

INTRO

If you are considering **testifying at the Arvada hearing at 7 p.m. on July 13**, this will help to ensure your voice is heard and will help you think about what message you are trying to deliver about your community. This memo is a resource for you as you prepare to get engaged and make an argument for your community to ensure fair representation at the federal and legislative levels for the next decade.

Can't make Arvada? [A full list of future hearings can be found here.](#)

TESTIFYING IS AS EASY AS 1-2-3

- 1) You need to be clear as to which commission, or both, that you are communicating to – as these meetings will be joint public hearings with both commissions. Once you have decided, [sign up on the official website](#) (sign ups opened July 6th for this hearing)
 - a. To testify remotely (online) you **MUST** sign up in advance.
 - b. If you are testifying in person you are also asked to sign up in advance but may sign up upon arrival.
- 2) You will need to prepare your remarks and understand the process
 - a. We have guiding questions and helpful information in this document
- 3) You will need to show up on time and wait until your turn to testify. Come prepared for a potentially long wait!

COMMISSION GUIDANCE ON COMMUNITIES OF INTEREST

Commissioners are particularly interested in learning about your communities of interest. The Colorado Constitution uses the same definition of “community of interest” for congressional and legislative redistricting. For the congressional commission, this can be found at Section 44 (3)(b), Article V. The equivalent language for the legislative commission is at Section 46 (3)(b) and noted in brackets below:

(I) "Community of interest" means any group in Colorado that shares one or more substantial interests that may be the subject of federal [or state] legislative action, is composed of a reasonably proximate population, and thus should be considered for inclusion within a single district for purposes of ensuring its fair and effective representation.

(II) Such interests include but are not limited to matters reflecting:

(A) Shared public policy concerns of urban, rural, agricultural, industrial, or trade areas; and

(B) Shared public policy concerns such as education, employment, environment, public health, transportation, water needs and supplies, and issues of demonstrable regional significance.

(III) Groups that may comprise a community of interest include racial, ethnic, and language minority groups, subject to compliance with subsections (1)(b) and (4)(b) of section 44.3 [or 48.1] of this article V, which subsections protect against the denial or abridgement of the right to vote due to a person's race or language minority group.

(IV) "Community of interest" does not include relationships with political parties, incumbents, or political candidates.

PREPARATION:

A Few More Tips:

- Plan your comments before speaking to the commission. You will have 3 minutes to address them.
- At the outset, address whether your remarks are directed to the congressional commission, the legislative commission, or both.
- To give your statements the most impact, make your comments concise and straightforward and ask that a written version be submitted ([or submit yourself](#)) in its entirety into the public record.
- Be aware that **the chair (or chairs) may limit speakers**. If you are cut off before finishing, ask again that your remarks be submitted in their entirety to the public record.
- **When you speak to the commission you must "go through the chair."** This means first addressing them by saying, "Mr. Chairman/Madam Chair, commission members."

SOME QUESTIONS TO GET YOU THINKING

- What are 1-3 interests that Arvada has in common with its neighboring communities (Wheat Ridge, Golden, Lakewood, and Edgewater)
- What are 1-3 things that make Arvada different or unique from Weld County, or other areas outside of Jefferson County?
- What are the regional needs of Arvada and this area as it relates to (federal or state depending on which commission you address) issues?
- What are some of the issues, positions, partnerships or other communities that bind this area and define this community?
- Do you agree with commission staff that Arvada should be in a new 8th Congressional District, or do you think it should remain in the 7th CD with other Jefferson County communities?
- What makes Arvada unique and what makes it a community?

FINAL TESTIMONY:

Your goal is to decide the key message you want to deliver to the Commission. Keep in mind the definition of what type of similarities constitute a community of interest and be sure to be descriptive as to why that matters.

Finally, don't forget to put your personal touch or your own (or your family's) experience when preparing your testimony. It's important that commissioners understand how these maps and these decisions impact you and your community when state or federal candidates are elected to office and have a voice in policy making - the whole point of redistricting!