

MINUTES

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON REDISTRICTING

Tuesday, August 2, 2011
Chanute and Pittsburg Public Hearings

Neosho County Community College and Pittsburg State University

Members Present

Senator Tim Owens, Co-chairperson
Representative Mike O'Neal, Co-chairperson
Senator Dwayne Umbarger, Co-Vice-Chairperson
Senator Anthony Hensley, Co-ranking Minority Member
Senator Carolyn McGinn
Representative Steve Brunk
Representative Bob Grant
Representative Caryn Tyson

Staff Present

Corey Carnahan, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Reed Holwegner, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Craig Callahan, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Dorothy Noblit, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Theresa Kiernan, Senate Committee Assistant
Cindy O'Neal, House Committee Assistant

Conferees-Chanute

Ross Hendrickson, Chanute Chamber of Commerce
Edwin Bideau, Former Legislator, Chanute
Senator Anthony Hensley
Jim Stillwell, Montgomery County
Representative Virgil Peck
Representative Jim Kelley
Howard Bredesen, Coffeyville
Mary Alice Lair, Chanute
Virginia Crossland-Macha, Iola
Patricia Hauser, Neosho County Republican Chairperson
Mike Howerter, Parsons

Conferees-Pittsburg

Shirley Palmer, Bourbon County Democrat Chairperson
Blake Benson, Pittsburg Area Chamber of Commerce
Craig Hull, Crawford County Convention and Visitor's Bureau
Linda Grilz, Crawford County Commissioner

Dale Slagle, Superintendent of Schools, Frontenac
Donald Pyle, Crawford County Commissioner
Jeffrey Lock, Arma
Clayton Tatro, Bourbon County, Fort Scott Community College
Joann McDowell, Chairperson, Montgomery County Democratic Party
Dave Martin, City Manager, Ft. Scott
Jim Overbeck, Chairperson, Cherokee County Democratic Party
Senator Anthony Hensley
Denise Cassell, Chairperson, Democratic Party County Chairpersons Association
Chad Titterington
Leah Mackey

Chanute Public Hearing

Senator Tim Owens, acting as the presiding Co-chairperson, called the meeting to order and made opening comments.

Co-chairperson Owens gave an overview of the guidelines and criteria for the 2012 Kansas Congressional, Legislative, and State Board of Education (SBOE) redistricting process (Attachment 1).

He stated that neither he nor the court looks favorably on the process of drawing districts by gerrymandering. He stressed it is very early in the process of the redistricting and no decisions have been made on any map or plan. He urged the citizens of Kansas not to jump to any preconceived conclusions and stated the Legislature is striving to make this a transparent process.

Co-chairperson O'Neal explained the town hall meetings were being held to give members of the public an opportunity to be involved in the redistricting process by allowing the public to ask questions about the process, to voice opinions on and make suggestions relating to the drawing of Congressional Districts, State Senate and House of Representative (Legislative) Districts and SBOE districts.

Co-chairperson O'Neal also explained that while the acceptable deviation from the ideal population is very small for congressional districts, at almost zero percent, the courts allow more flexibility for Legislative and SBOE Districts and have approved deviations of 5 percent above or below the ideal population of such districts. Once the maps or plan designating or defining the Legislative and SBOE Districts have been enacted, they are submitted to the Kansas Supreme Court for a determination of compliance with Federal and State law. The map or plan designating congressional districts is not subject to a mandatory court review. The congressional district map or plan that was enacted in 2002 was challenged, but upheld by the court. Four counties were divided in the 2002 Congressional District map in order to meet the deviation standard.

Co-chairperson O'Neal stressed the Legislature will attempt to follow the guidelines that have been approved to provide guidance in the redistricting process and will try to avoid breaking up geographical areas, but it may become unavoidable in order to meet the strict deviation standard. The most important factor the court considers when determining whether a congressional plan is constitutional, is whether the population of the district is within the acceptable range of deviation from the ideally sized district. Other factors considered by the court include: dilution or preservation of minority voting strength; gerrymandering; and

recognition of communities of interest and preservation of the integrity of political subdivisions (splitting cities and counties between or among districts only when necessary to meet the acceptable population deviation).

He explained the 2010 Census showed a majority of Kansas counties lost population while only 28 counties gained population. The population data also showed citizens moved from rural areas to more populated urban areas. Overall, the state grew by 164,700 citizens, allowing us to keep our four congressional districts (Attachment 2). Co-chairperson O'Neal reviewed the statewide population figures and ideal district sizes.

Ross Hendrickson, Chanute Chamber of Commerce, worked on census data while employed with former Secretary of State Ron Thornburgh. Both the past and current census show there is a strong movement from rural to urban communities. He stressed the importance of keeping the City of Chanute and the rest of Neosho County in the same district since they are connected by an economic base and maintain a rural voice. He touched on their achievements and successes: passing a \$40 million bond issue for schools; Neosho County Community College is one of the fastest growing community colleges in Kansas and is a leader in the training of nurses; and Neosho Memorial Regional Hospital has received awards at both the state and national levels, and built its own fiber-optics to connect key resources together along with business and residential usage. He stressed that while there will be changes, not all counties, businesses, and families want to have a metro presence in the new districts. He asked that the Legislature maintain the rural character of the Chanute and Neosho districts.

Mr. Hendrickson quoted Secretary Thornburg, "Rural Kansas was powerhouse with agriculture that fueled the Kansas economy for generations when Johnson County was just a rural area of Kansas City, so now it's time for Johnson County and other metro areas to play the role supporting the rural parts of the state." (Attachment 3)

Edwin Bideau, former legislator from Chanute, stated he had two main concerns: preserving the homogeneous rural character of Neosho County and keeping economic zones together when drawing House Districts to the extent that the committees are able.

Senator Anthony Hensley provided a PowerPoint presentation similar to the one he used at previous town hall meetings. He stated the main criteria of redistricting is to make sure the requirement of "one person, one vote" is met. He also gave a history lesson on the word "gerrymandering" and its origins. He felt every guideline was ignored during the last redistricting process. He was extremely concerned that the First Congressional District will be drawn so that it stretches across the state from the western border to the eastern border and then down into Leavenworth and Wyandotte counties. Senator Hensley said he heard this type of map had been circulating in Washington, D.C., but had not actually seen a map with this configuration. He believes this type of map may be designed to preserve the dominance of the Republican Party. He stated this plan would be a disservice to both Wyandotte County and western Kansas. This plan also would be a disservice to southeast Kansas because it would extend the Second Congressional District to include the City of Salina and, thereby, dilute the voting strength of the southeast counties currently in the Second Congressional District. Senator Hensley noted the map used in the PowerPoint presentation was drawn by his Chief of Staff, Tim Graham, and was drawn on the basis of conversations with unnamed persons who Senator Hensley stated had contacted him. He reminded the Committee about the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Baker v. Carr*, relating to the "one person, one vote" requirement that must be complied with when legislatures redistrict (see Attachment 8 of Wichita and Hutchinson Public Hearings).

Senator Hensley expressed that he would prefer Montgomery County be placed in the Second Congressional District to unify the nine counties in the southeast corner of the state. Ten years ago, there was a map titled "February Copper." At the time, the Kansas Congressional Delegation was supporting this map. The Senate passed it by a 21-19 vote. Senator Hensley stated legislators should listen to the concerns of the Kansas Congressional Delegation, but to do the Legislature's job and not allow undue influence from the congressional delegation.

Jim Stillwell, Montgomery County, wants the county to be included in the Second Congressional District along with the rest of southeast Kansas. He believes Montgomery County does not share a community of interest with Wichita and Sedgwick County.

Senator Hensley stated he hopes to present a map that would put Montgomery County into the Second Congressional District, but it takes some time to design because it has a domino effect on the other Congressional Districts.

Co-chairperson O'Neal pointed out that while the population of the Fourth Congressional District is 6,912 over the ideal number, the population of Montgomery County is over 35,000 residents. In order to accomplish what has been requested today, the Legislature would have to make up the difference between those numbers by taking population from another congressional district. There may be some counties that are more compatible with other districts. What Mr. Stillwell proposed is, however, possible.

Representative Bob Grant stated by placing Montgomery in the Fourth Congressional District during the last redistricting, it weakened southeast Kansas in the Legislature and made it difficult to elect someone from southeast Kansas to Congress.

When asked if he would like to comment on the district Montgomery County should be in, Representative Virgil Peck stated the question had not come up on the campaign trail, but believes it would be more beneficial to southeast Kansas if Montgomery County was located in the Second Congressional District. Representative Peck stated Montgomery County has an aviation industry focus shared with Wichita in the Fourth Congressional District.

Representative Grant stated economic issues are more at home in southeast Kansas than they are in Wichita. The requirement of "one man, one vote" has put a bind in splitting up the districts. The population shift will end up pitting rural against urban.

Representative Jim Kelley agreed Montgomery, Elk, Chautauqua counties are tied to the Fourth Congressional District because of the aircraft industry, but believes that economic development activities pulls all the southeast counties together.

Howard Bredesen, Coffeyville, stated both Coffeyville and Independence share a community of interest, but are not located in the same legislative districts. He would like the two cities to be put in the same House and Senate districts.

Mary Alice Laird, Chanute, expressed concern with the manner in which Woodson County was split among legislative districts. She urged the Legislature not to split small entities (cities and counties) among multiple legislative districts.

Co-chairperson O'Neal calculated that the population in southeast Kansas is short 22,773 residents. When considering the number of residents in the following House districts: 1,

2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 12, and 13, and keeping in mind the ideal population in a House district is 22,716 residents, the loss of population in southeast Kansas is equal to one House district. It is a sobering fact that Southeast Kansas will lose one House seat.

Co-Chairman Owens performed a quick calculation on the Senate districts in southeast Kansas and stated since the only growth area in southeast Kansas was around Pittsburg, he doubted that there would be a loss of a Senate seat.

Virginia Crossland-Macha, Iola, lives in the Ninth House District, which is composed of one entire county and portions of four other counties. It divides school districts, cities, and small towns, and represents a diverse area. They have a representative from the richest county representing the poorest counties. She requested the Committee take into consideration putting Piqua in the same district as Yates Center and Woodson County with which Piqua shares a community of interest.

Corey Carnahan, Kansas Legislative Research Department, informed the Committee and citizens that Maptitude software would be used for drawing district lines. Those wanting to participate in drawing their own maps should contact the Kansas Legislative Research Department (KLRD) or a caucus office.

Mr. Carnahan stated later this year, the KLRD would launch www.redistricting.ks.gov. This website will provide notifications on upcoming meetings, maps that have been technically approved for release to the public, and the maps under consideration by the Legislature.

Patricia Hauser, Neosho County Republican Chairperson, asked whether the computer software would include economic, income, and school district information. Mr. Carnahan responded those items are not tied to the 2010 Census, but possibly is available through the Secretary of State's Office.

Co-chairperson Owens extended his appreciation to members of the Legislature in the audience for their attendance at the meeting. He commented the ideal or acceptable number of people in a district only might be reflected for one day, the day on which the census was taken. This is due to deaths, births, and relocation of residents in the district. Co-chairperson Owens stated meeting the acceptable deviation in population is a very important factor to be considered when determining the validity of district boundaries.

Mike Howerter, Parsons, asked if the Legislature draws the precinct districts, because they are out of date. Mr. Carnahan explained that the local school boards draw school district boundaries and precinct boundaries are drawn by the county election officer.

Senator Umbarger expressed his appreciation to the citizens attending the meeting, stating it is a difficult process when starting to work with the numbers and dividing communities. The Legislature is dedicated to not splitting communities of interest. However, sometimes it is necessary. That is why guidelines offer a roadmap for redistricting.

Co-chairperson Owens noted Johnson County is a microcosm of the state; that it has agricultural and rural interests, as well as business and urban interests. He also noted he is a resident of Johnson County, but like many of the residents of Johnson County, he is not a native of the County, and they understand the needs and interests of the state as a whole.

Co-chairperson Owens again thanked all those present for their attendance and participation in the redistricting process. In addition, he stated it is important these joint meetings are held across the state so members of the committees are able to get input from people from all areas of the state.

Pittsburg Public Hearing

Shirley Palmer, former member of the Kansas House of Representatives, Bourbon County Democrat Chairperson, stated districts should be drawn for the people who live in them and not for politicians. She asked that Bourbon County be contained in one House District and if possible in one Senate District. She asked that the city of Fort Scott not be split between or among districts. She urged the adoption of a process under which a non-partisan redistricting commission be established to draw district boundaries. She asked that the Legislature adhere to the one person, one vote doctrine. Finally, she stated the goal of redistricting is to reflect changes in population, protect communities of interest, and ensure that growing minority communities receive fair representation ([Attachment 4](#)).

Co-chairperson O'Neal stated the Committee has to start drawing the maps somewhere and everyone wants to start the map in their county, because they get to draw the district lines exactly as they would like. He pointed out Bourbon County has 15,673 residents, which is about 7,000 residents under ideal population of a House District. Therefore, some county around Bourbon County probably would have to be split.

Ms. Palmer stated she had heard from the county clerk that a couple who lives in Bourbon County, but also within USD 248 School District (located in Crawford County), are not allowed to vote on school board issues unless they request a special ballot.

Senator McGinn stated she lives in a similar circumstance, but has never had to do what Ms. Palmer was suggesting. She requested KLRD look into whether this was an issue across the state or just in Bourbon and Crawford Counties.

Blake Benson, Pittsburg Area Chamber of Commerce, expressed support in maintaining a strong voice in the Kansas Legislature. The numbers do not look good for southeast Kansas, but Pittsburg and Crawford County are headed in the right direction; Pittsburg State University has recorded the highest attendance ever. He expressed concern with the adjustment in the federal census numbers are attributable to students enrolled at PSU. He stated over 1,000 students enrolled at PSU are not included in the Pittsburg population. Mr. Benson noted Crawford County is one of the 28 counties that did not lose population. The future population is expected to grow more than 20 percent over the next 20 years. The T-Works transportation plan will improve Highway 69 and will allow for population growth in the near future. The Chamber feels it is not the appropriate time to pull back on representation for the area ([Attachment 5](#)).

Craig Hull, Crawford County Convention and Visitor's Bureau, stated southeast Kansas travel and tourism industry has been tracking the hotel occupancy rate and shows since 2006, there has been an increase of nights sold from 42,000 to 71,000 in 2010, and is on pace to exceed 75,000 in 2011. This increase in tourism is before improvements to Highway 69 have been started. Once the new highway is completed he believes there will be a dramatic market shift benefiting the area. He would like to continue the representation they currently have. Education continues to be a focal point of their economic progress and Pittsburg State University will continue to bring in more students ([Attachment 6](#)).

Linda Grilz, Crawford County Commissioner, was concerned that changing the state representation could create a rural vs. urban fight. She also expressed a concern the agricultural interests of the state will be underrepresented. She urged the Committee to consider geographical areas when drawing line (Attachment 7).

Dale Slagle, Superintendent of Schools, Frontenac, stated there is tremendous support for families and schools in southeast Kansas, especially in tough times. They recently raised \$31,000 to fund scholarships for schools. Pittsburg State University is a quality school and has a lot to offer to industries of southeast Kansas.

Donald Pyle, Crawford County Commissioner, emphasized redistricting is an important job and hopes the Committee will maintain the integrity of many communities that comprise southeast Kansas. He asked the Committee to pay close attention to boundaries of school districts, counties, and other units of local government. Finally, he asked all districts be created with an equal amount of respect (Attachment 8).

Jeffrey Lock, Arma, stated he understands how it is a mobile society and the "one person, one vote" is the basis for redistricting. He urged the Committee to keep the number close to the deviation. He appreciates the diversity that has been brought into this area. The Committee needs to do what is right.

Clayton Tatro, Bourbon County, Fort Scott Community College, pointed out, in addition to PSU, there are six community colleges located in southeast Kansas. While he understands the need to put students back at the "home base," he believes the adjustment of numbers of students should be reconsidered. The vast majority of the time, they are living at the community college more than at home.

Co-chairperson O'Neal stated it is the student who makes the choice as to where the student is counted under the Secretary of State adjustment.

Joann McDowell, Democrat County Chairperson, Montgomery County, commented, considering what has gone on in Washington the past few weeks, the members of the Kansas Legislature need to figure out how to conduct themselves so they determine what is best for the citizens. When they are connected to Johnson or Sedgwick counties, they take a back seat. She asked the Committee to put them back into the Second Congressional District and consider the good of the state as a whole.

Dave Martin, City Manager, Fort Scott, stated it is a fight everyday to keep things prosperous in southeast Kansas. They need to work with their legislators. He stated collaboration with legislators is vital to continue the success of the area. All three of his legislators always are available to help whenever he calls. He asked the Committee to leave the districts as currently drawn.

Co-chairperson O'Neal stated the Legislature cannot leave things as they are, but will try to minimize the impact of the loss in population that has occurred in the southeast area of the state.

Co-chairperson Owens added he wants to avoid splitting cities and counties between or among districts, as much as possible, but it may be unavoidable to meet the population requirements.

Jim Overbeck, Cherokee Democrat County Chairperson, expressed concern that Cherokee County is a heavily Democratic county and through the redistricting process its democratic base will be diluted. He asked whether it is the plan of the Republicans and the Committee to break up these types of political strongholds.

Co-chairman Owens stated it is his sincere hope the Committees' intent is not to break up political strongholds. He stated guidelines have been adopted that address the issues Mr. Overbeck raised. He added, "No party wants to be the only party."

Senator Anthony Hensley provided a PowerPoint presentation that he presented at each of the previous town hall meetings (See Attachment 8 of Wichita and Hutchinson Public Hearings).

Following Senator Hensley's presentation, he was asked to divulge the names of the sources of information upon which the map was drawn. He responded that he would, if asked, divulge the names of the sources privately to any Committee member.

Denise Cassell, Chairperson, County Chairs Association, State Democrat Party, wanted citizens to express their concerns about the redistricting process so the Legislature will take into consideration citizens' perspectives.

Chad Titterington, a member of the audience, asked Senator Hensley, in relation to the "D.C.-Topeka plan," "If this indeed is a conspiracy, why won't you divulge the names publicly?" In addition, he stated he felt that Senator Hensley had a duty to divulge the names of his sources. In response to Mr. Titterington, Senator Hensley stated his sources do not want their names disclosed publicly and he is protecting his sources in the same manner a reporter would protect his or her sources.

In response to concerns that redistricting maps already may have been drawn, Co-chairperson Owens noted it is likely many maps or plans have been drawn, but an official map will not be drawn until the members of the Committee have considered comments submitted by the public at (or following) the 14 town hall meetings being held across the state this summer and fall.

Senator Hensley stated if he had any preconceived notion on the drawing of districts it would be to right the wrongs made in the redistricting process in 2002 and would begin with placing Montgomery County in the Second Congressional District with the rest of the counties of southeast Kansas.

Senator Marshall asked for more information on the adjusted census figures. Mr. Carnahan explained the Secretary of State sent boxes of forms to military bases and colleges to find out where the military personnel and students consider their permanent place of residence to be. The total adjustment figure does not take into account those who did not fill out the form and return it.

Mr. Carnahan went on to explain each educational institution determines the manner in which the forms are distributed and the program is administered on its campus. Some institutions require the form to be filled out and returned before the student is allowed to enroll in classes for the next semester.

Chad Titterington asked whether the population adjustment was an arbitrary process. Co-chairperson O'Neal responded it is up to the student to determine where he or she is counted for the purpose of redistricting. It could be worse; more could have chosen their hometown and could have made the adjustment count for the area higher.

Mr. Carnahan informed the audience the Secretary of State has made a 110-page report available online, which details the response rate and how this process is conducted.

Leah Mackey thanked the Committee for holding a town hall meeting in Pittsburg, Kansas.

The next redistricting public hearings will be held on September 2, 2011 in Lawrence and Overland Park, Kansas.

Prepared by Theresa Kiernan and Cindy O'Neal
Edited by Corey Carnahan

Approved by the Committee on:

December 2, 2011

(Date)

**GUIDELINES AND CRITERIA FOR 2012
KANSAS CONGRESSIONAL AND LEGISLATIVE REDISTRICTING**

Legislative Redistricting

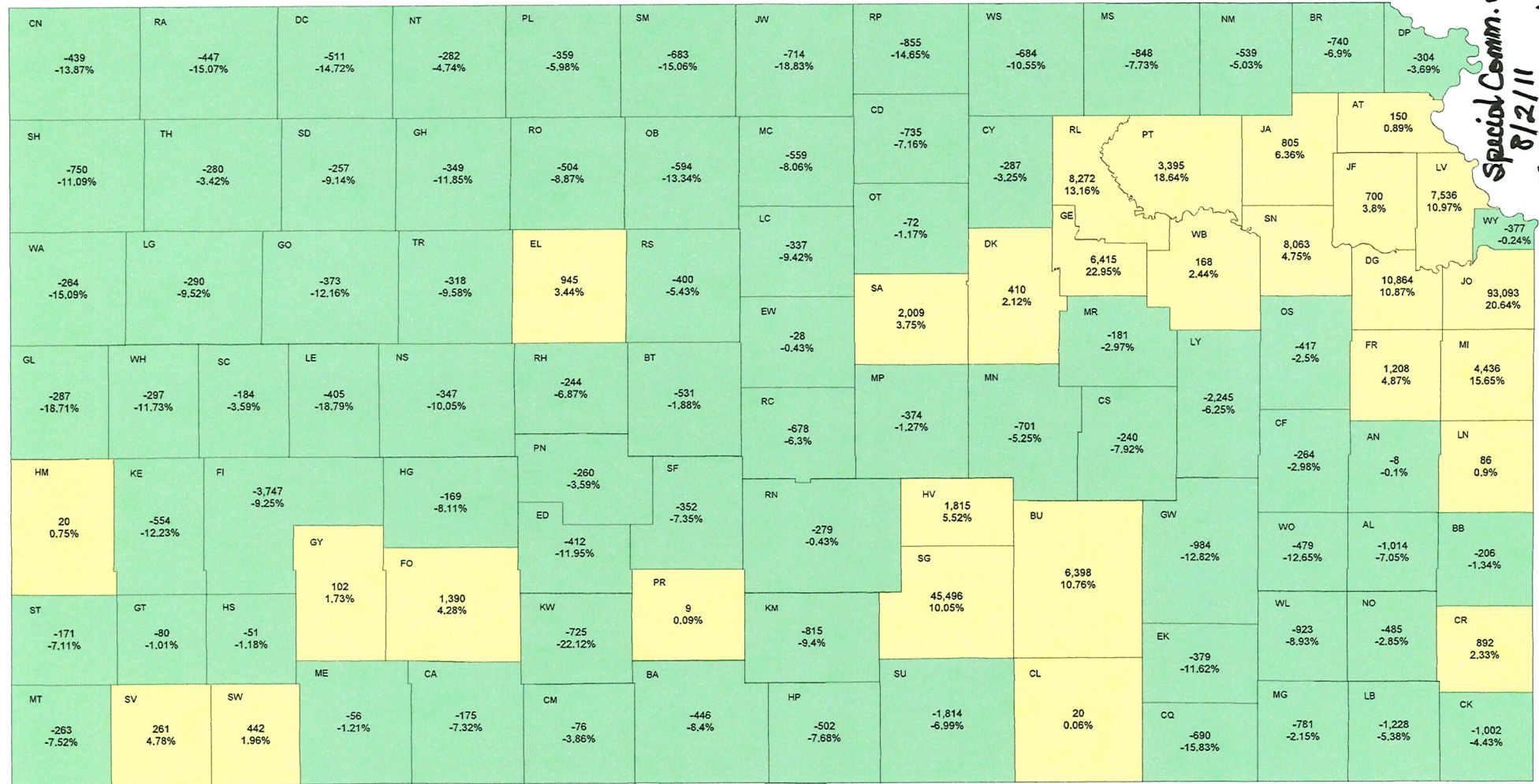
1. The basis for legislative redistricting is the 2010 U.S. Decennial Census as recalculated by the Kansas Secretary of State pursuant to Article 10, Section 1 of the *Constitution of the State of Kansas* and KSA 11-301 *et seq.*
2. Districts should be numerically as equal in population as practical within the limitations of Census geography and application of guidelines set out below. Deviations should not exceed plus or minus 5 percent of the ideal population of 22,716 for each House district and 70,986 for each Senate district, except in unusual circumstances. (The range of deviation for House districts could be plus or minus 1,136 persons, for districts that could range in population from 21,580 to 23,852. The overall deviation for House districts could be 2,272 persons. The range of deviation for Senate districts could be plus or minus 3,549 persons, for districts that could range in population from 67,437 to 74,535. The overall deviation for Senate districts could be 7,098 persons.)
3. Redistricting plans will have neither the purpose nor the effect of diluting minority voting strength.
4. Subject to the requirement of guideline No. 2:
 - a. The "building blocks" to be used for drawing district boundaries shall be voting districts (VTDs) as described on official 2010 Redistricting U.S. Census maps.
 - b. Districts should be as compact as possible and contiguous.
 - c. The integrity and priority of existing political subdivisions should be preserved to the extent possible.
 - d. There should be recognition of similarities of interest. Social, cultural, racial, ethnic, and economic interests common to the population of the area, which are probable subjects of legislation (generally termed "communities of interest"), should be considered. While some communities of interest lend themselves more readily than others to being embodied in legislative districts, the Committee will attempt to accommodate interests articulated by residents.
 - e. Contests between incumbent members of the Legislature or the State Board of Education will be avoided whenever possible.
 - f. Districts should be easily identifiable and understandable by voters.

Special Committee on Redistricting
8/2/11
Attachment 1

Congressional Redistricting

1. The basis for congressional redistricting is the 2010 U.S. Decennial Census as published by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. The "building blocks" to be used for drawing district boundaries shall be Kansas counties and voting districts (VTDs) as their population is reported in the 2010 U.S. Decennial Census.
2. Districts are to be as nearly equal to 713,280 population as practicable.
3. Redistricting plans will have neither the purpose nor the effect of diluting minority voting strength.
4. Districts should attempt to recognize "community of interests" when that can be done in compliance with the requirement of guideline No. 2.
 - a. Social, cultural, racial, ethnic, and economic interests common to the population of the area, which are probable subjects of legislation (generally termed "communities of interest"), should be considered.
 - b. If possible, preserving the core of the existing districts should be undertaken when considering the "community of interests" in establishing districts.
 - c. Whole counties should be in the same congressional district to the extent possible while achieving population equality among districts. County lines are meaningful in Kansas and Kansas counties historically have been significant political units. Many officials are elected on a countywide basis, and political parties have been organized in county units. Election of the Kansas members of Congress is a political process requiring political organizations which in Kansas are developed in county units. To a considerable degree most counties in Kansas are economic, social, and cultural units, or parts of a larger socioeconomic unit. These interests common to the population of the area, generally termed "community of interests" should be considered during the creation of congressional districts.
5. Districts should be as compact as possible and contiguous, subject to the requirement of guideline No. 2.

Kansas Counties with Percent of Population Change 2000 to 2010



Percent Change
 0 to 100 (28)
 -100 to 0 (77)

Special Comm. on Redistricting
 8/2/11
 Attachment 2

I want to thank the Special Committee on Redistricting for holding this public hearing and for coming to our community here in Chanute.

My name is Ross Hendrickson and I am the president of MRH Insurance Group – a third generation family owned independent insurance agency here in Chanute and I am representing the Chanute Chamber of Commerce with my comments this morning.

In my previous career, I worked as the executive assistant for then Kansas Secretary of State Ron Thornburgh. In fact, my first duty with the secretary of state's office was to work on the census, so I have an understanding of the process and the challenge of making these difficult decisions.

Based on past census data, there has been a strong movement of population from rural to metro and the districts for state representatives, state senators and congressional districts prove that.

Nonetheless, I am here today to stress the importance of maintaining Chanute and Neosho County's connected economic base and maintain a rural voice for our community.

Chanute has becoming a southeast rallying point for exhibiting that rural communities can achieve success and provide a way of life sought by both families and business.

I ask that you give serious consideration to not breaking-up Chanute's connected economic base and not negatively affect our successful bond issue of over \$40 million dollars that built state of the art school buildings.

Not affect Neosho County Community College's continued rise in the charts to one of the fastest growing community colleges in Kansas and a leader in training nurses.

Not affect Neosho Memorial Regional Hospital that continues to receive award after award both on the state and national level, and recently recognized by our very own Governor Brownback and the Kansas Calvary.

Special Committee on Redistricting
8/2/11
Attachment 3

Not affect our city innovation and vision that allowed the City of Chanute to invest and build their own fiber optics that we are now using to connect our key resources together and on the path to offer to our business owners and residents, as well as using as a key factor to attract business from out of state.

We are realistic there will be changes to come with the results of the census data, however, please keep in mind that not all families and businesses want to have a metro presence. Kansas represents rural America to America and we ask that you protect our interest and keep our voice that understands rural issues.

I will end with a comment that I heard early in my political career when working for Secretary Thornburgh when I had dinner with a former western Kansas legislator when he said, "Rural Kansas was the powerhouse with agriculture that fueled the Kansas economy for generations when Johnson County was just a rural area of Kansas City, so now it's time for Johnson County and other metro areas to play the role supporting the rural parts of the state."

I thank you again on behalf of the Chanute Chamber of Commerce for visiting our community and listening to our input related to this difficult legislative decision that has the overwhelming political component attached. We ask that you represent rural views over political views by not breaking-up our connected economic base, while keeping a voice that understands Kansas must maintain its diversity between metro and rural to attract families and businesses that desire the traditional way of life in Kansas.

Southeast Kansas Redistricting Meeting

August 2, 2011

Pittsburg State University Alumni Center, Pittsburg, Kansas

Remarks by: Shirley Palmer, Fort Scott. Bourbon County Democrat Chairperson, two term (four years) 4th District State Representative, 2006-2010 and southeast Kansas resident.

To the Redistricting Committee:

Good Afternoon and Welcome to Southeast Kansas. It's nice to see so many of you with whom I worked with for 4 years in the state legislature. Thank you for the opportunity to share some of my thoughts on the redistricting process. Thank you for your willingness to take the time to travel across the state attending these town hall meetings to listen to our thoughts, concerns and suggestions.

You have begun the statutorily mandated task of redrawing the state's district maps. Redistricting – or reapportionment as it is often called – reflects the change in our state's population and ensures that each Congressional, State Senate, and State House District represents an equal number of constituents.

I hope you are going into this process with an open mind and a listening ear. I trust you will do your best to do what's best for Kansas in a fair and honest way. (And not for political gain!)

Redistricting is about more than drawing lines. It determines how loud our voice will be heard in Topeka and Washington. And how well we can support aging residents, protect our rural schools, and grow the local agricultural economy. If we are going to preserve the tradition and legacy of Kansas, it's vital that the state's new redistricting plan acknowledge these needs.

I am a retired public school teacher, having taught 2nd grade for nearly 40 years. I remember quite well each new school year when we gathered back to start a new school year and during the first In-Service day of school our Supt. of School would remind us that schools did not exist for Superintendents, Principals, Teachers, Professional Aids, Custodians, etc. but that they existed for the STUDENTS.

As we look at this redistricting process **I believe districts exist for the people and not for politicians.**

Just like schools exist for the students, legislative districts exist for the people.

Bourbon County is a very important and historic place in Southeast Kansas. Bourbon County used to be one county in a district when it came to voting by legislative districts. However, we are now split into 2 different legislative House districts, District 4 and District 2. Currently we are one district for the Senate.

Many people in Bourbon County have asked me to try to get the current status changed back to what it once was. When I campaigned and went door to door, knocking on thousands of doors, the Number 1 concern shared with me when I asked what they would like to see changed was PLEASE WORK ON GETTING BOURBON COUNTY back as a whole county in a district, especially for the House races.

Special Committee on Redistricting
Date 8/2/2011
Attachment 4

The county seat in Bourbon County is Fort Scott. The city of Fort Scott isn't even in one district. The city is split. Many people don't even realize what district they are in until they go to the polls on election day and then get upset because they can't vote for someone who is in the other district.

I have shared this with both 4th District State Representative Caryn Tyson and 2nd District Representative Bob Grant. They have both indicated to me that they agree with me that Bourbon County should be all one district. They both also shared with me that it probably would never happen. I ask, WHY NOT???? If it should be then do it!

I realize it is supposed to be based on population and common sense. It also should be fair.

I don't like to see state mandated, once a decade process of redistricting into a political game. Instead of voters picking their Representatives, many politicians will be busy picking their voters!

I liked the suggestion of instead of turning this process into a possible political game – we should have done what many other states have done: adopt a non-partisan redistricting commission. Districts should be impartial, fair, and represent every Kansans' right to be represented!

The current 23-member House Redistricting committee has 6 Democrats and 17 Republicans. The 13-member Senate Redistricting committee includes 3 Democrats and 10 Republicans.

House speaker Mike O'Neal has stated that the redistricting process involves a lot of geography. He said it was all about maps that make sense and do not overtly politicize the situation.

The process of redistricting should follow the "one person, one vote" principal. Districts should be impartial, fair, and represent every Kansans' right to be represented.

Since I'm here representing Bourbon County I'd like to share some statistics with you about our county.

This information came from our County Clerk.

In 1988 Bourbon County was in the 12th District for State Senate. We were one whole county when our State Representative was in the 11th District.

In 1990, all of Bourbon County was in the 4th District House.

In 1992 Bourbon County was split into two Senate Districts 12 and 13.

District 13 was South Scott, Walnut, All of Fort Scott, Drywood, Marmaton, Pawnee and North Scott.

District 12 was Franklin, Freedom, East and West Marion, Millcreek, Osage and Timber Hill.

In 1992 Bourbon County was all one county for District 4 State Representative. Our State Representative at that time was Rep. Gilbert Gregory.

In 1994, Bourbon County was all together and our State Representative was Andrew Howell.

In 1996, Bourbon County was Senate Districts 12 and 13 and 4th District House.

Date _____
Attachment 4-2

In 1998, Bourbon County was still in Senate Districts 12 and 13 and 4th district House.

In 2000, Bourbon County split State Representatives into 2 districts, 4th and 2nd. With Senate Districts remaining 12 and 13.

In 2002 Bourbon County was still 4th and 2nd Districts for State Representatives. The Senate was not up for election that year.

In 2004, Bourbon County changed to Senate 13 and 4th and 2nd Districts for State Representatives.

The Second District includes Drywood, South Scott and Wards 2 and 3. (The East Side of Fort Scott North of 6th street).

North Scott is in Dist. 4 around where the Marmaton River splits.

Other precincts in Dist. 4 include: East Marion, Wards 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, Franklin, Freedom, Marmaton, Millcreek, Northeast Scott, Northwest Scott, Osage, Pawnee, Timberhill, Walnut and West Marion.

Our current County Clerk, a Republican, told me recently that Redistricting has never been about numbers. It's all about politics."

One reason why this current method of splitting Bourbon County is not fair in my opinion is voter anonymity. . Spring elections involving school issues becomes a big item.

For example, In one precinct, Walnut, a couple lives in Bourbon County but also lives in USD 248 School District which is in Crawford County. They can't vote on school board elections or Fort Scott Community College elections UNLESS they request a special ballot to do so. Therefore, the anonymity is gone. There is no privacy in their voting because there are only the two of them and usually these people simply choose NOT to vote in school elections due to frustration and confusion. (According to Co. Clerk)

The goal of redistricting is to reflect changes in our state's population and to protect "communities of interest" and to make sure that growing minority communities receive fair representation.

I truly believe that by making Bourbon County "whole" will address the issue of commonality, common interest and improve Economic Development.

Thank you for listening and good luck with this tremendous task.

Shirley Palmer
620-223-4105

Joint Committee on Redistricting
Date _____
Attachment 4-3



August 2, 2011

Testimony before Joint Reapportionment Committee

Blake Benson, President, Pittsburg Area Chamber of Commerce

Good afternoon, members of the committee. On behalf of the Pittsburg Area Chamber of Commerce and the more than 500 employers we represent throughout southeast Kansas, I'm here today to express our support for maintaining a strong voice for southeast Kansas in the state legislature.

The population recalculation numbers supplied by the Secretary of State's office appear to indicate that southeast Kansas doesn't currently have the population required to sustain its current level of representation in the legislature. What those numbers don't show is the direction in which our area is headed. Crawford County is one of only 28 counties that recorded an increase in population over the past decade. This past spring's enrollment at Pittsburg State University is the highest ever recorded by the university. While that's great news for our local economy, a large percentage of those 6,700 students (or more than 7,000 students in the fall) are not included in our local reapportionment figures.

The reapportionment figures also don't show our future population projections. A 2009 study by the KU Institute for Policy & Social Research projects that Crawford County's population is expected to grow by more than 20% over the next 20 years. With Pittsburg State University's success in attracting students from Johnson County and northwest Arkansas, the university's growth shows no end in sight. Add in the recent announcement by Governor Brownback and the Kansas Department of Transportation that a significant portion of Highway 69 will be included in the new T-Works transportation plan and it's a clear indication that our area should experience significant population growth in the near future.

We feel that, with this amount of future growth and activity in our area, this is no time to pull back on our representation in the legislature. We further feel that southeast Kansas is on the verge of becoming an economic engine for the state and we would appreciate your support in ensuring adequate representation. Thank you for your time and consideration.

*Special Committee on Redistricting
8/2/11
Attachment 5*



August 2, 2011

Testimony before Joint Reapportionment Committee

Craig Hull, Director, Crawford County Convention and Visitors Bureau

Good afternoon, members of the committee. On behalf of the Crawford County Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Crawford County CVB Advisory Board and the travel and tourism industry in Crawford County, the CVB would like to express support for maintaining the current representation for southeast Kansas in the state legislature.

While population continues to decline in much of southeast Kansas, the number of visitors traveling to southeast Kansas continues to grow. Occupancy tracking conducted by the Crawford County CVB since 2006 has shown an increase of room nights sold in Crawford County from 42,000 in 2006 to 47,000 in 2007, 62,000 in 2008, 66,000 in 2009 and 71,000 in 2010. Thus far in 2011, Crawford County is on pace to exceed 75,000 room nights. Combine the increased economic impact from the travel and tourism industry with that of an increase in population in Crawford County and growing enrollment at Pittsburg State indicates Crawford County has not only been able to maintain during the current economic downturn, but record steady growth.

The steady growth during an economic downturn has also come without a significant infrastructure project in southeast Kansas. The travel and tourism industry anticipates a dramatic market shift with the announcement by Governor Brownback and the Kansas Department of Transportation that the Highway 69 Project will be included in the new T-Works transportation plan. This project has the potential to transcend Crawford County from an off-the-path destination to a rubber tire market with growth in the accommodations, retail and hospitality sectors, which will ultimately lead to increase economic activity and population increase.

Pittsburg State University continues to be a focal point of economic progress. Posting all-time record enrollments, the demand for affordable higher education has thrust PSU into a position to keep up with the increased demand as well as maintain a competitive balance with regional institutes of higher learning. With numerous on-campus improvement projects in the works, PSU's continued growth will be the catalyst for economic development in Crawford County.

The Crawford County CVB believes those three factors, a growing travel and tourism industry, infrastructure improvements and increased enrollment and facility improvements at PSU, will allow Pittsburg and Crawford County to sustain its current trend of steady growth. With this growth, the Crawford County CVB feels it is necessary to maintain representation in the Kansas legislature and appreciate your support in maintaining southeast Kansas legislative districts. Thank you for your time and consideration.

*Special Committee on Redistricting
8/2/11 Attachment 6*

August 2, 2011
Legislative Redistricting Committee

I come before you today concerned about the future of Kansas – particularly rural areas of the state. The potential for changing our representation through redistricting could create a rural vs. urban Kansas.

As an agricultural state, we see declining populations in rural areas, however agriculture is a vital part of the states economy. When considering redistricting solely on population future representation may under represent those vital rural areas of the state.

Statistics can be misleading, such as student population not considered even though students live in Crawford County while attending Pittsburg State University.

Our legislators have fought fiercely to expand the highway system and need strong leadership to see that happen.

I urge you to consider geographical areas as well as population when considering future district representation.

Linda K. Grilz

Crawford County Commissioner

*Special Committee on Redistricting
8/2/2011
Attachment 7*

Donald P. Pyle
PO Box 249
111 E. Forest St.
Girard, Kansas 66743



620-724-6115
Fax 620-724-6007
www.crawfordcountykansas.com
countyclerk@ckt.net

Office of the Crawford County Clerk

August 2, 2011

Honorable Members of the House and Senate Redistricting Committee

Re: Redistrict of House and Senate Districts

Distinguished Committee Members,

In my capacity as Crawford County Election Officer, I wish to offer all of you my sincere thanks for your willingness to be a part of the work involved in redrawing House and Senate District lines. Your work will affect the State of Kansas for at least the next ten years and possibly longer. I understand how sensitive this issue can be to the citizens of Kansas and I also understand that this is a job that draws more criticism than appreciation for your efforts.

I wished to address you to emphasize how important it is that you take great care in this job to help maintain the integrity of the many communities that comprise Southeast Kansas. We have many great cities and citizens in this area and they have been and they deserve to be well represented in Topeka. Please pay close attention to community boundaries, to school district boundaries, to county boundaries and to other boundaries in your consideration of this task. Although you will ultimately be drawing these boundary lines, it is often the county election officer that is left to answer the voter's question of why their voting district changed. I hope that my answer to those questions will be, "Because it makes more sense for you to be part of your new district".

You are faced with a difficult and unenviable task. Please treat each of the citizens of Kansas that make up all of the House and Senate Districts with equal respect. I thank you for your time and for the opportunity to speak on this matter.

Sincerely,

Donald P. Pyle
Crawford County Clerk and Election Officer
countyclerk@ckt.net

Special Committee on Redistricting
8/2/11
Attachment 8