

McLean County Democratic Party  
Senate Redistricting Committee, March 22, 5 p.m., Peoria Civic Center  
Support Redistricting  
309-824-6672  
chair@mcleancountydemocrats.org

Dear Honorable Senators,

Bloomington-Normal in McLean County, Illinois is a fast-growing area with two universities and a community college that is split into two different state House, two state Senate and two Congressional districts. The borders for these districts often run through similar neighborhoods. You may be separated from your neighbor politically depending on what side of the street you live on. This is not an ideal situation, and often leads to confusion and voter apathy.

Because McLean County is the largest county in Illinois by land mass, these districts encompass large rural areas that deserve their own proper and responsive representation. However, they also include a rapidly growing, progressive and well-educated urban area that has very little in common socially, economically, and politically with the rest of the county. For the past twenty years, Bloomington-Normal has seen the highest growth outside of the Chicago Metro area. While this has brought a diverse population to our county, the Bloomington - Normal metro area is not treated as an integral unit. For example, of our two state representatives, one lives in town and the other is located 30 miles away - separated from the metro area by acres of soybeans and corn. This particular district includes our low income, working class neighborhoods. The current State Representative for that district is rarely seen in this area and is unresponsive to community concerns.

As you plan redistricting, we implore that you consider Bloomington-Normal as an urban metro area and draw fair boundaries that will unite this community instead of dividing it. There is endless confusion at election time about what State House, State Senate and U.S. Congressional district people are in. The solution often requires elaborate explanations and considerable expense designing mail pieces and other campaign advertising that help people discern irregular, precinct by precinct divisions.

The McLean County Democratic Party is an active organization that has mobilized itself as a political force. It has filled precinct positions and had candidates run for county, city and regional offices. For a party, these irregular political subdivisions create a significant challenge to ensuring informed voters turn out and understand what offices they are voting for and which they cannot. Confused or discouraged voters will not show up to vote.

We ask that you unite our community of Bloomington-Normal into a coherent unit so that our elected representatives will truly understand and reflect our community's concerns and needs.

Sincerely,

Patrick Cortesi  
Chair, McLean County Democrats