

Testimony on Redistricting

To: Honorable Members of the House and Senate Redistricting Committees
From: Alan Sender, Chairperson, Bloomington-Normal Airport Authority
Re: Subject Matter on 2020 Census and adjustments to the General Assembly Redistricting Act Of 2021
Date: August 27, 2021

I currently serve as chairperson of the Bloomington-Normal Airport Authority, the owner and operator of the Central Illinois Regional Airport (CIRA.) Created in 1964 under the Illinois Airport Authorities Act, the Bloomington-Normal Airport Authority operates as an independent municipality with a seven member Board of Commissioners. The airport is located in McLean County in the southeastern section of the City of Bloomington. CIRA encompasses approximately 1,950 acres. The National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems categorized CIRA as a primary commercial service airport.

The Bloomington-Normal Airport Authority is overseen by seven appointed commissioners, two from the City of Bloomington, two from the Town of Normal and three from the McLean County Board. It is noteworthy that, reflecting the original organizational documents dating to 1964, the property limits of the Authority are confined to the corporate limits of the Town of Normal and the City of Bloomington, thus requiring that all seven commissioners live within the municipalities of Bloomington and Normal.

I appreciate the opportunity to present today a single redistricting issue impacting the Central Illinois Regional Airport.

The apportionment map passed by the General Assembly in June and signed by Governor Pritzker places the entirety of the CIRA property within the 87th House and 44th Senate districts. It is noteworthy that the 87th/44th contains an very small subset of City of Bloomington residents who are constituents and taxpayers of the Bloomington-Normal Airport Authority. The map signed by the governor places the overwhelming preponderance of the airport authority's constituents in the 91st and 105th House districts.

The position I present today is that CIRA's constituents would be best served by attaching the airport property to the 105th district, to which the airport is currently adjacent, and in which far more of the airport's constituents reside, as compared to the 87th district. We hope, by making this change, to more closely tie CIRA to legislators who represent the airport board's constituents.

Such an adjustment could be accomplished **without the need to move households from their current assignment to the 87th and 105th districts**, as follows: the southernmost boundary of the 105th House District, which under the map approved in June terminates on Route 9, would be slightly adjusted so as to place CIRA in the 105th instead of the 87th district.

If the 105th boundary were to extend south of Route 9 from County Road 1900 on the east, Ireland Grove Road on the south and Streid Road to Hershey Road on the west, then back up to Route 9, the entirety of airport property would be included in the 105th along with a number of businesses. There would be only a very small handful of residences that would be impacted and, in fact, the line could be drawn on the west edge of the airport to exclude any residences.

Alternatively, it would clearly be beneficial to the citizens and property owners in the City of Bloomington and Town of Normal whose tax dollars support CIRA to have a single State House district containing all of Blomington and Normal. From the Airport's perspective, and as a long-time citizen of Normal, Bloomington-Normal is a community of interest and splitting the communities into three different districts appears to dilute the community's political voice.

However, should a redistricting plan be unable to maintain Bloomington-Normal as a single community and state house district, and, as chairperson of the airport board, we ask your consideration to adjust the 10th and 87th district borders to include the airport in the 105th district.

As chairperson of the BNAA Board of Commissioners, I appreciate the opportunity to make this request and stand ready to answer any questions that may be raised.