



Asian & Pacific Islander American Vote- Michigan

Written Testimony for the Michigan State Senate Redistricting & Elections Committee

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June 22, 2011

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. My name is Stephanie Chang and I am the president of Asian & Pacific Islander American Vote – Michigan.

Asian and Pacific Islander American Vote - Michigan is a nonpartisan nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization that serves the Asian Pacific Islander American (APIA) community through civic participation, advocacy, and education. The APIA community includes Pacific Islanders and Native Hawaiians, South Asians, Southeast Asians, East Asians, multiracial Asians, and anyone who self-identifies as Asian.

As you know, the Census 2010 data showed that the APIA population is the fastest growing population in Michigan. Our state's APIA population grew by 34.9% from 2000 to 2010. In some cities, the APIA population more than doubled in that time span.

APIAVote-Michigan has closely monitored the redistricting process in several areas and actively participated in the county reapportionment process in Oakland and Wayne counties by submitting proposed maps and testimony. In addition, in Washtenaw, Kent and Macomb Counties, we submitted letters with comparison maps in order to educate reapportionment commissioners about key geographic areas in which the APIA population grew significantly between 2000 and 2010.

It was a great experience to participate in the reapportionment process in these counties. Our participation influenced the final map agreed upon by the commission in Oakland County and hope we were considered a significant voice in the other counties previously mentioned. It was because of the open and transparent process in some of these areas that we are able to fully participate.

APIAVote-Michigan is a proud member of the Michigan Redistricting Collaborative. Like our colleagues, we were glad to see that the House majority released proposed

redistricting maps prior to a conference committee this time around. We are also glad to see that some data is available to the public.

More time and information is needed to ensure that voters and all Michigan residents are able to look at information that matters to us in this redistricting process. For example, communities of interest like my own, the APIA community, would need more time to conduct a thorough analysis of how our demographic group is impacted by the proposed district lines.

In addition, additional racial demographic data should be added to the population data charts for each proposed district map. The current information available to the public only reveals racial demographic data for African American/Black populations and only for the majority minority districts. Information about Asian, Hispanic/Latino, Native American, and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander population counts and percentages for each proposed district should be made available.

This is a great opportunity to continue making redistricting an open and transparent process that all Michiganders can participate in. Today we join the other Michigan Redistricting Collaborative members in calling for:

- The posting of the plans with full detail on the legislature's website for 30 days before passage of legislation;
- Two or more committee hearings in each chamber to receive comment about the plans;
- Four or more public hearings around the state to allow a greater amount of public comment; and
- An official statement from the legislature about each district explaining why the proposed boundaries were drawn the way they were.

The November 1 deadline is still several months away, meaning that there is time to ensure that the best plan possible is adopted. I hope that this committee will consider these recommendations. Thank you for your time.