

May 1, 2021

Subcommittee Chair Sen. David Koehler  
West-Central Illinois Subcommittee  
Illinois Senate Redistricting Committee  
[redistrictingcommittee@senatedem.ilga.gov](mailto:redistrictingcommittee@senatedem.ilga.gov)

Dear Senator Koehler:

I am writing to urge the Senate's Redistricting Committee to reunite the City of Galesburg within a single state senate district.

I have lived in Galesburg for over thirty years and have tried to be an active and informed citizen. I remember well when we had district offices in our community, making it easy to connect with our state representatives. However, since the last round of redistricting in 2011, Galesburg has been divided among two state house districts and two state senate districts, with the result that none of our elected representatives currently maintains a district office here. (The closest, Rep. Dan Swanson (74<sup>th</sup>), is 16 miles away, in Woodhull, while the district offices of Rep. Hammond and Senators Stoller and Tracy are all more than an hour away, in Peoria and Macomb.)

This bifurcation of our town dilutes our voice in a way that I believe is unfair. Galesburg and its citizens have interests that are distinct from the rural areas and smaller communities with which we now share political representation, and the current division into separate districts severely diminishes our ability to make those interests and concerns heard. As you may know, Galesburg is a commercial, small-manufacturing and educational center with a strong representation of organized labor. Nearly 25% of our city's residents are people of color. The collective interests of the city and the urban issues of concern to its citizens are very different from those of the overwhelmingly rural and agricultural population that makes up the majority of these districts. Dividing the city in this way virtually ensures that these interests and values are effectively halved in impact both at the ballot box and after.

Our city and its residents deserve to be represented through a process where all our votes can have as full an impact as possible. Redistricting should be governed by the principle that municipalities are divided only when necessary. I urge the Redistricting Committee to reunite the City of Galesburg and bring it back into a single state House district.

Sincerely,



Nancy Eberhardt



Galesburg, IL