



New Mexico State Senate

State Capitol
Santa Fe

SENATOR TIMOTHY M. KELLER
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STANDING COMMITTEES:

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- Education

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 - Economic & Rural Development Committee
 - Investments Oversight Committee

- ADVISOR:**
- New Mexico Finance Authority Oversight Committee

- DESIGNEE:**
- Legislative Finance Committee

The Honorable Linda M. Lopez
Co-Chair Redistricting Committee
9132 Suncrest SW
Albuquerque, NM 87121

Dear Senator Lopez:

The purpose of this letter is provide input for public record from concerned constituents in my district. Albuquerque's Southeast Heights, more specifically the "International District" (formerly referred by the old informal name, "the Warzone") has been the recipient, or placement area for thousands of refugees over the last thirty years by the United States State Department via their contractor, Catholic Charities.

These minority groups resettled here in the last thirty years in rough order consist of: Vietnamese, Chinese, Cuban, El Salvadorian, Southern Mexican/Chiapas, Bhutanese, Burmese and Congolese. Additionally this district has the highest percentage of off reservation Native Americans and African Americans anywhere in Bernalillo County. There are twenty-seven languages spoken at Highland High School! These histories are documented in various memorials and resolutions at city, county and state level. The most recent was Senate Joint Memorial 24 in 2009, which passed unanimously, and speaks to this unique and special history in our state. Note these are legal United States residents and many are citizens and have children who are citizens and attend public schools in the area.

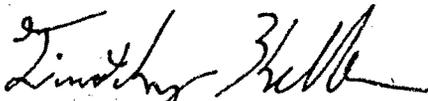
With respect to redistricting, of concern is the specific location of these groups. Because of the Catholic Charities designated resettlement locations, these groups are in very specific areas in our city, all of which are currently in Senate District 17. No other elected official, city or state, has all of them in their district. As a result the Senator of Senate District 17 is almost exclusively looked to, and worked with this community.

The neighborhoods of Trumbull (precincts 286 and 326), La Mesa (precincts 323, 318, 321 and 322) and Singing Arrow/El Dorado (precincts 330 and 331) comprise this population. Note that two are in the International District proper around Talin Market on Central and Louisiana, while the other, and most recent large group (from the 2000-2010) is south of Central between Juan Tabo and Tramway (off El Dorado street).

Representing Albuquerque's International District: Wyoming Terrace, Van Cleave, Willow Wood, Miravista, MiraBella, Singing Arrow, Trumbull, South San Pedro, La Mesa, Expo NM, Fair West, Elder Homestead, Chelwood Vista, South Los Altos, Towne Park, Sandia Vista, East Central, Los Colinas, Grand Court, Los Altos Towers, Encino Gardens, South Pointe, Far East Route 66, Los Altos, Far East Central and Mile High, Longwood East, Sandia Technology Park, Four Hills Mobile Home Park and Terracita

The current Senate District 17 configuration includes all three of these populations and gives them meaningful connection through Senate District 17 to state affairs. Being of extremely low income, and often with families, these groups are massive users of social services and require adequate representation. If they were to be divided among districts this group would have insignificant influence and be forced to work with up to three different Senators (much like they have to now with the current House make up) and therefore would be deprived of meaningful representation. As their only consolidated voice in our state government, I humbly ask that redistricting considerations respect this community of interest and maintain the cohesion of these groups within a single Senate district.

Sincerely,



Timothy M. Keller
State Senator

cc: Brian Sanderoff - Research and Polling
✓ Jon Boller - Staff - Redistricting Committee