



Alaska Native Leaders Dialogue on Redistricting

Thursday, April 21, 2011

Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association

DIALOGUE SUMMARY

Flow - Welcome, Purpose, Agreements, Introductions, Presentations, Discussions, Next Steps

Overview

The purpose of the Alaska Native Leaders Dialogue on Redistricting on Thursday, April 21, 2011, was to bring the Alaska Native community together to listen and discuss the various redistricting proposals being considered by the Alaska Redistricting board. Discussion topics included: The Hard-Earned Voice of Alaska Natives, Inside the Legislature, Redistricting Overview and Impacts on Alaska Natives, and Resource Presentations by AFFR, Rights Coalition, AFFR and the Alaska House Bush Caucus. All of the participants were asked to speak with care, listen deeply, value each other's time and be candid and meaningful with each other. The meeting was not about endorsing any one plan, but rather to take consideration of all the plans and see which would potentially maximize and preserve our Native voice. How as a community do we want to approach that goal? This is about determining where we are as Native people in terms of navigating through this redistricting process.

In Attendance:

Sarah Scanlan (Inupiaq) - RuralCAP
Marica Davis - Calista, General Counsel

Andrew Guy (Yup'ik) - Calista, President/CEO

Christopher Dean (Athabaskan) - Ahtna Board, AFN Board

Michon Alvarez (Athabaskan) - FAI ANPC Intern

Margaret Galvin (Aleut) - APIA, AFN Alternate

Thomas Mack (Aleut) - Aleut Corporation, President

Bridget Wolgemuth (Inupiaq) - ASRC External Affairs

Adrian LeCornu (Haida) – AFN Staff

Amber Jenkins (Alutiiq) – FAI Program & Finance Manager

Kay Brown – AFFR Staff

April Ferguson (Yup'ik), BBNC General Counsel, AFFR

Denise Morris (Aleut) – FAI President/CEO

Tanya Beatus (Athabaskan) - Doyon Exec Asst to President, AFFR

Alexei Painter (Athabaskan) – House Bush Caucus resource rep, Rep. Joule Staff

Georgianna Lincoln (Athabaskan) - FAI Trustee, AFN Board, Doyon Board

Coleen Dushkin (Aleut), APIA Human Services Exec Asst

Kristel Komakhuk (Alutiiq/Inupiaq) - FAI Development Director

Jorie Paoli (Inupiaq) – FAI ANPC Policy and Research Coordinator

Rick Mueller (Tlingit) – FAI ANPC Policy Analyst

Dorothy Shockley (Athabascan) – Sen. Kookesh Staff
Andrea Sanders (Yup'ik) – FAI Development Assistant
Willie Hensley (Inupiaq) - FAI Board Chair
Liz Moore (Inupiaq) - NANA/NWALT Regional Affairs
Matt Ganley- BSNC

(?) On phone – Native village of Eyak
Melissa Kookesh (Tlingit/Athabascan) - CCHITA Special Asst. to President
Nancy Barnes (Tlingit/Tsimshian) – Sen. Kookesh Staff, Eyak Corporation Board
Liz Medicine Crow (Haida/Tlingit) - FAI VP & ANPC Director

STRENGTHENING THE ALASKA NATIVE VOICE

• ***The Hard Earned Voice of Alaska Natives***

- In America, the right to vote is key. In the past, there were those who did things to retain that power – literacy tests, citizen tests... not a system that fit our cultural system.
- In the early days you weren't considered a citizen of this country unless you went through rigorous effort to get right to vote before 1924.
- During times of change in the early days when they were building canneries at every mouth of every stream, during the gold rush – we literally had no voice in all the changes taking place in our world.
- Even until the 1940s during the span of our lifetimes, people had signs right here in town that said 'No dogs, No natives' allowed. There was overt discrimination taking place against AK Native people.
- Tremendous amount of energy and learning the western process of politics and conducting meetings. When in the old days, we were too busy doing what we'd been doing for 10,000 years, to learn the system, but eventually became involved.
- One Man One Vote came in, Boom we only had one senator – that changed things.
- The reality is that all the things we have enjoyed – the material life that has been elevated in the last 50 years is a consequence of politics, and people selflessly getting involved and doing the confrontational type of activity that we don't, as a matter of course, like to do. Having to use power to take care of needs of your district. Not traditional in a sense. I would say we've had tremendous Native legislators from all parts of AK ... who took the time in those days to try to represent their people.
- At this ... critical time when our revenues, our government has financial issues, our state is beginning to have financial issues, where urban #s are up, and the next 10 years we'll have to focus on getting the best possible representation to take care of the things we've fought so hard for. That's why this is so important.
- When we put our minds to it, we can do tremendous things. That's why we put so much energy into AFN, you can go so much further if you have some semblance of unity – you can go further than you ever thought you could.
- The thing is we've not played the urban game very effectively. In my mind, that is something we can absolutely do – build the alliances we need to take care of the people in the future in the time of diminished revenues.
- We need to talk about what we'll do 10 years from now if someone doesn't find more oil soon. It'll never be as bad as living in the sod house, and if we can maintain our villages and live off the land we'll be okay.
- This is a very key piece of what we'll have to work on to make sure our people are able to thrive and survive and our children will have a future.

• ***Inside the Legislature***

- We need to hear the inspiration to get us riled up and get going – it's so difficult for our villages to understand why redistricting is important to us.

- Redistricting has very little meaning in our villages – how do we inspire our folks in bush Alaska to testify to the Redistricting Board – who are not a friendly bunch of faces to testify to, to begin with?
- Right now, we have 3 AK Native senators out of 20. If we’re 20% of the population – we should have 4. In the house we have 4 of 40, that’s horrible – we should have 8.
- Why is that important?
 - The 1st thing is the ability to be on the inside of that tent, not a nose under the tent – on the inside - to hear bad legislation coming down the pike, what’s being said by other legislators, how we can have influence on that.
 - Ability to give our people a heads up on things coming down the pike – if they’re for the betterment or will be harmful.
 - Ability to discuss with other legislators.
 - It’s not so important to discuss with you what I think - you already know. It’s the mic in the villages to explain why this is important ... you’re talking to the people of AK, all over the state. I always talked to the folks out there – urban, suburban, rural, Bush. This is how I see it.
 - Ability to be effective on legislation, rewriting it, drafting it, getting info out to communities.
 - Critical to have ability to ask for research to be done by the state, not paid by the village – paid by the state, and have best resource to do that.
 - Access as legislators to all the commissioners, the governor – the power you have to sit down with them on any given day and say “here are my concerns” and hear what that department will do about that.
 - Ability to act vs. react - we could talk about issues to villages before all this happened.
- ... People want to see their legislators, they don’t understand that when your Senator Kookesh with 126-130 communities there’s no way to possibly go to every community, not even in 2 years.
- ... We have a lot of education to do, folks. Especially in the urban areas, the turnover in Anchorage is astronomical (every 4 or 6 years?) – a huge number of folks who are new to AK, constantly re-educating. Our need is to get involved in what’s happening in urban AK as well. We’re talking now about villages, but have to look out 10 years.
- We have to somehow get out that message, why this is important to testify, to write, why it’s important to have a Native voice in the House and why need more than 4 of 40, more than 3 of 20 in the Senate.
- **Redistricting Overview** (see AK Native Districts – Majority Influence Spreadsheet)
 - The Alaska Redistricting Board has proposed two options. Both are fairly similar in terms of Alaska Native influenced districts but one option pairs a Ketchikan and Kodiak senate seat while the other option pairs a Ketchikan and Valdez Senate seat.
 - The Redistricting Board is still trying to find out what constitutes a Native influenced district. Currently they are using the same 35% to 49% guideline used in the previous redistricting process to determine whether or not a district is Native influenced. The board has contracted a Voting Rights Act expert to analyze past district election results which will help her determine what constitutes a Native influenced district.
 - Currently, the Redistricting Board is using Native and Native + White to determine a district’s Alaska Native population. The board has not determined if they will stick to this formula or include Alaska + all races combined. FAI is working with census information and is looking at the issue of race/population.
 - The redistricting board will be traveling for the next month, holding public hearings in 32 communities. They will conclude public hearings with a statewide teleconference to be held in Anchorage on May 6. Unfortunately, smaller villages will be shut out of the process as the Redistricting Board has elected to hold the public hearings without live streaming or teleconferencing as an option.

- When looking at all the proposed plans one must consider what is more important – more Alaska Native influenced districts with less Alaska Native population or less influenced districts with a stronger Alaska Native population
- Overview Q&A/Discussion:
 - We need to stress the importance of public testimony so Alaska Native voices are heard. What is most important to us? Where do we want to focus our priorities?
 - If you don't have Native people who get out and vote, then the percent of Alaska Natives in a district won't matter.
 - Influence has a broader meaning. It's not just the number of Native people in a district that we should be looking at. We should also be looking at the percentage of Native people who will actually vote and exercise their influence. You have to gage who will vote by looking at voting trends to establish if a Native candidate can win a particular district.
 - In order to have influence, you need to have balance in your district politically (not 65% of a party).
 - The 10 district plan (6+1+3+0) proposed by the House Bush Caucus will give us 10 seats. I wonder what voice we will have given that scenario. Is it important for the Redistricting Board to hear? We as Alaska Natives are almost 20% of the population in Alaska. We need to maximize.
 - You can have urban democrats with 2 votes less than majority and they had no power. The rural democrats had power and acted as a swing vote. Native legislators had power on a social agenda.
 - One question we must ask is do we want to maximize representation in Juneau or do we maximize Alaska Native influence.
 - The Native population has increased since 2000 census. We have to fight for more seats.
 - Sometimes funding and opportunities are given to certain villages depending on what Native leader is representing the area. Some villages are favored over others. Calista region is tired of being split up.
 - We know the Interior will be split up but Tanana Chiefs Conference stated that they would like to be partnered with other Native groups rather than urban areas because they have more in common with other villages than urban areas. Even if it means crossing regions.
 - We need to ensure Native Representation. We need to come to an agreement and have a unified voice.

Resource Presentations – Resource Representatives shared their group's views on the plans/maps that they submitted or shared with the Redistricting Board. Each group respectfully adhered to the invitation to present information rather than market their plans and this was greatly appreciated.

- **AFFR**

- represent a broad group (urban-rural) collation of interested partird working for a fair plan including a strong Native voice.
- we've met with people around the state including Tribal communities looking to keep sub-groups together as much as possible.
- This plan was put together on a very tight timeline due to Redistricting Board timeframe
- Not able to come up with 9 but did get to 8 [majority minority/influence districts].
- We have 1 influence district in SE. But the SE is a difficult area because of the outward migration. New district 39 to help get us to Native influence.
- People can identify with the previous districts; when an incumbent is put out it's not just the person but the entire district that is "thrown off".
- Think ANCSA boundaries are a good indicator of the socio-economic boundaries that work.
- Not certain that the Boards plan or any of the plans meet legal requirements.
- This is not just a rural issue but an urban issue also.

- There are serious problems with the Boards proposals we need to be clear in pointing out those problems and issues. We have concerns about many aspects of the Boards plans.
- **Rights Coalition**
 - There are 3 audiences for the plan- the Board, the AK Supreme Court and DoJ.
 - Care very much about complying with the legal criteria and believe that a plan needs to be adopted that makes sense.
 - Issues that kept popping up - Boroughs getting broken (i.e. Mat-Su) – this plan works on keeping those boroughs intact.
 - Plan allows modifications without affecting the entire plan - a type of template.
 - 55% was goal for keeping a balance between minority & majority. Didn't quite reach that number but very close.
 - Taken suggestions from all over the place and hope to represent a diverse array of interests. All districts are paired. Tried to take areas with highly dense populations out of the equation and focus on the other outer areas.
 - Welcome all comments.
- **AFFER**
 - Respecting regional corporation boundaries.
 - Big difference was in the Doyon region - deviation of 5%.
 - Looked to avoid getting to the 50-51% majority but aimed to 70% and higher.
 - [Don't like plans that] splits Calista region into 3 separate districts. One of the concerns in the SW region ... squished into 3 very different districts - drained of our voice.
 - Not happy with the Board plan what-so-ever and we will fight it as hard as we can.
 - We strived for quality as opposed to quantity.
 - Key concerns in districts 37 & 38, which have been changed by adding YK Yup'iks to a previously predominately Aleut and Bristol Bay influenced district.
- **AK House Bush Caucus**
 - Came up with 5 or 6 plans/maps total, the Bush Caucus is not endorsing any of them formally.
 - Modified the 5-1 concept based on the feedback received at some of the Think Tanks.
 - Made a real effort to keep known regions intact. Districts 5 & 38, mainly Calista region.
 - This plan does achieve 9 VRA's.
 - SE plan is very close to the Boards alternative plan.
- **Participant Presentation Discussion:**
 - Respect needs to be genuine.
 - Have certain regions (i.e. TCC, Calista) been split so much that they will never get a representative genuine to the Native interests? Certain plans have broken up these regions so much that it appears that way.
 - We're holding on to a 'floor' that does not accurately portray our Native population.
 - How difficult it is for Native people to come together on this topic (western processes) is evident but overall we want to preserve OUR voice as a unit.
 - Somehow we're opposing each other even though were all saying the same thing.
 - We don't have to all agree on a map but collectively we need to have community cohesion and allow each of our subgroups to be supportive of what we come up with here.
 - How can we keep everyone "whole" but still be living up to the legal requirements?

- We should also look towards having AK Native representation in Anchorage and the Mat-Su.
- We should come to common denominators and take into consideration transportation/connections needed for a legislator to visit his/her district communities.
- Looking 10-20 years down the line we have to focus on resource development. Resource development is in rural Alaska! So we have to be clear about pairing areas that are in alignment or nothing will get done with opposing interests being demanded.
- We're not going to have 12 representatives to serve each region so how do we get fair representation for our Native people? Come up with another seat or 2? It could be the difference in the legislative balance of power.
- If we're trying to protect the overall rural gains then we should be thinking about increasing our presence in Juneau.
- Resource Presentation Q&A/Discussion:
 - When we talk about protecting Native voice and look at the maps, I see that some of the maps do not value it.
 - Thinking about one person, one vote, we need a redistricting plan that will represent our growth.
 - When we talk about influence we don't just have to be thinking –rural- how many Alaska Natives live in the urban areas? We can also have urban influence.
 - The Alaska Native population has increased. When it decreases the Redistricting Board is so quick to take away seats. Why can't the opposite be true? (current Alaska Native population is growing each day)
 - The redistricting process in itself is not a Native cultural norm. We don't have to agree on a map. We should discuss issues as Native people collectively.
 - There are a lot of Natives in Anchorage and the Mat-Su. We need to make sure that we have representation for those areas.
 - Most of the resource development happens in Bush Alaska.
 - When we talk about Native voice, we need the diversity of all regions. We need balance of Native voice. It's not our Native way to split up and divide.
 - There are 13 Bush Caucus members most of whom are non-Native. If we don't have a unified voice the Redistricting Board will do what they want to do.

The Redistricting Board Plans (Pros/Cons/Concerns-?'s)

Pro's

- Must give the Redistricting Board credit for maintaining the 9 Alaska Native influenced districts.
- Like that they kept the Interior together
- In Southeast Alaska, we don't want to lose representation.
- Southeast would not lose both Alaska Native representatives.
- Brought Marshall and Russian Mission back with the other lower Yukon villages
- I like how the board is keeping the districts similar to the current map.
- Northwest Arctic Borough stays intact.
- Shishmaref is back in district 39, the Bering Straits region.

Con's

- There has to be a way to make district 38 a more compact district.
- Both options do not seem to use natural boundaries or street boundaries.
- Both options have multiple incumbent pairings.

- The Redistricting Board cannot be serious with these proposed maps. It is very messed up. We need to give decision makers the tools they need to make the right decisions. They will have to make a new plan. We need to influence the process. The way they have drawn Anchorage's boundaries is a mess. Whatever the plan becomes, this is not it.
- Ketchikan's Senate pairing in both options are not contiguous.
- District 6 –an Alaska Native influenced district – Interior paired with urban area (Esther).
- Senate pairing will not pass constitutional muster.
- Mat-Su and Fairbanks is an odd match for Senate pairing – looks discontiguous. The same can be said about the option that pairs an Anchorage district with a Fairbanks district.
- The Anchorage proposal is to break up the balanced districts in the Senate (reducing the Bush Caucus swing voice).
- Both options pit Sen. Kookesh (Anchorage) with Sen. Stedman (Sitka).

Concerns-?'s

- Quantity (more seats) vs. quality (higher Native population percentage in each district) issue and majority vs. minority (as in party lines)
- We could get representation out of Anchorage, Fairbanks, Mat-Su, in the more urban areas and change things up! However the lines are drawn we can make suggestions and gain input.
- No way for this to pass. The Board is all ready coming up with next reiteration of the plan - we need to use our connections and get our priorities out to them.
- Rural Ak is better off when the legislature is more balanced.
- How are the urban pairings going to affect rural Ak?

Alaska Native Leader Discussion on Alignment Areas - Small Group Discussions - Is there Alaska Native alignment on: Maximize and preserve Native voice and vote, No retrogression, Subgroup issue, Alaska Natives electable to legislature

- Maximizing/Preserving the Native Voice
 - Don't retreat.
 - If we get away from names, we can preserve the Native vote.
 - The board proposal protects the way it is now.
 - We need diversity but we need to have a Native in every senate and house race.
 - Education and outreach. Understanding the different ways to be involved in Native politics.
 - Information about e-voting (online voting).
 - Broad districts may not increase Native vote. Example, 87% Native population in Bethel but the representative in Bethel isn't Native.
 - If we have an urban republic, they need education about the needs of rural Alaska.
 - As Alaska Natives we need to be an aggressive lobbying machine. We need to educate people about being involved in politics.
 - We need create opportunities for Alaska Natives to run for office.
 - The Murkowski campaign – there's a need for analysis on this past campaign.
 - We have more in common that we don't have in common. The non-Native pioneer types, we didn't have anything in common but we need to look for commonalities.
 - When it comes to giving testimony to the board, use small points of commonalities to our advantage.
 - There needs to be a teleconference line for those who cannot attend a public hearing.
 - We need more information to provide comments at hearings.

- The Redistricting Board is formed in the fall, they should form dates then instead of 2 days before. The board should work with us. It affects everyone (redistricting).
 - A beneficial project for ANPC is thinking about the current constitutional amendment that has set up this process, analyze the process to improve future years redistricting process.
 - We don't have time to give adequate feedback. It would be a useful gift to give to the next generation.
 - Letting people in your community know what we have to lose for the next 10 days.
 - Anyone can submit a plan.
 - We are reinventing the wheel.
 - We have common interests. How do we get there?
 - The voting rights analysis will not be available until after public hearings around the state have concluded.
 - We need to look at amending the Alaska Constitution so that we can have in place a better redistricting process.
 - We need to think about the next generation. Curriculums should be in schools around the state teaching children about the redistricting process. We need to get ready now for what will happen 10 years from now.
- Subgroups
 - When looking at subgroups, board should consider the resource development in each region. You have to be careful if you have different goals with resource development - in looking at the mixing of the groups.
 - Virtual villages, text messages, email. We're connected now more than ever. Before, we learned about things at boarding school. There is an alignment now because of social networking.
 - In 10 years, Alaska Natives, our communities, are going to be more and more mixed.
 - Our lack of communication can be the reason people are leaving our villages.
 - We, as Alaska Natives, are connected. We share the same past, i.e. boarding schools.
- No Retrogression
 - Retrogression is not acceptable.
 - The 6-1 plan (the 10 Alaska Native influenced plan), you have to be careful with it. Otherwise there will be districts right at the threshold. Cautionary statement. It could backfire on us.
 - How do we contain retrogression?
 - Fundamentally, we agree with no retrogression.
 - Bridging divides – are we ready to do that?
 - How do we maintain no retrogression and maintain integrity of influenced districts?
- Electing Alaska Natives
 - We are our own worst enemy. Comes back to education to elect our candidates. We can't sit back and do nothing.
 - There are campaign schools/classes.
 - Alaska Natives need to support Alaska Native candidates running for office. We need to hold fundraisers.
 - Party affiliates need to endorse and embrace Alaska Native candidates.
 - As long as people are leaving the villages, there will be less and less representation.
 - Strive to let people to know to vote Native.
 - Remember, Bethel region is almost 87% Alaska Native and they elected a non-Native candidate.
 - Look at how Alaska Natives came together to help elect Sen. Murkowski. We can do the same for Alaska Native candidates.
 - Take a proactive push.

- Support candidates and families.
- Focus on the rural areas.
- Identify and embrace Native candidates.
- Common themes – education, getting young people up to speed now, support (locally, regionally, and by the political parties that should be standing by Native candidates), think about the future 2010-2020, make sure Alaska Natives are voting. Get out the Native vote. Joe Miller– ‘he probably thought like Custer, where’d all these natives come from?’

Alaska Native Leader Discussion on Alignment Areas – Large Group Discussion

- When we talk about what it means to maximize the native vote, it’s a concentrated effort.
- As we share the things that came out of this process, there is a true concern for the implications redistricting may have on our Native people as a whole.
- Can we speak with one voice?
- Everyone says we want to maximize the native vote, we have commonality.
- The population has shifted in the state of Alaska. In order to be constitutionally sound, it just may not be possible.
- If you have to move to another level, we need to look at this in terms of Native impact statewide.
- The only chance any region may have of preserving is if they are actively engaged in the process.
- Everybody understands that the same thing happened in 1971, there has to be compromise. People are losing a lot in the redrawing. Let’s figure out a way to compromise among ourselves. Not everyone is going to get what they want.
- In 10 years, they’re going to build from what is going on now (the process).
- 10 groups working on a map. They have begged to have people participate.
- I don’t fault any region for not being here. It might be to our benefit that the Redistricting Board can’t say “the Native people say this, this”. But they don’t go to all the white people and say, “all of you white people here, be united in what you share”
- I think for our region, we understand there has to be compromise, too – and we’re open to that, but we’re hoping for unity. But we’re stretched thin. I appreciate that FAI has taken the time to bring us all together, to be in the same room to talk about this.
- I want to hear from the other regions what they have going on so I can help advance the issues they’re working with so we can make sure the voices are heard. Our region is small – we’re always lumped in with others, but we don’t divide.
- The DOJ role in the redistricting process is interesting to think about. Review for AK Redistricting plans, through DOJ and state court system. DOJ: reason is because of requirement Section 5 Voting Rights Act, preclearance, only one of a handful subject to that. We have the route to tell the Redistricting Board “this is what we care about, this is what we want to see happen for our cultural groups and for our people, etc.” Also have the ability to go to DOJ, these are the problems, this will disenfranchise and marginalize the AN voice – once again - not only in the process, but at the end of the day in the maps that go through.
- To maximize voice in two ways – in the process, and within the actual plan adopted.
- We can dance around it, or we can just talk about it. Is there any kind of unity, cohesion?
- We look at the outline that the board has set forward to public hearing sessions, last one is May 6th statewide teleconference. Deadline for written comment is May 13th. That’s the board’s guideline for itself – anything submitted after they don’t have to consider but there’s no legal deadline by which people can submit something to them.

- If you think about the different routes we can go, putting together areas where we have bullets for people around issues to be highlighted (process, deadlines, where needs to be emphasized) – is there a general sense that there needs to be a session for the AN leadership comes together to a room to say “Can we get behind one of the plans that exist? Can we come together to find something that works for us?” The board doesn’t make it easier for us – they don’t make anyone else come to consensus around areas before presenting. Or do we do our own thing with pushing forward on maximizing the Native voice?
- For us, everybody coming up with their own plans would be a healthy exercise. Don’t think it’s possible for everyone to get behind one plan. We welcome feedback on our plans, but not optimistic that in this condensed timeframe we can come to consensus. Ask all regions to go to the board and testify, when they get in there, they should say – This is not enough time, why isn’t the telephone line open so everyone can hear what we’re saying? Unless the data has been analyzed by the voting rights expert, it won’t do any good.
- I think the most important thing to do is go before the board as various groups and share common denominators, not A PLAN, but share commonalities, we will be submitting our written testimony, maybe we’ll come up with our own plan (but I doubt it) but we’ll monitor it very closely as the process goes on, including testifying. There are many things that are written on the wall that are common denominators. I agree with the notion that the timing is ill thought out.
- As a legislator, it was great that people would pass resolutions in their region – difference between waving resolution and waving stack of letters. As part of reaching out to different areas/communities – not just one resolution, every organization writing and submitting something.
- 90 Days from day/time census #'s comes out. They can sort of pre-plan but can’t give dates, based on census dates. Matter of changing Constitution. But that’s possible. Most dates are on fast track in regards to redrawing the lines, because of how long it takes if there’s litigation.
- We also had conversation about protracted length of process, could be in 2012 elections by the time a plan is adopted. With litigation and that timeline. Interesting thing about that is they’d have voting data to go with it and back up. Could be good/bad- then it would be REALLY important everyone vote.
- Common Denominator: When we count Natives – it’s Natives AND ALL combinations.
- Our lawyers say it’s very important for Native voices to be heard in the process, DOJ will give great weight to opinions and voices when they look at what happened all along.
- All of us stay tuned in, ongoing process with new info out all the time.
- Significant opening May 6 when new plans can be presented.
- DOJ viewing from afar - GIS, and doing their own lines, but looking to grassroots and keeping groups together and what people trying to achieve through the process. It’s really important to keep focused and work collaboratively among all interested parties – get unity and put it into the public record. Good for overall effort.
- Critical week May 6-13. Reasonable to ask board for more time. Unreasonable for them to set arbitrary goal of one month with piece of critical info (VRA expert determinations) not available, you can’t present legally defensible position without knowing. Say we really think that more time within 90 days, extend deadline, would give people more time to digest and pull things together. You could come up with something that could potentially work across the regions, make compromises with time for that to happen. Don’t have critical info or time to do this right.
- A Galena woman hadn’t heard that board would be in Galena on Thursday. Have to get the word out to all the villages that members of the board will be in their communities. Get your relatives in these communities on board.
- Some of our communities won’t be able to make it to the hearings, working on getting dedicated people to represent them with written testimony to submit to the record.

- Appropriate in testimony to talk about lack of diversification on the board? Yes. It's important to get it on the record and point that out. Diversity in color and political party. Needs to be pointed out. One Native, Two females. One Rural. Should be brought up – if there's a lawsuit, it will be on the record.
- There's no oversight of the board, besides the litigation process. ... All we can do as citizens is participate in the public process and give testimony, litigate – no other avenues for oversight.
- We need to have chapter and verse in the record that people were disenfranchised. As we reach out and get people to participate, if they have difficulties we need to get that documented.
- In Galena, are they putting up signs? Board relying almost exclusively on state's online process to notify everyone. They're not doing outreach to let people know. They should at least contact local tribal councils.
- If you have connections at local radio stations, we [FAI] have PSA language for them to read.

Next Steps

- Any will to reconvene this group?
- Any value in meeting after the 6th-13th? See what happens first
- Get the word out, get people participating in hearings, monitor process
- Submit written comments at this point since hearings will be done in pairs by the Redistricting Board, not the whole board.

Closing Circle - One Word: We called everyone back to the table to summarize and close out the day. We asked each person to share one word to describe the session and/or topic:

