

FILED

STATE OF MINNESOTA
SPECIAL REDISTRICTING PANEL
A21-0243
A21-0546

December 8, 2021

OFFICE OF
APPELLATE COURTS

Peter S. Wattson, Joseph Mansky, Nancy B. Greenwood, Mary E. Kupper, Douglas W. Backstrom and James E. Hougas III, individually and on behalf of all citizens and voting residents of Minnesota similarly situated, and League of Women Voters Minnesota,

Plaintiffs,

and

Paul Anderson, Ida Lano, Chuck Brusven, Karen Lane, Joel Hineman, Carol Wegner, and Daniel Schonhardt,

Plaintiff-Intervenors

**Declaration of Lenny Fineday
in Support of the Corrie Plaintiffs'
Proposed Redistricting Plan**

vs.

Steve Simon, Secretary of State of Minnesota; and Kendra Olson, Carver County Elections and Licensing Manager, individually and on behalf of all Minnesota county chief election officers,

Defendants,

and

Frank Sachs, Dagny Heimisdottir, Michael Arulfo, Tanwi Prigge, Jennifer Guertin, Garrison O'Keith McMurtrey, Mara Lee Glubka, Jeffrey Strand, Danielle Main, and Wayne Grimmer,

Plaintiffs,

and

Dr. Bruce Corrie, Shelly Diaz, Alberder
Gillespie, Xiongpaoo Lee, Abdirazak
Mahboub, Aida Simon, Beatriz Winters,
Common Cause, OneMinnesota.org, and
Voices for Racial Justice,

Plaintiff-Intervenors,

vs.

Steve Simon, Secretary of State of Minnesota,

Defendant.

I, Lenny Fineday, declare as follows:

1. I am a member of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe and reside in Cass Lake, Minnesota within the Leech Lake Reservation. I also serve as the Chief Legal Counsel for White Earth Band of Ojibwe and as Vice Chair of the Cass Lake-Bena Public School Board.
2. I support the proposed boundaries for House District 2A to bring together the Ojibwe people of Leech Lake, White Earth, and Red Lake. The Ojibwe seek unified representation because they constitute a distinct community within Minnesota with specific cultural ties and common issues.
3. The Ojibwe have lived as a distinct community in northern Minnesota for well over 1,000 years. In addition to their cultural contributions to the state, today the Ojibwe provide a significant economic impact, operating eight casino-resorts throughout their territories, which collectively make them the largest employer in the area and provide an economic impact to the area in the hundreds of millions of dollars.
4. Despite this economic benefit, the Ojibwe—like many other tribal communities—still need assistance after decades of destructive federal policy that lead to intergenerational poverty and underinvestment.
5. One specific need shared among the Ojibwe is that for affordable housing. Even before the pandemic, many Ojibwe faced homelessness or near-homelessness on their reservations, with waits of 14 months on average for subsidized housing, compared to an average of nine months for other Minnesotans. Housing insecurity among the Ojibwe is both caused by and contributes to other significant social ills, including unemployment,

underemployment, and physical and mental health problems. According to a 2018 survey of homeless Ojibwe, only 24 percent of them were employed and 81 percent earned wages of less than \$15/hour. StratisHealth reports that the percentage of Ojibwe aged 45-64 with one or more disabilities is twice that of other Minnesotans; Ojibwe are six times more likely to lack a high school diploma or GED than other Minnesotans. The housing and health problems of the Ojibwe cannot be addressed without a dedicated advocate in the legislature.

6. The Ojibwe have formed a distinct community within Minnesota for hundreds of generations and must be kept intact to ensure that representatives of this community can better serve our needs and interests, and to ensure that our voting power is not diluted. The proposed boundaries presented by the Corrie plaintiffs keep our community intact and ensure proper and effective representation for the Ojibwe people.

I declare under penalty of perjury of the laws of the United States and the state of Minnesota that the foregoing is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Dated: December 3, 2021


Leonard Fineday (Dec 3, 2021 20:22 CST)

Lenny Fineday


Lenny Fineday Ojibwe COI narrative


Final Audit Report


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