

ALASKA REDISTRICTING BOARD

Verbal Testimony Summaries Homer Public Hearing 10/13/2021

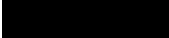
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ALASKA REDISTRICTING BOARD COMMUNITY PUBLIC HEARING VERBAL TESTIMONY SUMMARY

Testimony Received: **Homer 10/13 Verbal Testimony**

Summary Date: October 27, 2021

Name: **Nicole Arevalo**

Email or Phone Contact: 

Ms. Arevalo stated that Kodiak Island is completely disparate from the Kenai Peninsula. The communities of Kachemak Bay, including Nanwalek and Port Graham, are included in the community even though the city limits of Homer are small.

Ms. Arevalo spoke in opposition of dividing the Kenai Peninsula as neighbors would be removed which does not make sense. Though there are requirements on the percentage of residents needing to be shuffled, it does not make any geographic, socio-economic, or community-based sense to divide these residents from the community.


Ms. Arevalo is in favor of keeping the Kenai Peninsula whole and the communities in Kachemak Bay and budding Kachemak Bay need to be unified as Homer is the hub for services for these communities.

**ALASKA REDISTRICTING BOARD
COMMUNITY PUBLIC HEARING
VERBAL TESTIMONY SUMMARY**

Homer 10/13 Verbal Testimony

Summary Date: October 27, 2021

Name: **Natalia Basargin**

Email or Phone Contact: 


Public Comment: **Ms. Basargin lives 26 miles on East End Road and many residents there do business in Homer. Ms. Basargin spoke in opposition of removing Fox River and Fritz Creek from Homer.**

ALASKA REDISTRICTING BOARD COMMUNITY PUBLIC HEARING VERBAL TESTIMONY SUMMARY

Homer 10/13 Verbal Testimony

Summary Date: October 27, 2021

Name: **Nikolai Basargin**

Email or Phone Contact: 

Public Comment: Mr. Basargin is a resident on East End Road and spoke against moving his community into the same district as Kodiak as everything they do is in Homer. PO boxes are also located in Homer. Seldovia, Port Graham, Moose Bay, and Chignik would make more sense as communities to be grouped with.

Many East End residents invest heavily with the State of Alaska, growing their businesses in Homer, not Kodiak.

ALASKA REDISTRICTING BOARD COMMUNITY PUBLIC HEARING VERBAL TESTIMONY SUMMARY

Homer 10/13 Verbal Testimony

Summary Date: October 27, 2021

Name: Eileen Becker

Email or Phone Contact: 

Public Comment: Ms. Becker opposed moving Fox River and Fritz Creek out of the district as this would make the residents feel alienated and divide the community. As it exists right now, Kodiak has nothing to do with Homer and they rarely see the senator that represents that area. Ms. Becker suggested bringing Port Graham, Seldovia, and Nanwalek into the district.

Ms. Becker noted that one of the biggest problems on the Kenai Peninsula is that the cities of Kenai and Soldotna have been put together as one big unit and fairly proportioning the Kenai Peninsula all the way around.

**ALASKA REDISTRICTING BOARD
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VERBAL TESTIMONY SUMMARY**

Homer 10/13 Verbal Testimony

Summary Date: October 27, 2021

Name: **Malcolm Brown**

Email or Phone Contact: 

Mr. Brown was born and raised on the Kenai Peninsula concurred with previous testimony stating that the board should divide the Kenai Peninsula to create three boundaries.

ALASKA REDISTRICTING BOARD COMMUNITY PUBLIC HEARING VERBAL TESTIMONY SUMMARY

Homer 10/13 Verbal Testimony

Summary Date: October 27, 2021

Name: **Mike Byerly**

Email or Phone Contact: [REDACTED]

Mr. Byerly spoke in favor of the AFFR map as it "hits on all cylinders and does a better job than any of the other maps by far on meeting the socio-economic criteria" and also hits the other constitutional requirements better than the other proposed maps.

This map keeps all Kachemak Bay communities better and aligns them back with Seward, which makes more sense, and Seward and Homer are very similar in many ways: fisheries in both areas, fisherman who fish in both areas, whale watching, kayak tours that go across the bay, etc.

The way Seward is presently drawn is a "weird district that goes from Seward all the way up to the northern peninsula and reaches all the way over to Nikiski" and these communities are not very similar.

Mr. Byerly encouraged the map to adopt the AFFR map either as a whole or at least the Kenai Peninsula areas.

ALASKA REDISTRICTING BOARD COMMUNITY PUBLIC HEARING VERBAL TESTIMONY SUMMARY

Testimony Received: **Homer 10/13 Verbal Testimony**

Summary Date: October 27, 2021

Name: **Ken Castner**

Email or Phone Contact: 

Mr. Castner agreed that Kachemak Bay is a geographic area, an economic unit, and should be a political unit.

Mr. Castner stated that he has lived in Homer since 1973 and over the course of time, there have been state senators that have served from Halibut Cove all the way to the north of Kenai. In every case, because they are all in the same borough, they've never had a senator that came from Homer and Homer always got their "fair share". This changed when their political unit tied into another borough because boroughs are important. When state senators are given to Homer from another borough, they are not being served well.

The senate allocation is as important to him as keeping the sanctity of Kachemak Bay together.

**ALASKA REDISTRICTING BOARD
COMMUNITY PUBLIC HEARING
VERBAL TESTIMONY SUMMARY**

Homer 10/13 Verbal Testimony

Summary Date: October 27, 2021

Name: **Dan Cole**

Email or Phone Contact: 

Mr. Cole agreed with everything George Hall stated in his verbal testimony.

ALASKA REDISTRICTING BOARD COMMUNITY PUBLIC HEARING VERBAL TESTIMONY SUMMARY

Homer 10/13 Verbal Testimony

Summary Date: October 27, 2021

Name: **Charlie Franz**

Email or Phone Contact: [REDACTED]

Group Affiliation, if applicable: **Vice Chair of District 31 Republican Party**

Public Comment: Mr. Franz noted that District 31 has grown over the last decade resulting in its boundaries likely needing to change to meet population requirements. District 31 encompasses contiguous communities of the Lower Kenai Peninsula and much of Kachemak Bay for many years. There are geographic, socio-economic, and cultural ties between the communities that make up their district.

Mr. Franz spoke in favor of Board Map v.4, but more work must be done. Several third-party maps have been reviewed and Board Map v.4 is a better starting place than any of the proposed maps. The most objectional change in Board Map v.4 is the carveout along the northern shore of Kachemak Bay of the communities of Fritz Creek and several Old Believers communities all of whom share natural physical boundaries, transportation routes, business activities, and medical and community services. The map violates all 3 principles that should guide the redistricting work (contiguity, compact, socio-economic integration). These communities do not understand why they are being reassigned to another community that is 140 miles away, in Kodiak.

Mr. Franz asked the board to consider including the entire north shore Kachemak Bay in the final District 31 map. If additional adjustments must be made to meet the population targets, Mr. Franz asked the board to consider making the adjustments to the northern boundaries of District 31.

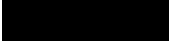
The people who live east of Homer are friends, business partners, and members of the community who deserve to stay in District 31.

ALASKA REDISTRICTING BOARD COMMUNITY PUBLIC HEARING VERBAL TESTIMONY SUMMARY

Homer 10/13 Verbal Testimony

Summary Date: October 27, 2021

Name: **George Hall**

Email or Phone Contact: 

Group Affiliation, if applicable: **District 31 Chairman, Alaska Republican Party**

Mr. Hall stated that District 31 has unique line drawing challenges as a result of being a place to recreate and an industrial center. There has been growth over the last decade, resulting in changes to the district. District 31 has been contiguous for several years, surrounding much of Kachemak Bay and Lower Kenai Peninsula. The most recent census data shows a district population of 18,718 which is almost a 10% increase since the 2010 census, and means that District 31 will reduce its size to conform to the statewide standard.

Mr. Hall spoke in favor of Board Map v.4 of all board maps and third-party proposed maps, but Mr. Hall also noted that more work needs to be done as this version could be easily challenged. The big change that stands out in this version is the carveout along the northern shore of Kachemak Bay of the communities of Fritz Creek and several Old Believers communities, all of whom share services and utilities with Homer. These communities' residents have asked Mr. Hall to inquire on why the board has carved out these communities and assigned them to a district that is 140 miles away, in Kodiak. They asked what possible socio-economic connections are present between them and Kodiak. The residents see that there are no connections.

Mr. Hall asked the board to consider including the entire north shore of Kachemak Bay in the final District 31 map.

ALASKA REDISTRICTING BOARD COMMUNITY PUBLIC HEARING VERBAL TESTIMONY SUMMARY

Homer 10/13 Verbal Testimony

Summary Date: October 27, 2021

Name: **Mary Jackson**

Email or Phone Contact: 

Ms. Jackson has lived in Homer for almost 20 years and noted that Board Map v.4 is the best map, but needs to be amended to put the whole East End Road back in. Ms. Jackson suggested that the board take the Kenai Peninsula as an entire unit with all 58,766 residents divided by 3, equaling 19,666 people which is within the federal deviation standards. This keeps the Kenai Peninsula as a whole and validates borough boundaries.

Ms. Jackson used the Kachemak Emergency Services Area (KESA) as an example and stated that it was formed at the end of the road, up north of Homer, and to the western boundary of the western service area near Anchor Point, going up to Ninilchik. All of these areas are independent, but interdependent as they have "reciprocity agreements to work with each other." The Board Map v.4 splits the boundary of the service area; this is not right. Ms. Jackson asked the board to form a district with the entirety of the Kenai Peninsula Borough including Seldovia and Tyonek.

ALASKA REDISTRICTING BOARD COMMUNITY PUBLIC HEARING VERBAL TESTIMONY SUMMARY

Homer 10/13 Verbal Testimony

Summary Date: October 27, 2021

Name: Ina Jones

Email or Phone Contact: [REDACTED]


Public Comment: Ms. Jones stated that she lives 18.5 miles out on East End Road and spoke in favor of the AFFER map. However, Nanwalek has been left out of the Kenai Peninsula borough and if there is a way to bring the northern line down to have the population absorb Seldovia and Nanwalek, that is just as important as it is to have Fritz Creek and East End Road included. Ms. Jones is against any map that removes Fritz Creek and East End Road from the Kenai Peninsula Borough, but she would also like to see Seldovia and Nanwalek included if there is any way to do so as Homer is where those residents attend school, shop, and recreate.

**ALASKA REDISTRICTING BOARD
COMMUNITY PUBLIC HEARING
VERBAL TESTIMONY SUMMARY**

Homer 10/13 Verbal Testimony

Summary Date: October 27, 2021

Name: **Terry Jones**

Email or Phone Contact: 


Public Comment: Ms. Jones is a lifelong Kenai Peninsula resident who currently lives 17 miles out of East End Road. If her community is lumped in with Kodiak, it will cut her community off from the representative that is on the Kenai Peninsula that they are able to meet and speak with on a regular basis. Kenai Peninsula also does not have much in common with Kodiak. Ms. Jones asked if there is another way to take the Kenai Peninsula, divide it by 3, and leave the borough intact?

ALASKA REDISTRICTING BOARD COMMUNITY PUBLIC HEARING VERBAL TESTIMONY SUMMARY

Homer 10/13 Verbal Testimony

Summary Date: October 27, 2021

Name: **Akcinia Kulikov**

Email or Phone Contact: 

Public Comment: Ms. Kulikov is a resident of the Voznesenka community and stated that there is a lack of information on other impacts such as taxes and school districts. Ms. Kulikov expressed concern about redistricting affecting those items. It's hard enough driving to Soldotna to take care of property and sales taxes. How will residents handle these impacts if they have to drive to Kodiak? In the Voznesenka community, as it is, there was voting that took place in Fritz Creek, and this resulted in Voznesenka residents not voting. If they have to vote in the Kodiak district, how will residents do this if Homer itself can't help their community with voting in their area?


Ms. Kulikov noted that the Voznesenka community needs their voice included in Homer and many residents of the area are against being grouped with Kodiak.

**ALASKA REDISTRICTING BOARD
COMMUNITY PUBLIC HEARING
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Homer 10/13 Verbal Testimony

Summary Date: October 27, 2021

Name: **Marcia Kuzmaul**

Email or Phone Contact: 

Public Comment: Ms. Kuzmaul is a business owner, member of the Chamber, and lives on Mile 4 of East End Road. Ms. Kuzmaul agrees with what other testifiers stated regarding the carve out of Fritz Creek and Fox River. Ms. Kuzmaul also spoke against separating the Kachemak Bay sides as the Kachemak Bay includes both the north and south, creating a synergistic, economic, cultural, and geographic community that is very distinctive with common issues.

ALASKA REDISTRICTING BOARD COMMUNITY PUBLIC HEARING VERBAL TESTIMONY SUMMARY

Homer 10/13 Verbal Testimony

Summary Date: October 27, 2021

Name: **Cassie Lawver**

Email or Phone Contact: 

Public Comment: **Ms. Lawver is a resident of Fritz Creek and the Kenai Peninsula Borough (KPB). Ms. Lawver opposed Board Map v.4 that removes Fritz Creek and Fox River communities from District 6 and places them in District 5. This area will not benefit from a representative whose constituents are only fisherman and military members. Fritz Creek has a small percentage of fisherman, but also has construction workers, house builders, cattlemen and cattlemen, and retirees. Residents have chosen to live on the road system for several reasons, one of which is to have access to their representative. Ten years ago this was not so, but in the last 5 years, Fritz Creek and Fox River residents have become very involved in state government.**

Moving 2,200 of KPB residents to another region that do not share the same socio-economic structure and geographic boundaries does not make sense.

ALASKA REDISTRICTING BOARD COMMUNITY PUBLIC HEARING VERBAL TESTIMONY SUMMARY

Homer 10/13 Verbal Testimony

Summary Date: October 27, 2021

First Name: **George Matz**

Email or Phone Contact: [REDACTED]

Public Comment: **Mr. Matz is a Fritz Creek resident and opposes the community being a part of a district that does not include Homer. Mr. Matz encouraged the board to consider topography as it defines where they live, how they connect, and how they receive services. The topography has the Kachemak Bay watershed where everyone has a connection to.**

Mr. Matz spoke in favor of the AFFER map's proposed District 35-R, but suggested including Nanwalek and Port Graham.

ALASKA REDISTRICTING BOARD COMMUNITY PUBLIC HEARING VERBAL TESTIMONY SUMMARY

Homer 10/13 Verbal Testimony

Summary Date: October 27, 2021

Name: **David Roseveare**

Email or Phone Contact: [REDACTED]

Public Comment: **Mr. Roseveare spoke in favor of Board Map v.4, but has concerns about the Fritz Creek and Fox River areas as the map takes Fritz Creek away from Homer where residents shop, work, and recreate. Fritz Creek residents consider Homer their community. Looking at the map, you can move the line that splits Kenai and Soldotna to balance the two districts out to have a far less adverse on the community as it would on Fox River and Fritz Creek.**

ALASKA REDISTRICTING BOARD COMMUNITY PUBLIC HEARING VERBAL TESTIMONY SUMMARY

Homer 10/13 Verbal Testimony

Summary Date: October 27, 2021

Name: **Mirimia Sanerov**

Email or Phone Contact: 

Public Comment: **Ms. Sanerov was born and raised on East End where there is a large Russian community on East End that will be greatly affected by redistricting and noted that there would have been a larger turnout from the Russian community if the meeting did not take place during their church services.**

Ms. Sanerov agreed with the statements made from other testifiers done today and spoke in opposition of separating Fritz Creek and the East End area and putting them into the Kodiak district.

ALASKA REDISTRICTING BOARD COMMUNITY PUBLIC HEARING VERBAL TESTIMONY SUMMARY

Homer 10/13 Verbal Testimony

Summary Date: October 27, 2021

Name: **Natasha Schade**

Email or Phone Contact: 


Ms. Schade lives in the Fritz Creek/Fox River areas and spoke in opposition of Board Map v.4 proposed District 6 and Board Map v.3 District 6 for socio-economic and logistical reasons. There are several more logical options that have been proposed, such as Doyon Coalition map's proposed District 6-C, AFFR, or AFFER's maps.

ALASKA REDISTRICTING BOARD COMMUNITY PUBLIC HEARING VERBAL TESTIMONY SUMMARY

Homer 10/13 Verbal Testimony

Summary Date: October 27, 2021

Name: **Paul Seaton**

Email or Phone Contact: 

Public Comment: **Mr. Seaton stated that socio-economic integrity must be sustained and for that reason, he spoke in favor of the AFFR map. This map keeps Homer, Kachemak Bay, and Seward combined.**

Mr. Seaton encouraged the board to revert back to the way the area was mapped in 2004 where Homer and Seward were grouped together. They are two communities that are at the end of the road with marine services and tourism businesses.

It is an advantage to keep all of Kachemak Bay, including Seldovia, in one socio-economically integrated unit.