

Testimony in Support of Fair Redistricting
August 26, 2021

Chair Devlin and Members of the Redistricting Committee:

Fair. Open. Accessible.

Good day. I am Karen Ehrens, a resident of Bismarck and Secretary of the League of Women Voters of North Dakota. As we embark on the once-in-a-decade opportunity to redraw legislative districts, we encourage you to ensure the process takes place in a **fair, open and accessible** manner. Redistricting impacts our lives in every way; the committee has responsibilities to all of us represented by this body.

While there will be a short timeframe in which to take the data obtained in the U.S. Census and prepare the districts in time for elections, a short timeframe is no excuse to deny input by the people of the state who will be impacted by these decisions for the next 10 years. With the new meeting technology in place, with planning, and with determination, the members of a redistricting committee can set up a process that is **fair, open and accessible**.

There are tools available to guide a redistricting process. The League of Women Voters of the United States partnered with the Campaign Legal Center (CLC) to produce a redistricting transparency report: Designing a Transparent and Ethical Redistricting Process: A Guide to Ensuring that the Redistricting Process is Fair, Open, and Accessible.

Key recommendations of this report are to hold a number of meetings or public hearings throughout the state, make the data used by the committee public in accessible formats, release all draft maps and reports on a publicly-accessible website, include a reasonable public comment period for proposed maps, and that all of you committee members act in an impartial way and follow ethical standards.

Please provide special consideration so that the members of the five tribal nations in the state of North Dakota have a role in the redistricting process, and that their communities are kept as intact as possible in the drawing of the districts.

We are watching and counting on you to make the redistricting process **fair, open and accessible**.

Karen Ehrens
233 West Ave C
Bismarck, ND 58501