

TO: Illinois State Senate Redistricting Committee
Illinois State House of Representatives Redistricting Committee

FROM: Andrea M. Peters, Quincy, IL

DATE: October 27, 2021

RE: New Congress Districts

I am a lifelong resident of Quincy, Illinois, a city on the furthest west edge of our state. I hope you can understand my concern when I saw that the new proposed Congressional district I would live in runs almost all the way across the state to the Indiana border, or that my current Congressman would leave our region completely. In my opinion, that is too far of a distance and too different a region to make sense as part of the same represented territory, and giving up our historical connections of 3 decades of representation seems unnecessary.

I am 46 years old, and as things stand now, our region has been part of the western section of the state for all of my adult life in terms of representative government. In west-central Illinois, we understand each other. We share similar concerns when it comes to the laws and how schools, hospitals, and the economy work together. Our congressman has come from this area for more than 30 years, and now it all changes for no apparent reason.

We know our Congressman because of these connections and because his community is connected to ours. Frankly, to have our community represented by folks from outside our region doesn't make much sense, especially if their own community is very different. Currently, our Congressman's main "home" office is a two hour drive. Under the current proposal, our drive could be almost twice that.

It seems that the Legislature's primary concern is to support the needs of the Chicago region while leaving our downstate communities behind. Our rural communities downstate have unique differences. We know each other, and we work for the same values. Our rural region shouldn't be ignored just for politics.

As a lifelong resident of Quincy and west-central Illinois, I would urge you consider consolidating and keeping communities together. Our communities deserve fair and equal representation - not maps that are intended to divide our region for political interests.