

Untitled

Commission Meeting

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Comments:

Public Comment on the Redistricting plan coming up for a vote

Dear Commission Chair Heil and the Board of County Commissioners Dec 7, 2021

First, I believe in a strong two-party system where both parties agree on the premise that all people are created equal and that free, fair and competitive elections are important for a functioning democracy.

Second, the county website page that posted the agenda has some glitches. The page must be refreshed after every click in order for people to access the agenda. It is hard to find and access it and where to submit comments. Plans and alternative information for Thursday evening meeting Dec 8, 2021. This is not allowing some people to be able to access the information prior to the meeting. Please see that this is fixed. Also, the Plan D map and Plan C map have overlapping titles that do not allow for people to see how the lines are drawn through neighborhoods. We need to see a clearly defined map that is not obstructed by titles. The Maps do not clearly define the road and landmarks by which the boundaries were selected within the City of Rio Rancho. There are overlapping graphics.

Comments as follows:

It appears that these maps were drawn in the dark without important community and tribal nation input prior to bringing them to a vote. Plan D is an egregious example of Racial Gerrymandering that stack, crack, and Pack clusters of minority voters in a single member district. These actions are shocking and appear to be illegal.

The Plan D and C redistricting maps are schemes to disenfranchised minorities to elect their preferred candidates through racial and partisan manipulation. For example, the use of racial gerrymandering in contexts where racially polarized voting does not enhance minorities' ability to elect their candidate of choice in Plan D and C. In this case, when racially polarized voting is a significant factor in minorities' ability to elect their candidate of choice, racial gerrymandering is a dilutive measure that decreases minority political influence. In analyzing the intent and the effect of these practices and procedures it shows that these plans have diminished the minority vote. The districting mechanisms used in these plans have disparate impacts on Native American voters and their right to fairly participate in American democracy. To approve such a plan, as illustrated in Plan D & C, the county assures that this topic will come before the judiciary. Discriminatory redistricting harms minority voters by limiting their influence and constraining their ability to build voting strength in surrounding districts.

The Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments provide the governing constitutional test for racial gerrymandering claims. The Fourteenth Amendment prohibits this commission from engaging in both intentional race-based voter dilution, racial sorting and partisan precinct grabs. While these plans show a blatant disregard for the Constitution's Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth amendments, it is obvious to many voters in these districts that the Commission is challenging the SCOTUS' decision in 2013 and amputation of the Voting Rights Act. However, there are still constitutional rights that are in effect and these plans appear to

be intended to challenge what is left of the law. Are these the Commission's intentions in bringing forward these biased plans?

Access to the political process through voting is the pinnacle of exercising citizenship rights and the cornerstone of the foundation of the American Republic. American consciousness is framed by the notion that every citizen has the opportunity to express his or her voice through a vote, and the elective process is open and accessible to all who seek it.

The Fourteenth Amendment prohibits two forms of gerrymandering: intentional racial vote dilution and racial sorting. In the first form of prohibited racial gerrymandering, vote dilution, the commission's plan D and C "crack" racial groups or partisan parties apart between districts and precincts, causing a sufficient group of voters to be an ineffective minority in each district, or they "pack" groups into as few districts as possible so they will not influence elections in adjacent districts or precincts. These plans do this very blatantly.

These plans show that race and by political party that cracking is the predominant factor motivating the Commission's decision to place a significant number of voters within or without a particular district or precinct like the plans show in the City of Rio Rancho. Also, it proves that is a predominant factor, the commissions compelling interest to allow this racial gerrymandering will be the commissions burden of proof.

By using racial gerrymandering as a scheme to disenfranchise minority voters unnecessarily over-pack minority or political party voting preferences precincts and or districts creating a detrimental policy impact that concentrates minority political power to a single district, so the demographics cannot influence other districts, is a stain on the County of Sandoval.

I, also, have issues with the technical ease of racial gerrymandering that has expedited these effects into all the commission districts. What did taxpayers pay for this ? Today, computer programs are readily available and comprehensive demographic information allows legislative mappers to easily "add voters of one selected race to a district and to subtract voters of other races or opposing political parties. The accessibility of partisan racial gerrymandering makes its impact even more obvious. Racial gerrymandering that discriminates against minority voters is particularly constitutionally troublesome because it sits at the intersection of the most suspect classification, race, and the most supreme political right.

This nation has a long history of racial discrimination in voting. Calculated attempts to suppress and deny the minority vote and the vote of the opposing party, especially through the use of district mapping, is a modern practice connected to the institution of slavery and its vestiges.

The integrity of the election process and discrimination relating to voting rights for people of color persists. Voting is not only fundamental to our nation, but also impacts the political and social mobility of marginalized populations. Elections should be determined by the political will of the people, as articulated through their unwrought and freely executed vote along natural boundaries and communities. Representation should not rely on the skill of master mappers, working in the dark.

The Plan D and plan C maps show extreme partisan and racial gerrymandering which is still unconstitutional.

After reviewing the PLAN E "Eichwald Plan" put forward by Commissioners Eichwald and Bruch with the help of Isaac Chavez, it looks that this is the only fair and viable alternative that will not end up costing the taxpayers millions of dollars in court costs.

Will your decision be to hold fair and competitive elections or will you vote to stain Sandoval County and keep minority voices squashed?

On August 24, 2018 in a public meeting Commissioner Block, slandered me, in a song and dance about a comment that was taken out of context regarding the bias and disenfranchisement of minorities and the white supremacist practices of the Commission and the County. Now it looks to many people in the County that the Commission has shown with these maps that in deed it has adopted policies and is proud to wear the Badge of Slavery and voter suppression in order to favor your partisan political party. It was only a matter of time that the discriminatory nature of the Commission showed its true colors.

Is this what your legacy is to be? Is this what you want for Sandoval County?
It is disgraceful. It is not the way to uphold democracy to hold free and fair elections.

Vote for Plan E the Eichwald plan and stand for equality and the protection of people's right to vote.

Respectfully,
Elaine Cimino