

To whom it may concern:

I oppose the latest proposed redistricting maps.

I'm a moderate ex-GOP voter in the 6th Congressional District. I switched to voting for Democrats in 2018 specifically because Sean Casten was the candidate, and he appealed to me. Want to know how you keep voters like me? Keep the 6th District intact. Splitting up the 6th to MAYBE create a Latino district, while pitting him against another Freshman rep is wrong, for several reasons.

Sean is the first candidate in 4 decades to beat the GOP in the 6th. Some of it was moderate suburban voters disgusted by what the GOP has become, but a good part of it is that Sean can win in places like Wheaton where his intelligent, thoughtful policy positions coupled with pro-business, pro economic growth messaging resonate. Splitting up the 6th and putting Wheaton into a district that stretches deep into Chicago dilutes the pool of moderate centrist suburban voters in the 6th who switched parties to support Sean. They may not all choose to follow a candidate committed to progressive policies who pushes a different framing for the message. That puts the legislature's objective - creating a Latino district - at risk - if too many suburban voters switch back to their former allegiances. Some might go back to their old voting habits.

Anecdotally, based on my personal experience canvassing in West Chicago, some Catholic Latino voters are relatively socially conservative - and a progressive might not win them over if there's an anti-abortion candidate running against a progressive. I don't think you can assume that just because you create a district with many Latino voters that they will vote as a block for a Latino candidate without regard to policy on social matters.

Another point: pitting two of the newest Democrat reps against each other sends the wrong message to future candidates AND the voters of the district. If the Dems won't protect those who fought and won their districts away from the GOP, like Sean Casten, then what's the point? Casten soundly beat Peter Roskam and Jeanne Ives - hey, thanks for that- but now we're going to force you into a primary with another Democrat. That sends absolutely the wrong message to moderate, intelligent potential politicians. First they win tough fights, and then the party throws them into a fight with another person from the same party. It also sends the wrong message to voters and volunteers who worked hard to flip a GOP district - now we're just going to chop up the district and you'll have a new (unknown) representative. It tells us "thanks for all your hard work, but you won't be represented by the person you helped to win against the GOP."

Please reconsider these maps. Surely there is another way to create fair, equitable districts in the state that represent and respect the work of the voters, without drastically splitting up the current 6th Congressional District.

Thank you,

Steve Anderson
Wheaton, IL