

First Alaskans Institute

ALASKA NATIVE LEADERSHIP DIALOGUE ON REDISTRICTING

Reasons for Being Involved in Redistricting: A Discussion Summary from Redistricting Think Tank Sessions

Think Outside the Box

- Maximize Native Vote & Voice
 - Discuss- Why Maximize Native voice?
 - Trying to maximize voice is the same as hanging onto what we have built in the last 35 years
 - Trying to build our potential to protect our services & programs, we never had that before
 - Do the right thing, people get this -> need Redistricting Board to do this, too
 - Rural Alaska voice
 - Ability to fully represent Alaska Natives – it has never happened yet
 - Fair representation -> maximum Alaska Native voice
- No Retrogression
- Alaska Native people elected to legislature
 - Run Alaska Native candidates
 - Get Alaska Native urban population to vote where they are, even if home is still in village
 - Need to identify with candidates and issues to do this, it is key -> have a voice
- Sub-Groups
 - What is this? Where are the lines?
 - How do Alaska Native leaders/people feel about this?
 - Priority is to maximize Native voice, don't have a problem with sub-group issue, but where possible within our internal subgroups we'd like lines drawn so can stay together
 - Willing to work towards maximized voice, but where are other regions on this issue?

What We Need

- No diminishment, no retrogression
 - Preserve Native voice -> see balance in Native voice -> each Native group represented
 - Preserve rural seats
 - Preserve/maintain strong Bush Caucus -> Native movement, not diminishment
 - Save our Native people & villages
 - Harmful legislation that diminishes Alaska Native vote/voice/participation/representation
 - There is no plan yet to protect current Native districts -> disenfranchise SE Natives -> if lose those seats, will never get them back
 - Cordova -> stepchild in redistricting process, connected to SE & Interior
 - Oppose retrogression, maximize Native voice -> concentrations where possible to achieve equity
- Everyday Alaska Natives have to talk about issues -> need Native voice in Juneau on these issues

- Divided = Conquered -> need unified voice or we don't protect Native vote/voice
 - Alaska Native community alignment
 - What issues does the Alaska Native community need to have a unified voice on?
- Maximize vote in urban and rural Alaska-> look at both
 - Get out the Native Vote, statewide
 - Build on relationships of mutual respect, especially with other similar communities in urban areas

Nuts & Bolts -> Plan for Best Legislature

- Monitoring process/mapping
- Build and create relationships
 - Trust-> Relationship = Best information
- Balance -> Bush Caucus with leadership voice when there is a balanced legislature
- Rural/Alaska Native legislator always working for rural Alaska
- Share redistricting process & information so Alaska Native voice can be heard
- Not pack districts
- 7 House seats
- 35% influence standard
- Articulate issues and process for Alaska Native Leaders & People
- Know that compromise is likely

Discussion Questions

- What do we care about?
 - When protect just our regions, what happens to the rest of the Alaska Native community?
 - As Native's, a collective interest
 - Ensure Alaska Native people are electable to public office
- How do we strengthen Alaska Native position for 2020?
 - \$ isn't the main issue, it is the protection and ability to maximize rural Alaska into the future
- What is best for the Native Community?
 - Need to see maps & know what they mean
- Process- what else needs to be said? who else needs to be involved?
 - How do we spread the word & generate interest now and for 2020?
 - Inform people so they can participate in hearings
 - VRA takes into account public record/hearings
 -
 - Fear- people will get involved too late, after a plan is adopted
- Alignment? Next Steps?
 - Resource packet/online links, etc
 - Resolutions template to Alaska Native organizations?
 - Suggestion for individual letters from every organization instead of just one resolution
 - Rally Alaska Native community to come together, speak with one voice