

4/8/2021

Re: Regional Communities and the Boundaries of Illinois Districts-LaSalle  
Scheduled Hearing for 4/9/2021 at 12:00p.m. for LaSalle  
Proponent with exceptions  
Submitted by Susan McGava, LaSalle

I am a citizen of LaSalle and I would oppose a redistricting process that uses any data other than the 2020 final census report. Illinois appropriated \$43.5 million dollars between 2020FY and 2021FY toward educating the public about the importance of participating in the census process so Illinois census numbers should be complete. I have my own personal reservations regarding census data, but I believe it will provide the best information available and it avoids additional cost to taxpayers for developing alternative methods. I understand that the census data will not be available until August of this year due to Covid. This puts the Redistricting Committee into a difficult situation due to required deadlines. However, these required deadlines can be pushed back due to Covid just like many other deadlines that have been adjusted due to Covid over the previous 15 months.

The Redistricting Committee needs to consider SB 1325 (the People's Independent Maps Act). This bill puts the redistricting process in the hands of an independent redistricting commission which, if vetted properly, would be a valuable tool to complete the process fairly and in a timely manner. Finishing redistricting and having timely information available for candidates who will be running in the March 2022 primary election is important. The Redistricting Committee needs to be organized and work with a bipartisan approach right now to agree on an independent redistricting commission. If the committee and outside participants prepare in advance there will be time to produce new maps, hold townhall meetings to present the maps, do adjustments for final maps, and still give valid information to potential candidates by November.

Sound impossible? Maybe. But it is an opportunity for the General Assembly to restore public trust by working together to get this task done right the first time, with the public interest as the focus of the project. Illinois taxpayers just want the people who are getting paid great salaries with awesome benefits to do their job

and that job is to get this task done efficiently and fairly so the state can move forward to tackle other pressing needs.

On a local level, I believe that due diligence is required when formulating new district boundaries. Small rural communities will lose a voice in the political arena when thrust into new districts made up of large cities. One sample map I viewed, showing possibilities for change, had LaSalle and other small communities being moved into either a new district with Peoria and Springfield or a new district with Bloomington, Decatur, and Champaign. Conversations in the community redistricting meetings this week have addressed the need to take into consideration the social, political, economics and religious interest of the people and to group these common interest groups together for political purposes. The same consideration needs to be used when addressing the grouping of small rural communities. We should not be left out of the conversation and deserve a fair balance of representation. We are an important part of the Illinois economy!

Thank you,  
Susan McGava  
LaSalle  
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