



Thinking about the future... Thinking about you.

June 27, 2011

Alderman Ashanti Hamilton
Chairman, Legislative and Judiciary Committee
City of Milwaukee
200 E Wells ST
Milwaukee, WI 53202

RE: File # 110063

Dear Aldermen Hamilton, Witkowski, Bohl, Davis and Donovan,

We have become aware of "Plan C" for the redistricting of the Aldermanic Districts that will be discussed during the Committee meeting on Monday, June 27th. We are writing to express our strong opposition to Plan C.

Over the last several years, a lot of synergy has grown and very POSITIVE RESULTS have occurred in District 13 - the Garden District - among:

- 1) The Gateway To Milwaukee and its Airport Gateway Business Improvement District #40,
- 2) The Garden District Neighborhood Association and its 10 related neighborhood associations,
- 3) The newly designated Green Corridor, and
- 4) The developing Aerotropolis Milwaukee effort.

Much of this synergy and results can be attributed to the initiative and leadership of Alderman Terry Witkowski plus the human beings living and working together in the current 13th District.

Plan C essentially outlines a substantially reduced 13th District size and a significantly enlarged 14th District where borders between the two would go through our BID, the Garden District and related Neighborhood Associations, the Green Corridor and essentially would remove Alderman Witkowski from most of the activities occurring among those groups he initiated. It would also remove Alderman Witkowski from most of the 27th Street BID that he helped establish last year. Such a change could create substantial risk around whether the participants in these groups would continue their enthusiasm that has had very positive benefits for the City.

We recommend a plan that largely leaves the 13th District as it is currently outlined, which in turn should allow the existing momentums to continue. Why alter a successful structure where collaboration occurs?

This is being sent on behalf of the boards of directors of Airport Gateway Business Improvement District #40 and of Airport Gateway Business Association. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Tom Rave
Executive Director

City of Milwaukee
Judiciary & Legislation Committee Meeting
Alderman Ashanti Hamilton, Chair
Monday, June 27th, 2011

Redistricting for Fairness in the Latino and Minority Communities

Good afternoon, it is a pleasure to speak with this distinguished committee today. My name is Jaime Alvarado and I am the president of the Rotary Club Amigos de Milwaukee, and the Deputy State Director of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) of WI. I am a constituent of the 12th Aldermanic District, a Latino, an Army veteran, and a proud U.S. American.

Our Rotary Club and LULAC promote civic engagement. We have been instrumental on partnering with the City of Milwaukee, the State of Wisconsin, and the U.S. Census Bureau on key civic engagement initiatives. We helped spread the message of the importance of being counted through the Census and some of us helped count residents. A few of us were certified Deputy Voter Registrars and we registered voters all over the state and especially Milwaukee. We also spread information on the importance of voting and distributed information on voting procedures and polling districts.

Rotary Clubs refrain from endorsing politicians or issuing partisan political statements. As individuals we are encouraged to be actively involved in many civic committees. Through the coalitions I have been a part of, I have learned a great deal with how government works well with proper representation. I am proud to serve with distinguished individuals on the Milwaukee Latino Redistricting Committee.

- As new 2010 Census data reveals, our nation has undergone great demographic change and is becoming increasingly diverse.
- In Wisconsin, the Latino population has grown 74% since the 2000 Census data.
- Milwaukee has maintained a similar number of residents of about 595,000, but the racial makeup has had a considerable shift.
- The white population has decreased by about 50,000 residents. This was offset by persons of color. Most notably, Asian Americans grew by about 3,000, Black Americans by 15,000, and Latinos by 32,000 residents.
- Latinos have increased 44% in the city of Milwaukee, and represents 26% of the population.
- The changing face of Milwaukee raises questions throughout communities, especially in electoral politics. This raises two important questions:
 - Are Latinos fairly represented at all levels of politics?
 - Do we have an equal voice and an equal opportunity to elect representatives who consider our needs and interests?
- "Redistricting" is the process that determines how our local aldermanic districts are drawn.
- In the Latino community, we have joined an unprecedented coalition of leaders and organizations and formed the Latino Redistricting Committee. Our sole purpose is to answer those and these important questions:
 - How can our communities participate fairly?
 - How can we ensure that the voting strength of our communities is not weakened?
 - What are the important factors to consider in redistricting?
- Redistricting following the census will determine political representation for the decade to come, and we are tasked to ensure that our communities' voices are heard, their needs addressed, and their rights protected.

- In our coalitions' proposed map, the 8th and the 12th districts will have 62 and 66 percent Latino representation respectively. Directly below these two districts a third district was drawn. This third district will combine some of the 13th and the 14th districts in order to provide about a 40 percent Latino representation.
- Our committee is adamant in combining these two districts. The 2010 census map shows this proposed third district is in an area with an existing Latino population that is underrepresented. They will comprise about 16,000 of the 39,000 residents of the proposed district. Incidentally, this Latino population is also trending to grow in the coming years.
- Afore mentioned, Former DOJ Attorney John K Tanner is in complete agreement for the need of two Latino districts and a third influential district in Milwaukee.
- We believe there is sufficient evidence that any attempt to "crack" the proposed third district will be a violation of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and in particular section 2.
- The Latino Redistricting Committee is reaching out to all communities for input and is available for any questions.
- We are also reaching out to elected officials in order to have a dialogue, understanding, and consensus.
- We are a nation of Immigrants. Immigrant groups like the Irish, Italians, Germans, and other immigrants with different skin tones such as black, yellow, red, and brown have been oppressed and discriminated against.
- Our government, our congress, has passed federal laws to help these groups gain political representation at the national, state, and local levels.
- The Latino community is no different. We are looking for fair representation in the City of Milwaukee.
- We have heard some argue that this is about race, favoritism, and breaking up of communities.
- This dialog should not be about race aversion and it should not be about special favors, it is about strengthening communities and the city of Milwaukee, by using the protections provided under federal law and to allow a minority community to be fairly represented.
- It is not about race aversion or special favors; it is about federal law and fair representation.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak at this important and what may be a historic meeting for some districts in the south side of Milwaukee. I wish to thank LRB for their openness and accessibility. And I want to thank this committee for their hard work.

Sincerely,

Jaime Alvarado