

Private
STAFF SUMMARY OF MEETING



OTHER COMMITTEE COMMITTEE ON INDEPENDENT CONGRESSIONAL REDISTRICTING COMMISSION

Attendance

Date 06/23/2021
Time 02:04:41 PM to 03:01:25 PM
Place SCR 354

Martha X
Coleman X
Moussa *
Diawara X
Paula Espinoza X
Jason Kelly X
William Leone *
JulieMarie X
Shepherd X
Macklin E
Danny Moore X
Lori Schell X
Simon Tafoya X
Elizabeth X
Wilkes X
Jolie Brawner X
Carly Hare X

This Meeting was called to order by
Carly Hare

This Report was prepared by
Elizabeth Burger

X = Present, E = Excused, A = Absent, * = Present after roll call

Hearing Items Action Taken
Presentation of the Preliminary Congressional Redistricting Plan Committee Discussion Only

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Collapse All Items

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Chair Hare called the meeting to order and reviewed the meeting's agenda. Meeting materials can be accessed here:
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Presentation of the Preliminary Congressional Redistricting Plan - Committee Discussion Only



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Jessika Shipley, Independent Redistricting Commission Staff, began the presentation of the preliminary congressional redistricting plan. She reviewed the constitutional criteria for the preliminary plan and discussed the location of the preliminary maps and related data on the commission's website. She referenced a memorandum regarding how the map complies with the congressional redistricting criteria.

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Ms. Shipley noted that the commission's redistricting online portal is now available on the commission's website.

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Jerry Barry, Independent Redistricting Commissions Staff, discussed the process for creating the preliminary map, and reviewed each of the proposed districts. He noted that 55 of the 64 counties are wholly contained within one congressional district in the staff preliminary plan and that the ideal district size is 721,714 people. He discussed the two rural districts created in the eastern and western parts of the state - Districts 3 and 4. He explained that District 3 is comprised of whole counties, with the exception of one portion of Boulder County. He discussed the drafting of District 4, noting that many small counties are kept whole, but including only rural counties left the district far short of the ideal population number. Consequently, the staff added rural portions of Adams, Weld, Arapahoe, El Paso, and Douglas counties to District 4 to keep the district as rural as possible.

He explained that El Paso and Denver counties have populations that are too large to comprise their own districts. A portion of El Paso County was moved into District 4. Portions of Denver were moved into District 7 and District 6. He discussed the small enclaves of population in the Denver area and the rationale for moving those enclaves into other districts.

The new 8th congressional district is placed in the northern Denver metro area. Mr. Barry explained that the district represents a fast growing area of Colorado, and noted that while nearly 30 percent of Colorado's population is Hispanic, no district is currently represented by a Hispanic. He described the municipalities included in the new district, including Arvada, Westminister, Thornton, Northglenn, Brighton, Broomfield, and a portion of Commerce City.

He described District 2, which includes Larimer County, except for Windsor, most of Boulder County, and portions of Weld County, and the entirety of Gilpin County. He described District 6, which keeps the City of Aurora whole. District 7 includes Jefferson County, except for the portions included in District 8 and a small portion in District 1, and Douglas County, except for a small portion that was included in District 4.

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Mr. Barry reviewed how the staff plan meets the constitutional congressional redistricting criteria as follows.

- 1) Districts of equal size and contiguity. Mr. Barry noted that the population of all districts are within 1 person of equal district size, and all districts are contiguous.
- 2) Compliance with the federal Voting Rights Act (VRA). Mr. Barry reviewed the preconditions that must be met to establish a violation of the VRA, and discussed how preliminary map could be evaluated under those criteria.
- 3) As much as reasonably possible, preserving communities of interest (COIs) and whole political subdivisions. Mr. Barry discussed how the map keeps COIs together. He explained that county splits were kept to a minimum, except to keep municipalities whole. He noted that the map will be used as a discussion point to help further identify COIs.
- 4) Compactness. He discussed the measurements the staff used to assess compactness. He explained that compactness measures should be used to compare plans to each other, and it's difficult to discuss compactness when reviewing only one map. He noted that some of the lines in the map are drawn to preserve political subdivisions.
- 5) Maximizing politically competitive districts. He discussed measurements of competitiveness, including the results from the Colorado Attorney General's race in 2018 and voter registration data. Under those measurements, Districts 1 and 2 are solidly Democratic, Districts 4 are 5 solidly Republican, Districts 3 and 6 are moderately competitive, District 7 is the most competitive, and the new District 8 favors the Democratic candidate.

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He continued by discussing that requirement that the maps not be drawn to protect political incumbents. He explained that staff does not have the addresses of the current congressional representatives, and stated for the record that the preliminary map was not drawn to protect political incumbents.

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Chair Hare opened the discussion to committee questions. Ms. Shipley responded to questions from the commission regarding how the map preserves COs, noting that the map addresses concerns regarding Southern Colorado, eastern and western rural districts, and a single district encompassing both the University of Colorado and Colorado State University. The commission discussed public comments from residents of mountain communities. Mr. Barry responded to questions about small enclaves within larger counties, and how including these enclaves in certain districts would require small voting precincts which would potentially identify the voters of those precincts.



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Mr. Barry responded to questions from the commission regarding tribal areas of the state, and whether the plan complies with the VRA. Commissioner Diawara asked Mr. Barry to anticipate the questions the commission may receive on the map. Mr. Barry emphasized that the plan is preliminary and will change based on final census data, and public comments will be considered when preparing the staff maps later in the year.



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Commissioner Shepherd Macklin discussed compactness. Ms. Shipley noted that the plan is based on 2010 geography, and the maps will change once the staff begins using the 2020 geography for mapping.



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Commissioner Shepherd Macklin asked about next steps for future commission meetings, and Commissioner Hare responded.



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The committee adjourned.

