressperson. They'll have very little in common. People in the western area have very little in common with the eastern area, especially along the river."

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.

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