

Public Comments During 6.1.21 IRC Meeting						
Timestamp	Meeting Date	Agenda Item	First and Last Name	Zip Code	Representing	Comments
2021/06/01 9:16:26 AM MDT	June 1, 2021	Public comments	Elisabeth Haskell	85364	self	Since you are talking about Comments from the public: Can you please do something about the way you handle comments from the public? There are three ways to submit comments, but the comments on only one of these channels are being made on any kind of consistent basis. The IRC is supposed to bring transparency and accountability to the redistricting process, and keeping hidden two thirds of the voices and messages influencing your work - even if inadvertently - does not serve this purpose. This inconsistency between the three public comment channels is technical, and should not be hard to fix, if you set your staff to it.
2021/06/01 9:18:46 AM MDT	June 1, 2021	Public Comments	María-Elena Dunn	86303	Myself -	The way that Contact Us is advertised it is NOT as being different and those who submit via that means do that ONLY because they are unable to "attend" the long Tue meetings. The ones in Public Comment are supposed to be targeted, as they have to be linked to something on the agenda, so saying that Contact Us are meant to be more targeted and private is not quite accurate. The public wants and needs to see transparency and by keeping the access to these more cumbersome (through public records requests) is not doing that.
2021/06/01 9:18:49 AM MDT	June 1, 2021	Public comments	Nancy Meister	85364	Self	Thank you Commissioner Lerner for acknowledging the frustration of last week's comment - wrong date. I too think we should see all public comments no matter how or when received. There is no private comments - all are public.
2021/06/01 9:19:52 AM MDT	June 1, 2021	Mapping	Debbie Logan	85614	Myself	Remaining independent and unbiased is extremely important when it comes to the mapping. Given what is going on with our state legislature, it is even more important that all 5 commissioners remain open minded, unbiased and independent of any and all political leanings. Commissioner Watchman had some very valid points and concerns regarding what this legislature has produced and we do not want this running over into the IRC's decision making. Thank you
2021/06/01 9:21:29 AM MDT	June 1, 2021	Comment Period re: Draft Maps	Hope Busto-Keyes	85743	Self	Dear Commissioners, The independence of the commission and the avoidance of undue partisan influence are of utmost importance to the confidence in the fairness of the final outcome of redistricting. As I understand, both the public and the AZ legislature will have the opportunity to submit comments about draft maps during a prescribed period. Comments about map construction that are transmitted from legislators to the IRC outside of the prescribed comment period should be avoided for the sake of preserving the independence of the commission. Thank you for your consideration.

2021/06/01 9:21:45 AM MDT	June 1, 2021	IV. Discussion on Public Comments received prior to today's (May 25, 2021) meeting.	Nelson Morgan	85054	Self	I agree with the decision too make public the Contact Us comments along with the comments submitted using these forms. The description of the difference between the two was more a description of the prior choice than of any strong reason for the status quo, so I applaud the Commission's decision to make it easier for the public to see all of the comments.
2021/06/01 9:31:34 AM MDT	June 1, 2021	public comments	Mary-Jeanne Fincher	85253	self	It was not clear from the Commissioners' and counsel's discussion (some of which was garbled, at least on my internet feed) which comments submitted via the website would NOT be made public. Could you please explain the distinction being made?
2021/06/01 9:34:56 AM MDT	June 1, 2021	Inviting legislators to comment	Cynthia Cook-Keller	85745	self	While the idea of inviting state legislators to offer comments, suggestions,etc. to the IRC may be in the spirit of inclusion, the IRC is a NON-political entity and needs to remain free of any potential of crossing that line. The legislature is certainly allowed to comment AFTER the draft map is presented but I think having their input prior to this would be asking for increased divisive exchange.
2021/06/01 9:35:16 AM MDT	June 1, 2021	VII Discussion and possible action on legal counsel briefing Re Item A Consideration and possible adoption of commission guidance onethics and conflict of interest avoidance:	Elisabeth Haskell	85364	Self	Why is your law firm Snell and Wilmer still doing political and candidate consulting?!? Surely this is a conflict of interest! Shouldn't the IRC adopt policies and procedures to make sure your employees and contractors do not violate conflict of interest laws, such as doing partisan work while under contract with the IRC? If you don't adopt and enforce such policies, the IRC is risking the integrity of all its work!
2021/06/01 9:42:07 AM MDT	June 1, 2021	Public comments	Laura Huenneke	86004	self	Thank you very much for the discussion (and decision) on public comments through these forms during meetings and comments received through the link on the website. I appreciate Commissioner Lerner raising once more the topic of making the latter equally public. And I know many of us appreciate that the majority of commissioners were in support of merging all of these comments in the public posting of comments received. This is a really meaningful step toward building public confidence in your commitment to transparency - thank you.
2021/06/01 9:42:33 AM MDT	June 1, 2021	Public Hearings Tour	Cynthia Cook-Keller	85745	self	It seems that pubic hearings tours are to be held AFTER the map is drawn, not after that draft is drawn...I urge the IRC to present the draft version with tours to acquire input from the public first. This tour could be virtual, or the final draft could be virtual if time/money etc. are an issue to have multiple tours.
2021/06/01 9:43:44 AM MDT	June 1, 2021	Census Presentation & Geography	Sue Thorne	85718	Copper Street Huddle, Tucson AZ	Please keep Communities of Interest in same geographical and cultural area together in redistricting. Make sure you do this in Northern AZ with the Native American populations and in Maricopa County as well as rural areas and Tucson. I have seen a Maricopa Neighborhood school and surrounding neighborhood left out of the district they serve. I have seen a park in the same district left out. I am not convinced that the mapping company that the Redistricting Commission has chosen is the most expert company and the most independent of partisan politics. I would encourage the Chairwomen to prevent attempts to gerrymander our state in order to favor Republican majorities. Gerrymandering is anathema to Democracy. The director you have chosen is not an expert at redistricting. Why? It makes me think that you want to direct him to do as you wish instead of what it is independent and right for Democracy. Make redistricting fair to all! You have also kept the very partisan lawyers who contribute as we speak to right-wing causes instead politically independent expert lawyers. Disengage with these partisan lawyers. We are watching and are building a case for litigation if your majority decisions do not reflect communities of interest.

2021/06/01 9:47:09 AM MDT	June 1, 2021	Agenda Item X "Discussion of future agenda item requests"	Elisabeth Haskell	85364	self	<p>Regarding a previous IRC discussion about bringing AZ legislators into the redistricting process, please DO NOT do this! We, the voters of AZ, passed Prop 106 to take redistricting OUT of the hands of self-interested legislators - and we meant it! If you bring legislators back in to the process FOR ANY PURPOSE, you are nullifying the INDEPENDENCE of the IRC, which is the whole reason this body exists. Inviting legislators back in to the process FOR ANY PURPOSE is flouting the will of the people of AZ. Arizonans expect you to defend and uphold the independence FROM POLITICAL INFLUENCE of the redistricting process!</p>
2021/06/01 9:52:58 AM MDT	June 1, 2021	IV. Discussion on Public Comments received prior to today's (May 25, 2021) meeting.	William Bowlus-Root	85365		<p>I respectfully disagree with the position stated by commissioners that there is no distinction between public comments posted while an IRC meeting is in progress through the official IRC Public Comments form channel (where this comment is posted) as opposed to those posted to the Contact Us form on your site which can be submitted at any time.</p> <p>My understanding is that, while it's true that comments posted to both channels are subject to public records requests and discoverable for legal actions, my comments posted during the meeting on the Public Comment form become an integrated part of the official transcript of the meeting, whereas my Contact Us comments are not. The Public Comments are required to be visible to the public as part of the meeting and can be accessed through the link on your website; the Contact Us comments can be accessed only through a public records request.</p> <p>Because I don't have access to the Contact Us comments, I am not able to see comments that have been forwarded to commissioners and therefore do not have visibility to influences that may come into play in their decisions. This seems to be contrary to the spirit if not the letter of the open meetings law. Members of the public should not have to go to the extra effort to file public records requests in order to see these.</p> <p>If you consider posting the Contact Us comments in bulk to the Public Comments channel, you may be mixing the comments for a meeting that has already ended with those submitted after the meeting; essentially adding to the meeting record after the fact. If you include them with the next meetings minutes, they would be referring to agenda items that are not pertinent to the new meeting. That makes it very difficult for the public to understand what meeting the comments are intended to reference. Transparency is not the same as throwing all comments by the public into a pit that can't be reasonably sorted through.</p> <p>Also be cognizant that some comments posted through the Contact Us form are comments or questions intended for your staff, the webmaster, or suggestions about the process of conducting meetings that are not intended for public viewing. There is no information on the Contact Us form that leads you to believe your comments will become part of a meeting itself. It's not clear what personal information you post there - such as the email address - will become generally available to the public. People who have already posted comments there may not want those comments made public without their permission.</p> <p>I'm not sure how you will decide to address this, but please do not assume that comments submitted through the Contact Us form are equivalent to those submitted through the Public Comments form. They are not.</p> <p>William Bowlus-Root A concerned citizen</p>

2021/06/01 9:54:27 AM MDT	June 1, 2021	V	Walter Gray	85035	Self	Income should be reported in Blocks, Block Groups and Census Tracts. Socioeconomic Segregation is a reality in AZ cities and counties. Also, throughout the country. Economic information is important to identifying communities of interest. Currently no Congressional or Legislative Districts have a Low Income majority. This is not Fair because about 40% of the Valley and State is Low Income.
2021/06/01 9:58:58 AM MDT	June 1, 2021	Census presentation	D Dunn	86303		We appreciate you asking the questions, Commissioner Lerner. Just because the other commissioners are mum does not mean you should be reluctant or apologize for actively participating. We are very glad to have your questions since we cannot be there. There was a lot to absorb regarding this Census presentation so clarifying questions are a must. Thank you.
2021/06/01 10:39:58 AM MDT	June 1, 2021	Census data protection	Nancy Meister	85364	Self	We need to believe that the Census Bureau is providing statistically reliable data for redistricting. Questions that use language that causes people to feel that the numbers are not accurate lead to a similar situation as "the election was stolen." We do not need to lead the public to think the census is not as accurate as possible.
2021/06/01 10:41:19 AM MDT	June 1, 2021	Inviting legislative caucus leaders to address the commission	Peggy Pena	85643	Self	The purpose of the Independent Redistributing Commission was to reassign the task of redrawing the congressional and state legislative districts from the state legislature to the IRC. Allowing input from the legislative caucus leaders prior to the draft maps being drawn is contrary to Proposition 106 intent.
2021/06/01 10:43:14 AM MDT	June 1, 2021	ED's report	M E Dunn	86303		No written report - screen shared - of ED's report again. Where is the detail for the Budget? And, "I think" that the Legislature has gone into recess until June 10. And, it may come back early, Yes, we all know about the issues between the legislature and the Governor. So, please come to these meetings fully prepared.
2021/06/01 10:43:32 AM MDT	June 1, 2021	Ill	Catherine Sigmon	85284	myself	I strongly urge the Commission to schedule public hearings as soon as possible. Public participation is essential to ensuring trust in the process and result.
2021/06/01 10:44:02 AM MDT	June 1, 2021	Redistricting and State Legislature	Janice & Mike Cosand	86406	Selves	During your May 25th meeting, the issue was raised regarding inviting the legislative caucus leaders to meet with your Commission. My husband and I strongly object to the legislature interfering/participating in a process that should be nonpartisan and independent. Clearly our AZ legislature is not partisan when they passed voter suppression bills that make it far more difficult to vote. Our AZ legislature is also responsible for an "audit" of the 2020 presidential election that is making our state a laughingstock of the nation and undermines our confidence in our democratic process of free and fair elections (when particularly when dark money is financing it). Please keep the AZ Legislature away from the Commission's responsibility of drafting the congressional and the legislative maps.
2021/06/01 10:47:41 AM MDT	June 1, 2021	Public hearings	Nancy Meister	85364	Self	Hopefully public hearings will be open to residents of the area and eliminate outsiders. I do hope you will look to a wide variety of places and not just rely on the Timmons Group to decide.
2021/06/01 10:48:12 AM MDT	June 1, 2021	#VI - Travel of IRC	Joan McDermott	86403	Mohave County Democratic Central Committee	We are very interested in not only knowing when the Commission will be in Mohave County, but want to know the locations, times - and whether our political elected officials will be invited. We believe that the formation of the commission was approved by citizens to remove politicians from that process.

2021/06/01 10:50:03 AM MDT	June 1, 2021	ED Report	David Dunn	86303		At the last several meetings, the commission has been talking about the fact that they need to talk about the listening tours - the timing, the structure of these, the way they will be handled (in person, zoom, hybrid). Why is this not being "agendized?" Time is ticking. And, people in the more rural communities need significant heads-up since they may need to travel. And, I am continually surprised by the Ex Dir's lack of preparedness. And, the fact that the commissioners seem not to be demanding more. The silence after his "presentation" are very telling. Distressing.
2021/06/01 10:54:04 AM MDT	June 1, 2021	Commission providing input from Legislators	Elaine Downing	86404	self	I am deeply concerned about the IRC providing the Arizona Legislators an opportunity to have input into the new maps. These legislators who are in the majority have proven themselves time and again to put party above the state citizens they represent. The current onslaught of voter suppression laws being passed to make it harder on our citizens to vote, and the sham of an audit by the Republicans proves it. This Commission is supposed to be INDEPENDENT. That is what the I stands for in IRC. It should be governed by the law and census data, and not party politics. Citizens should have confidence that their tax dollars are paying for fair and equitable elections and representation. If our districts will be redrawn in accordance with the Constitution then let it be done with integrity. Thank you.
2021/06/01 11:00:45 AM MDT	June 1, 2021	Proposed meeting with legislative leaders	Betty Bengtson	85718	League of Women Voters of Arizona	The League of Women Voter of Arizona urges you to consider carefully the purpose of meeting with legislative leaders. The IRC was create specifically to remove redistricting from the legislature. Your responsibility is to create districts fairly and independently. Legislative leaders represent partisan views, but may not represent all Arizona residents. And legislators are given an opportunity to submit comments on draft maps at a specified time in the process. The IRC draws maps independently of the legislature; the legislature does not approve the maps you produce. You must consider the interests of all Arizonans, not political parties. You should not provide an opportunity to unfairly weight the scales. Again we urge you to carefully consider this step.
2021/06/01 11:05:24 AM MDT	June 1, 2021	ED's Report	María-Elena Dunn	86303	The Rural Areas	Please place Round One of the Listening Tour discussion in next week's agenda. Enough talking about talking about it. We need guidance on possible dates, how these will be formatted (presentation by Commissioners, number of public commenters or amount of time, etc.), and in what version (in person, zoom, hybrid). In making these decisions, pls insure that you take into account that people in smaller/rural communities need to make plans to travel, perhaps, and that wi-fi/braodband may be limited, if available at all, that there are cell service dead zones, etc..... By next week, the Exec Dir should present to you, in writing, (to be shared with public) a proposed schedule for the Tour as well as a draft outline which addresses all the points listed above. Your time is running away.....

2021/06/01 11:14:56 AM MDT	June 1, 2021	VI. Executive Director's Report and discussion thereof.	William Bowlus-Root	85365	Myself	<p>Brian discussed the time frame and prices that would be charged for public records requests. He indicated that requests might not be acknowledged for several days and may not be fulfilled for a month or more. He also mentioned a charge of \$.25 per page. The public should not be required to go to these lengths to penetrate the information that may influence the commission members.</p> <p>If you are considering making it necessary to submit a public records request to obtain the comments made through the Contact Us form, then it seems entirely inappropriate that a fee would be charged for them. Please make those requests free of charge.</p> <p>That they might not be made available more than a few days before the next meeting makes it difficult for anyone who is closely following the proceedings to assess public sentiment, incorporate good ideas presented there into their own thinking or suggestions, or to understand what commissioners may be responding to (since presumably they would already have seen those comments before the public records request could be sent to the requestor.) If you are going to make the Contact Us comments public, then you may need to consider making them available on your website in a format similar to those submitted through the official channel on the Public Comments form that are already made available there.</p> <p>William Bowlus-Root A concerned citizen</p>
2021/06/01 11:15:37 AM MDT	June 1, 2021	Scheduling public meetings	Betty Bengtson	85718	League of Women Voters of Arizona	The League of Women Voters of Arizona would like to see a greater sense of urgency in scheduling a listening tour/public meetings. Last minute announcements of a meeting schedule does not serve the public interest.
2021/06/01 11:16:05 AM MDT	June 1, 2021	updates from law firm	Susan Bickel	85718	self	I would like to ask why only one law firm seems to be present and participating during these meetings? Thank you.
2021/06/01 11:19:24 AM MDT	June 1, 2021	Census Bureau presentation	Betty Bengtson	85718	League of Women Voters of Arizona	Thank you for arranging today's presentation by the Census Bureau. It was very helpful in understanding the census data and its use in redistricting. Please continue to provide these educational and training opportunities to the public as well as to the Commission.
2021/06/01 11:21:43 AM MDT	June 1, 2021	XI	M.E. Dunn	86303		Commissioner Watchman made an excellent point which brings to mind that the IRC members may be doing presentations to different organizations (such as the Chair and the LWV this 7 June) and there should be a standard power point presentation that all can use for these so that they are all speaking off the same page in the same book. Ex Dir Schmitt should have this ready by next week, tho it should have been ready already given that they will be speaking soon. Let's get this done, please

2021/06/01 11:25: 30 AM MDT	June 1, 2021	Special Speaking Invitation to Legislative Leadership	Sharon Edgar	86004	self	In the May 25, 2021 meeting, Chairwoman Neuberg proposed inviting the majority and minority leadership "to come and share with us what their vision is of our responsibility and have a comfort level with us." This would be the same majority leadership that sued the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors, most of whom are Republicans, for possession of the 2020 general election ballots so they could conduct a third audit – an audit that is not exactly winning any prizes for transparency and ethical standards? The same majority leadership that promotes voter suppression bills, like ones that will make it more difficult for citizens on the Navajo Nation to vote and register to vote? In my opinion, the optics of the Commission having a level of comfort with those leaders would not generate public respect and/or confidence in the independence of the Commission. Thank you, Vice Chairman Watchman for giving voice to the fact that many of us are opposed and appalled by the Republican leadership's voter suppression bills. They should not be given special consideration beyond the thirty-day comment period after draft maps are drawn.
2021/06/01 11:25: 45 AM MDT	June 1, 2021	X Future Agenda Items	Nancy Meister	85364	Self	I agree with Commissioner Lerner that special interest groups should not be asked to present to the Commission. They will have the opportunity at the Public Hearings. I could request special time to speak to you, but I should not be given that privilege. You are an Independent Commission so we could get politics out of the redistricting. The Public started the process!
2021/06/01 11:27: 01 AM MDT	June 1, 2021	discussion on inviting legislators to speak	Susan Bickel	85718	self	Thank you Commissioner Watchman. Your comments clarifying the origin of the IRC were important to share again.