



Members of the Redistricting Advisory Committee:

The African American and Latino communities in Kansas make up 18% of the general population. The KAAAC and the KHLAAC represent these constituencies and work closely with our elected officials in Topeka.

Redistricting is essential and will impact our state for the next decade. However, if this process is mishandled, it will disenfranchise hundreds of thousands of Kansans and undermine their faith in those who will be elected to represent them. A stable and healthy democracy depends on an engaged electorate who is encouraged to participate and have a hand in shaping their future and it benefits all Kansans to be attentive to the needs of the Communities of Interest in the state.

KAAAC and KHLAAC exist to elevate the voices and concerns of our communities. As such we represent underrepresented communities around the state. Those communities must know their concerns are heard and that their voices will not be ignored when new lines are drawn.

To ensure and promote trust in our governmental system so the general population knows the government is working for them and not actively against them, we put forth the following recommendations concerning the redistricting process.

Minimum of 14 Townhall Meetings

During the last redistricting process, the committee conducted at least 14 public town hall meetings and we request that be the minimum again. We recommend at least two meetings in each of the four Congressional districts and urge the committee to start these meetings as soon as possible. We recommend the committee hold meetings before and after maps have been introduced so that the public can give feedback on the maps considered by the legislature.

Access to Participation

It is imperative to remove as many barriers as possible to accessibility and participation by the general public. We ask the committee to select meeting locations that are ADA-compliant, provide both Spanish language and sign language interpreters, and have a means for individuals to request special services they may need to engage in the process. Many video conferencing tools also have built-in closed caption services that should be integrated into meetings. The committee should hold meetings in the evenings during weekdays and on weekends to avoid employment conflicts. Additionally, we ask the committee to provide hybrid virtual and in-person meetings to maximize engagement.

Given Kansas' growing Spanish-speaking population, we request meetings focused on the Spanish-speaking communities with English translations provided.

Speaking-Time Reservations

We request for the committee to create a reservation system for the public to schedule times to speak, thereby allowing the committee to accommodate the schedules of individuals.

Community of Interest Forms

The creation of a Community of Interest form allows individuals to submit written comments describing their community. Attached is a copy of the form used by the City of Long Beach. In it, the form defines a community of interests and asks questions to solicit different types of feedback. This allows for the public to provide public comments that will be useful for the committee to consider. (Link to Long Beach Community Interest Form <https://www.longbeach.gov/globalassets/redistricting/media-library/documents/get-involved/coi-form/lb-coi-worksheet>)

Post-Hearing

Transparency is necessary to have a fully open and engaged public process. We ask that all videos and transcripts be made available online in a timely manner, along with all public submissions and written testimony.

We appreciate your consideration into the matter,

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