

Private
STAFF SUMMARY OF MEETING

OTHER COMMITTEE COMMITTEE ON JOINT INDEPENDENT REDISTRICTING COMMISSIONS

Attendance

Aislinn Kottwitz	X
Amber	X
McReynolds	X
Blanca Uzeta	X
O'Leary	X
Constance	X
Hass	X
Danny Moore	X
Elizabeth	X
Wilkes	X
Gary Horvath	X
Heather Barry	X
Hunter Barnett	X
Jason Kelly	X
John Buckley	X
Jolie Brawner	X
JulieMarie	X
Shepherd	X
Macklin	X
Kevin Fletcher	X
Lori Schell	X
Martha	X
Coleman	X
Moussa	E
Diawara	E
Paula Espinoza	X
Robin	X
Schepper	X
Samuel	X
Greenidge	X
Simon Tafoya	X
William Leone	*
Carlos Perez	X
Carly Hare	X

Date 08/11/2021
Time 07:08:14 PM to 10:57:52 PM
Place Boulder
This Meeting was called to order by Samuel Greenidge
This Report was prepared by Matthu Beck

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

Hearing Items Action Taken

Expand All Items

Collapse All Items

07:08:26 PM

Chairs Greenidge and Kottwitz gave opening remarks and introduced the informational video on redistricting.

07:08:52 PM

Mr. Richard Keck, representing self, testified. He testified that he felt the proposed state house district map does not keep Boulder together as a community of interest.

07:22:45 PM

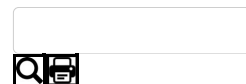
Mr. Kevin Sipple, representing self, testified. He testified that CD2 and CD3 leave out communities as they stretch towards the Continental Divide. He also spoke on how state house districts in Boulder County will split the city.

07:27:20 PM

Mayor of Louisville Ashley Stolzmann, representing self, testified. She submitted a letter from multiple leaders in the area (Attachment A). She testified that the public services and issues in the proposed state house districts would be split.

07:30:14 PM

Mr. Raffi Mercuri, representing self, testified. He testified that the eastern part of Boulder has more in common with the core of the city than the western part of Boulder. He stated that Boulder County should not be split by a congressional map.



07:35:30 PM

Ms. Leslie Weise, representing self, testified. She testified on how ozone and air quality is an important issue in the area and how Weld County doesn't fit with Boulder due to their oil and gas industries.

07:42:26 PM

Mr. Charlie Winn, representing self, testified. He testified that all of Boulder County should be in CD2 and Gilpin County should be in CD3.

07:45:46 PM

Ms. Catherine Carlson, representing self, testified. She stated concerns with the latinx community being diminished in state house district maps and that the congressional map is not competitive. Commissioners asked follow-up questions on the idea of dividing Denver into two separate congressional districts.

07:50:22 PM

Mr. Eric Budd, representing self, testified. He testified about proposed state House Districts 36 and 37 and his concerns with areas of the city not being included.

07:57:04 PM

Ms. Susan Winter, representing self, testified. She testified that Boulder County should be kept together in a congressional district. She also reiterated previous testimony that the Gunbarrel area must be kept with Boulder in a state house district.

07:59:45 PM

Dr. Kristopher Larsen, Mayor of Nederland, testified. He spoke on the importance of keeping the area intact as they share local services and districts. He submitted a written copy of testimony (Attachment B).

08:09:29 PM

Commissioner Matt Jones, representing Boulder County, testified. He reiterated previous testimony that Boulder County should be kept together.

08:12:30 PM

Ms. Susan Newcomer, representing self, testified. She testified that Grand County is not a Republican or rural county.

08:18:34 PM

Erie Trustee Sara Loflin, representing self, testified. She testified that many in Boulder County chose to live there for common goals of public health and environmentalism and that being placed with a county that prioritizes oil and gas is alarming.

08:22:31 PM

Ms. Annmarie Jensen, representing self, testified. She stated concern with the city of Lafayette being split between multiple state house districts.

08:27:18 PM

Mr. George Friend, representing self, testified. He testified on the sense of community between Boulder and Nederland.

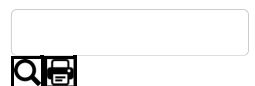
08:29:36 PM

Mr. Aaron Brockett, Boulder City Councilman, representing self, testified. He spoke on how the different sections of Boulder are better served with the current state house and senate map instead of the proposed plan. He submitted written testimony on behalf of Boulder County Sheriff Joe Pelle (Attachment C).

08:34:48 PM

Ms. Cherry-Rose Anderson, representing NAACP Colorado-Montana-Wyoming State Area Conference, testified. She testified on the goals of the NAACP and that the proposed maps are regressive for minority representation. Commissioners asked follow-up questions regarding whether communities of interest or political boundaries should be considered more heavily.

08:45:21 PM



Mr. Brad Emms, representing self, testified. He spoke about the Rocky Mountain Area Airport and the importance of air travel as well as passenger travel when considering community services and interests.

08:48:23 PM

Mr. Neil Allaire, representing self, testified. He reiterated previous testimony that Weld County and Boulder County don't fit together well due to differences in fracking policy.

08:53:54 PM

Dr. Nancy Loving, representing self, testified. She testified that Boulder County should be left in CD2 and not moved into CD3.

08:57:00 PM

Ms. Cory Sevin, representing self, testified. She testified that differences between Boulder and Weld Counties make it impossible to represent the communities if combined in a district.

09:00:24 PM

Mr. Matt Benjamin, representing self, testified. He testified on the importance of having shared values in a community, especially in terms of environmental causes in the area. He submitted a written copy of his testimony (Attachment D).

09:09:28 PM

Dr. Lesley Smith, representing self, testified. She testified that CD2 and state House District 36 both leave primary sources of water in Boulder in a separate district.

09:17:37 PM

Ms. Kristi Venditti, representing self, testified. She testified that Nederland should be in a district with Boulder and not grouped with the western slope. She responded to questions from commissioners.

09:23:11 PM

Jesse Kumin, representing himself, testified. He spoke about the two-party system and stated that redistricting is a process of choosing winners and losers. He expressed his concern about separating communities of interest and disenfranchising minority voters.

09:30:49 PM

Ms. Dawn Reinfeld, representing self, testified. She reiterated previous testimony having concerns with Boulder and Weld Counties being grouped together.

09:33:02 PM

Ms. Julie Van Domelen, representing Emergency Family Assistance Association, testified. She reiterated previous concerns with Boulder County being grouped with the Western Slope.

09:38:05 PM

Mr. Marty Robinson, representing self, testified. He testified that Broomfield should be grouped with Boulder County and not Weld County.

09:46:07 PM

Mr. Bill Vaughan, representing self, testified. He stated that the open space and shared history in Southeast Boulder County create a community of interest and that Broomfield should be kept in CD2.

09:51:37 PM

Mr. Rick Fernandez, representing self, testified. He reiterated previous testimony on keeping Broomfield grouped with Boulder County. He also spoke on the Windy Gap development and the importance of water in the area.

09:56:00 PM

Ms. Jamie Tabaka, representing self, testified. She reiterated previous testimony that Nederland should be grouped with Boulder in CD2. She submitted a written copy of her testimony (Attachment E).



09:59:34 PM

Dr. Suzanne Trask, representing self, testified. She spoke on an alternative map discussed during the Fort Collins public hearing and expressed concern with how it would split up the community.

10:03:59 PM

Mr. Alan Philp, representing Colorado Neighborhood Coalition, testified. He testified in support of the commissions' work on competitiveness and asked that the commissions be careful when calculating a formula for competitiveness. Commissioners asked follow-up questions regarding formulas for competitiveness.

10:14:41 PM

Mayor of Boulder Sam Weaver, representing self, testified. He testified that the current state House Districts work well for Boulder.

10:18:16 PM

Mr. Joe Cornelius, representing self, testified. He spoke about competitiveness in districts and how gridlock currently affects politics in Colorado.

10:21:51 PM

Mr. David Setter, representing self, testified. He stated that the land around the Northwest Parkway should be a community of interest and is why Broomfield and Boulder County should stay together in CD2 with Weld County being put into CD8.

10:25:28 PM

Ms. KC Becker, representing self, testified. She reiterated previous testimony that Western Boulder fits with the mountain communities better than Eastern Boulder fits with the Eastern Plains. Commissioners asked follow-up questions on how to group communities in the area.

10:38:11 PM

Mr. John Tayer, President of Boulder Chamber of Commerce, representing self, testified. He reiterated testimony on how a split along Broadway Blvd in Boulder would be a good divide and gave his thoughts on how the community has grown from a business minded perspective.

10:41:49 PM

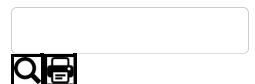
Mr. Dan Gentner, representing self, testified. He testified that Commerce City being split into multiple congressional districts seemed odd.

10:44:24 PM

Mr. Harry Hempy, representing self, testified. He reiterated previous testimony to keep Boulder County whole.

10:57:52

PM The committee adjourned.



A

August 10, 2021

Dear Colorado Independent Redistricting Commissioners,

Thank you for joining us in our community and we hope that your tour across the state has been informative and helpful as you make your decisions. We are a collection of local elected officials and community leaders in Eastern Boulder County and wish to provide input about the proposed initial map and its effect on our communities. Additionally, we hope to provide context and information on our communities and the work that we have achieved together to advance some of the common goals of our residents and constituents.

The preliminary map is problematic and troublesome to many of us here in Eastern Boulder County. Our largest point of contention is the inclusion of a significant portion of Boulder County in a district dominated by Weld County. Our two counties have significant differences, none more pronounced than in our approach to oil and gas extraction.

Boulder County has had a long, hard, and pronounced stance against further oil and gas development within our county. Our communities have been on the front lines of this fight, working tirelessly to halt the expansion of new drilling at our border. Weld County has obviously taken a different approach, fostering a relationship with the oil and gas industry that has led to massive development and expansion of drilling and hydraulic fracturing over the past decade. Their economy and workforce depends on extraction, ours does not.

The merits of our arguments are immaterial in this particular debate. It is a disservice to constituents on both sides of the county line to group us in the same district. A Representative cannot adequately represent communities with an impasse on an issue that is so pronounced in the Legislature. A desire for competitive districts should not result in a district where those who supported the losing candidate are in direct conflict with the communities that supported the winner. This would lead to unnecessary animosity and increased partisanship that can be easily avoided by keeping the county line as a hard boundary.

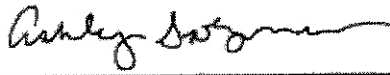
The cities of Louisville, Lafayette and Erie have worked together on these issues, placing climate change at the forefront of their agenda. A poll of Louisville voters saw climate change as their top political issue, with a large majority being willing to pay additional taxes to alleviate the effects and prevent further deterioration.

We have active community groups that provide services in all 3 cities, including one that focuses on homelessness and housing in Eastern Boulder County. Having a legislator who represents all 3 of our intertwined cities makes it so much easier to push state action on the issues that activists in our community are fighting for.

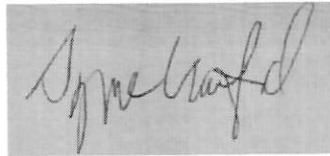
While less egregious than grouping Boulder County with Weld County, it is also puzzling that the Western Boulder communities nestled in the mountains that stretch to the town of Nederland are included in the same seat as Lafayette. Not only does the map look bizarre with the majority of

the City of Boulder being almost entirely surrounded by the proposed District 36, but the communities included have very little in common, with none of the common ties that exist between the Eastern Boulder cities of Louisville, Lafayette and Erie, as well as unincorporated eastern Boulder County residents.

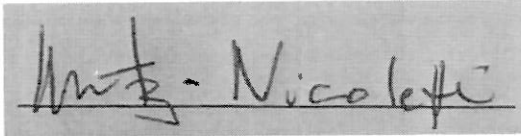
We fully acknowledge and appreciate that you all have a tough job to balance an entire state and understand the nuances of small communities across Colorado. However, we strongly feel that a map that recognizes the differences between areas with vastly different interests is vital for the continued health and prosperity of Colorado.



Ashley Stolzmann
Mayor of Louisville



Suzanne Crawford
CEO, Sister Carmen Community Center



Mitzi Nicoletti
Board Member, Sustainable Resilient
Longmont



Michael Belmont
Community Leader



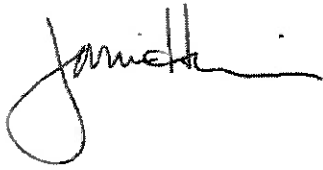
Christine Berg
Former Mayor of Lafayette



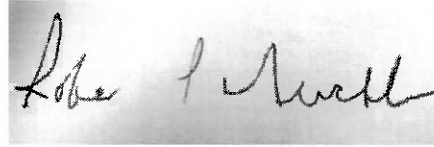
JD Mangat
Lafayette City Council Member




Jacob Williams
Executive Director, Healthier Colorado



Jamie Harkins
Mayor of Lafayette



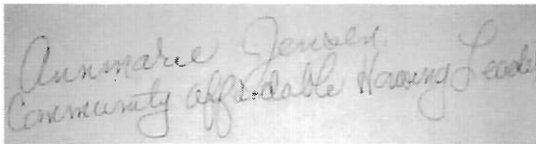
Robert Muckle
Former Mayor of Louisville



Stephanie Walton
Lafayette City Council Member



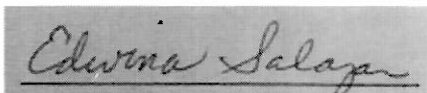
Tim Barnes
Lafayette City Council Member



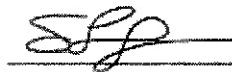
Annmarie Jensen
Director, East County Housing Opportunity
Coalition
Community Leader



Marcia Martin
Longmont City Council Member



Edwina Salazar
Retired Non-Profit Executive Director
Community Leader



Sara Loflin
Erie Trustee
Executive Director, League of Oil & Gas
Impacted Coloradans



Karen Dike
Longmont Climate Community and Our
Longmont



Town of Nederland, Colorado

45 West First Street -- P.O. Box 396

Nederland, CO 80466-0396

www.nederlandco.org

Phone: (303) 258-3266

FAX: (303) 258-1240

Thank you for coming to hear from us this evening. My name is Kristopher Larsen and I am here tonight to speak on behalf of the Board of Trustees and residents of the Town of Nederland, of which it has been my honor to serve the last five and a half years as Mayor.

In particular, I am here tonight to speak to you regarding the preliminary maps for the decadal adjustment of Colorado's Congressional districts, though many of these points are equally applicable to the redrawn state house districts.

The criteria under which you have drafted the preliminary map before us this evening includes the following (as copied from the redistricting website.)

- Preserve whole communities of interest and whole political subdivisions, such as counties, cities, and towns;

As drawn, the preliminary map for Colorado's Congressional districts fails to meet this criteria on several counts for the Town of Nederland. Specifically:

- The proposed map fails to maintain whole political subdivisions.
Namely:
 - The proposed map puts the majority of Nederland within CD-3 while two parcels on the North side of town remain within CD-2.
 - The proposed map places the Town of Nederland, and other significant parts of Western Boulder County, within CD-3 while the majority of Boulder County remains in CD-2.
- The proposed map draws the Eastern boundary between CD-3 and CD-2 in such a way that it separates the Town of Nederland from its natural communities of interest.

- Nederland's schools are part of the Boulder Valley School District, not with districts on the other side of the Continental Divide.
- Like the rest of Colorado's Front range, Nederland is facing a crisis in affordable housing. While this is a growing problem across the state, the specifics of the impact on Nederland have more in common with the Boulder County foothills than with Grand County, or any of the counties on the Western Slope. In fact, Nederland has partnered with Boulder County Housing Authority within the last year to build an affordable housing development within the Town.
- While we all can look out the window and see the statewide, even nationwide, impact of forest fires, the Town of Nederland is close partners with Boulder County, the County Sheriff's office, and the Arapahoe-Roosevelt National Forest to address the particular impacts specific to the front range. Some of these are the increased number of homes in the Wildland-Urban-Interface, the increased tourism and recreational use of our forests, and the increase in unhoused living in the forests near towns. These Front Range issues increase the risk of forest fires for Nederland, and the mitigating solutions will come from Front Range partnerships.

This is a small sampling of the communities of interest that exist within the Peak-to-Peak region which the proposed boundary of CD-2 and CD-3 separates. All can be preserved by redrawing the boundary to the logical, both physically and socially, location along the western edge of Boulder County atop the Continental Divide.

On behalf of the Town of Nederland and its residents, I ask that the commission modifies the map to include all of Boulder County within CD-2.

Kristopher Larsen
Mayor
kristopherl@nederlandco.org



Boulder County Sheriff's Office

JOE PELLE
Sheriff

July 29, 2021

Colorado Redistricting Commission

To Whom It Concerns:

As a public safety official, I feel obligated to share my perspective with the Colorado Independent Redistricting Commission on an area that I feel needs continued excellent and focused representation.

The western portion of Boulder County and the western end of the City of Boulder have faced significant public safety challenges over the decades. Wildfires, floods and wildlife management are all issues that have become exacerbated as Boulder continues to grow and expand into previous wilderness areas.

Not only do these smaller, mountainous communities feel tied to the City of Boulder through their jobs, community engagements and recreational activities, but the safety and well-being of their homes and businesses are directly tied to the legislative issues surrounding the handling of these unique issues. Other parts of Boulder County are more suburban and are more similar to other farther-out suburbs. Louisville, Lafayette and Eire are not threatened by fires and floods in anywhere near the same manner.

I have seen firsthand the impact that keeping these smaller communities together has had on our legislature and the policies that are considered and passed by our representatives and senators. Splitting communities such as Nederland, Eldorado Springs, and unincorporated communities such as St. Ann Highlands into 3 separate House Districts as the proposed staff map does makes very little sense to me. Nor does completely excluding the western portions of the City of Boulder, considering they face very similar challenges.

While I understand that population needs to be equal among districts, with a more rural, mountainous Boulder seat likely extending farther into the mountains than the limits of Boulder County, it makes far more sense to include all of the portions of Boulder that face these issues before expanding toward Estes Park, Grand County, or other areas that face similar challenges. This staff map inexplicably divides these communities into 3 districts and even bizarrely places Nederland and Allenspark with Wellington and Timnath, communities that have very few of the same issues that we do.

Headquarters
5600 Flatiron Parkway
Boulder, CO 80301
303-441-3600

Communications · Emergency Management
3280 Airport Road
Boulder, CO 80301
303-441-4444 · 303-441-3390

Jail
3200 Airport Road
Boulder, CO 80301
303-441-4600

As we continue to grow into our mountainous areas these challenges will multiply. As climate change intensifies, we will need strong, unified representation for these communities that have already dealt with the uncertainty and fear of fires and floods raging through their communities. Please unify these neighbors under one district so our representative can be as focused as possible on these critical issues, rather than having to balance disparate needs from constituents with very little in common when it comes to their legislative priorities.

Respectfully,



Joseph K. Pelle

Headquarters
5600 Flatiron Parkway
Boulder, CO 80301
303-441-3600

Communications · Emergency Management
3280 Airport Road
Boulder, CO 80301
303-441-4444 · 303-441-3390

Jail
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Boulder, CO 80301
303-441-4600

D

Dear members of the Colorado Redistricting Commission,

8/11/21

My name is Matt Benjamin. I am a husband, father of two young kids and I live in South Boulder along our wild-urban interface.

I first want to thank you all for putting in the time to reshuffle our states districts in light of the population changes along the front range and throughout the state.

Driven by goals of fairness and equity, these draft districts are getting pretty close to meeting the high standards that we place on the foundations of our democracy. We've come a long way from what used to be arbitrary or at worst deliberately racist and or classist lines on a map. Now that we are doing this with intention, I ask that we not miss some of the granularity that connects community's, environments and shared resources.

The draft map for districts in Boulder are fundamentally disconnecting communities. We hear the term the "Boulder Bubble". For those of us Boulderites this can be a self-deprecating wise crack or used as a backhanded judgement by others. I urge this commission to not codify and enshrine the "Boulder Bubble" on a map. Lets also try not to create a donut that almost wraps around the city. This will disconnect more than it will connect people. The Western edge of Boulder has far more connection to that of foothills than that of Longmont or Lafayette for that matter. Where I live we have bear resistant trash cans, regular sightings of mountain lions and as we saw last year, living along the wild-urban interface means we are at major risk of wildfires coming down off the foothills. Lets also not forget that as we near the 8th anniversary of the Boulder flood from 2013, the western edge of Boulder and that of the wild-urban interface share much of the same fate and consequences of climate change.

Given that connectivity between the western edge of Boulder and that of our neighbors just in the hills to the west of us, we should share representation that aligns with our shared geography and resources.

I thank you for your time and hope we can use this opportunity to strengthen democracy without weakening communities and their connections.

Thank you,

Matt Benjamin
Boulder
Matthew.benjamin82@gmail.com

I am here to argue that Nederland and all of Boulder county should remain a part of district 2.

The proposed redistricting splits the town of Nederland from the surrounding areas of unincorporated Nederland, dividing our small mountain community and making it even more difficult for our voices to be heard.

If you don't live in the mountains, you may think that all mountain towns are similar but this is not the case.

The western slope is less populated and is mostly agricultural areas mixed with resort towns. The western resort towns are a destination trip for city dwellers and funding for their impact comes from the money spent on tourism. Meanwhile Nederland is a mere 25 minute drive from Boulder so we see a constant flow of day skiers, afternoon rock climbers, cyclists doing a training loop through the mountains, and people going for a short hike after work. The impact on our emergency services and public land management is not balanced out by tourism dollars. The eastern slope shares this issue of being a playground for the neighboring front range cities which is why Nederland should remain in district 2.

The eastern slope is also a different climate than the western slope with different precipitation patterns and different wildfire concerns. The western slope traditionally gets more precipitation as air rises over the Rockies, while the eastern slope is in a rain shadow that tends to cause worse droughts. Fighting wildfires is different because the easterly winds quickly blow our wildfires down to the suburbs of Boulder, making this a common interest with the city of Boulder. The western slope is more sparsely populated and does not put major metropolises in the path of wildfires. We share this common dynamic with the Poudre Canyon west of Fort Collins in district 2.

Conversely, Boulder policies also heavily affect Nederland. The ability to live in Nederland and commute to Boulder means our housing prices have skyrocketed with Boulder making it difficult for those who work in the mountains to find affordable housing.

Boulder is also known for its homeless-friendly policies which attracts a population of transients that spills into our mountain community due to easy bus access. Nederland deals with transients illegally camping in our forests and private land, leaving trash and human waste and starting forest fires, one of which came close to burning down my house in 2016. The woefully inadequate number of law enforcement rangers is an issue we specifically share with the eastern slope.

I will also quickly mention a few more common interests with the eastern slope:

- The difficulties of living in a sprawling, rural school district which is a short drive from better funded city schools.
- Water rights and conservation issues, including our reservoir in Nederland which supplies water to all of Boulder.
- A shared public transportation system with the rest of Boulder county.

Finally, I would argue that Nederland is not contiguous with the rest of district 3. Political textbooks¹ and other state's guidelines clarify contiguous as meaning one can travel from any part of the district without crossing into a different district. For example, if a river runs through a district, there must be a bridge within the district. The stretch of the continental divide that separates Nederland from the rest of district 3 has no crossings. Winter Park may look a mere 10 miles from Nederland but in reality it is a 2 hour drive via the nearest pass. The nearest crossing an hour north of Nederland is Trail Ridge Rd which is impassible in the winter. Making Nederland an island separated from the rest of district 3 would undoubtedly affect our representative's ability to visit, engage with, and understand our community.

Nederland is not connected to the western slope by road or by common interest. The continental divide is a wide uninhabitable rock. Please, draw the line between districts 2 and 3 along the continental divide instead of dividing our small community.

Thank you,

Jamie Tabaka
Nederland, CO

¹ Election Law in the American Political System, James A. Gardner, Guy-Uriel Charles · 2014