

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

**Location:** Flagstaff  
Flagstaff City Hall

**Date:** September 6, 2001  
6:30 p.m.

**In Attendance:**

**Commissioners:** Steve Lynn, Chairman  
Daniel Elder  
Joshua Hall

**Commission Attorneys:**  
Lisa T. Hauser  
Jose Rivera

**NDC Staff:**  
Florence Adams  
Marguerite Leoni

Twenty-three persons addressed the Commission at the meeting at Flagstaff City Hall.

Although most speakers affirmed the importance of keeping all of Coconino County and, in particular, an undivided Flagstaff in a single legislative district, there were sharp differences over how Coconino County should be linked to its neighbors. The Mayor of Sedona (after expressing gratification that his City is united in the draft legislative plan) said that most of the Verde Valley associates with Flagstaff; and he suggested that the needs of the other areas of Yavapai County could be accommodated by exchange of areas among districts A, B, and C. Other speakers, also, including residents of the Verde Valley and Cottonwood, insisted on the community of interest among the Verde Valley, Sedona and Flagstaff, praising draft legislative district C for uniting Flagstaff and the Verde Valley. Others, however, asserted Coconino's community of interest with the Tribal Reservations to the North including the Navajo Reservation. One speaker dismissed the idea of community of interest with the Verde Valley, which he characterized as having "a sprawling type development" and a different perspective on water issues. Another speaker charged that draft Legislative district C is detrimental to the greater Flagstaff area because it "severs the natural economic, environmental, historical and physical entity" that exists north of the Mogollan Rim. Yet another warned that the linkage of Flagstaff with "the burgeoning suburbs of Prescott and the Verde Valley" would marginalize Flagstaff. Flagstaff, in this view, is more appropriately linked to the Grand Canyon, the tribal reservations, and to northern Arizona.

Several speakers criticized draft Congressional District C, citing a number of perceived problems: its size and the difficulty of representing it; its lack of community of interest; and the prospect that the rapid growth of Yavapai County would make it less competitive.

The suggestion was made of moving most of Yavapai County, with the exception of the Verde Valley, into Draft District A: the population lost from C would be replaced by moving Fort Mohave out of district A, and the Gila River Reservation and the mining communities of Pinal County out of district G.

A representative of the Hopi Tribal Council said that his tribe has common interest with Coconino County and Flagstaff, having recently purchased land and facilities in the area. He also affirmed the importance of the separation of the Hopi from the Navajo, which he said was justified on historical and contemporary grounds. Another representative of the Hopi, referencing court cases and legal precedents, said that the separation was fundamentally justified by the sovereignty of the Tribe and its retention of original natural rights; and he claimed that the key focus of redistricting should be to assure that the right to influence legislation is not less than in the current legislative districts; but he noted, also, that the rights of small minorities have not been fully canvassed by the courts.

A representative of the Navajo tribe criticized the separation of the Hopi, terming the resultant draft Congressional district a "gerrymander" that was created merely to allow the Hopi to exit its natural community of interest and to join it with a dissimilar, urban community; and that the separation is to the detriment of the compactness standard. He noted, also, that the result of the separation is to lower the numbers of the Native American population in the draft district below the benchmark level.

Concern was expressed by two speakers that the differences between the draft legislative and Congressional maps could create pocket or island precincts, and that the path created to link the Hopi reservation to draft Congressional district A could pose logistical problems for election officials.

**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.