

FILED

December 8, 2021

**OFFICE OF
APPELLATE COURTS**

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

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 Ngawang Dolker
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, Ngawang Dolker, declare as follows:

1. I was born on May 18, 1987, in India. I am a United States citizen of Tibetan descent. I am a resident of Fridley, Minnesota. I immigrated to the United States and moved to Minnesota in 1996.

I support the proposed boundaries for House District 35A to keep together our growing Tibetan communities that are living and growing in this district for the past decade. The Tibetan communities in Fridley and New Brighton want to be kept together and have unified representation because we constitute a distinct community in Minnesota with specific cultural ties and common issues.

2. I serve as the President of the Tibetan American Foundation of Minnesota (TAFM).
3. TAFM is a registered non-profit organization under 501(c)(3). TAFM was formed in 1992 to aid in the resettlement of Tibetan immigrants to the state of Minnesota. Under the Immigration Act of 1990, the United States granted one thousand immigrant visas to Tibetans living in India and Nepal. Minnesotan families volunteered and helped host 160 Tibetans and helped them settle in the Twin Cities area from 1992-93.

4. Because of how Tibetans migrated to the United States and settled in Minnesota in the 1990s, under the “immigrant” status, Tibetans were not eligible for any public assistance funds. Tibetan immigrants had to prove their self-sufficiency before migrating to the United States and finding jobs within a few months of arriving in Minnesota. This led to strong community organizing and support for each other in the Tibetan Minnesotan community. Since then, Tibetans have worked hard against all odds to build a thriving and exemplary community that places a strong emphasis on self-reliance and education.
5. Over the years, with gradual family reunification, Minnesota is now home to the second largest Tibetan American community in the United States. The Tibetan Minnesotan population is now 5,000 strong and continues to grow.
6. Most of the Tibetans reside in and around the Twin Cities region. We are largely concentrated in Whittier neighborhood of Minneapolis, Northeast Minneapolis, New Brighton, Fridley, St. Louis Park, and in northern Hennepin County.
7. Beyond language, culture, and ethnic identity, Tibetan Minnesotans share a similar economic interest. We are overwhelmingly represented in the health care industry such as nurses, nursing assistants, cooks, housekeepers, and other hospital staff in the major hospitals located in Hennepin County.
8. Today, Tibetans in Minnesota live in a compact and united community. We formed organizations such as TAFM to serve as a nexus. TAFM is committed to preserving and promoting the rich Tibetan cultural and spiritual heritage under the leadership of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. TAFM’s programs include Tibetan language schools, traditional music, dance lessons, sports, youth mentorship, after-school programs, spiritual services, social services to the elderly, scholarships, community-health prevention education, civic organizing, and community events. These programs are aimed to preserve and promote Tibetan cultural tradition and civically engage all Tibetan Minnesotans. Additionally, through the social services programs, TAFM continues to address multiple challenges faced by Tibetan Minnesotans such as language barrier, addressing health education and vaccine delivery during covid pandemics, and job search, etc.
9. As a vibrant minority group in the state of Minnesota, the Tibetan American community needs equal opportunities to participate in the political process under a fair redistricting process so that our economic and community interests are fairly represented. We ask that the Minnesota Tibetan community be kept intact in the same United States House of Representative district and Minnesota State House of Representative District and Minnesota State Senate. We believe in this way that the Tibetan community’s interest will be better served.

10. We support the Corrie Plaintiffs' proposed map of House District 35A, Senate District 35, and the 3rd Congressional District, all of which will unify the Tibetan community.

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 5, 2021


Ngawang Dolker (Dec 5, 2021 14:20 CST)

Ngawang Dolker

Sources

International Institute of Minnesota, <https://iimn.org/publication/finding-common-ground/minnesotas-refugees/asia/tibetans/>

“In 1992 Minnesota received 160 immigrants of Tibetan origin. These were all adults that eventually secured the resources necessary to bring their family members to the U.S. Presently the Tibetan community in Minnesota is **estimated to have a population of 800, the second largest Tibetan community in North America**. Large concentrations of Tibetans can be found in the **Whittier neighborhood of Minneapolis** and in **northern Hennepin County** where some seventy families have become homeowners.”

Tibetan American Foundation of Minnesota, <https://tafm.org/about/>

“U.S. Congress under the Immigration Act of 1990 granted one thousand immigrant visas to Tibetans living in India and Nepal. With the help of a group of volunteers and American host families, 160 Tibetans were settled in the Twin Cities area in 1992-93. Over the years, with gradual re-unification of family members, the Twin Cities’ Tibetan American population increased many fold to approximately **three thousand and continuing to grow**. Minnesota now has the **second largest Tibetan American community in the United States**. Most of the Tibetans reside in and around the areas of Minneapolis and Saint Paul. Tibetan new arrivals to Minnesota under the “immigrant” status are not eligible for any public assistance funds. In fact, prospective Tibetan immigrants have to prove their self sufficiency prior to setting foot in the United States. Since their first arrival in the state of Minnesota in 1992, Tibetans have worked hard against all odds to build a thriving and exemplary community that place strong emphasis on self reliance and education.”

Northeaster Newspaper, *Local Tibetans focus on future in Northeast*, <https://www.mynortheaster.com/news/local-tibetans-focus-on-future-in-northeast/>

“Since the arrival of these first Tibetan immigrants, the Tibetan population in the Northeast area has boomed. Attempts to track residents statewide have not kept up with the community’s swift increase. Tibetans from around the world relocate to Minnesota, drawn by a stable economy and job opportunities, as well as a welcoming community of fellow Tibetans. Minnesota now has the **second largest concentration of Tibetans in the United States**, surpassed only by New York.

‘It’s a stable place,’ says Ngawang Dolker, a Tibetan immigration lawyer who came to Minnesota in 1997 to reunite with her mother, one of the 162 Tibetans who had arrived five years earlier. ‘It’s a good place to raise a family. Job opportunities are good, schools are good ... **Even [Tibetans] from other states, they relocate here.**’

Donna Schmitt, the mayor of **Columbia Heights**, estimates that in her city alone there are nearly **4,000 Tibetans—a staggering 20 percent of the entire city population**—but says that an accurate count is difficult.”

“Regardless of the community’s true size, local Tibetans are making their presence felt. Gyuto Wheel of Dharma Monastery, located on the corner of 26th and Taylor Street in Minneapolis, is the **first Tibetan Gyuto Monastery in the United States**. Jalue Dorje, an 11-year-old Columbia Heights resident, has been identified as the eighth incarnation of the Taksham Lama, making him **the first reincarnated Lama to**

be born in Minnesota. And beyond establishing ways to maintain cultural relevance in a strange new country, Tibetans are contributing to the local scene and sharing their heritage with others.”

Updated Ngawang Dolker Tibetan Declaration (1)

Final Audit Report

2021-12-05

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"Updated Ngawang Dolker Tibetan Declaration (1)" History

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