

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

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

**Declaration of Jovita Francisco
in Support of the
Corrie Plaintiffs' Proposed
Redistricting Plan**

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, Jovita Francisco, declare as follows:

1. I am the executive director of Minnesota Immigrant Movement (MIM). MIM has worked with statewide Latino communities for more than 15 years, providing diverse but Latino-focused communities with a network of support, connecting them to resources, and advocating on their behalf when community resources are scarce.
2. We support the Corrie Plaintiffs' proposed boundaries for Congressional District 7, Senate District 22, and House Districts 22A and 22B.
3. The proposed boundary for Congressional District 7 keeps Nobles and Watonwan Counties together. These counties contain the cities of Worthington, St. James, and Madelia, which have some of the largest Latino populations in the region. These Latino communities are bound together by specific cultural ties and unique common issues. Keeping these Latino communities together in Congressional District 7 will provide them with unified congressional representation.
4. St. James is a close-knit community in Watonwan County. It has a population of close to 5,000 Minnesotans, and the Latino community represents over 37 percent of the total population. The local St. James economy is driven by meat and food processing plants in the area, where many Latinos work. St. James Public Schools has adapted to the influx of Latino students, which has turned the white student population in the district into the minority. The Latino community in St. James is a strong and vibrant part of the local community and should be kept together with other Latino communities in Congressional District 7.
5. Worthington also has a close-knit Latino community. Of the 12,764 residents living in Worthington, 4521 (35%) are Latino. Worthington is located in Nobles County, which is

demographically one of the fastest-changing counties in Minnesota. Over the last 10 years, Nobles County experienced the state's largest increase in people of color. For example, in 2010, the Nobles County's population was close to 67% white—due to an influx of residents of color, the white population is now closer to 57%. On a countywide basis, the population of Nobles County today is 21,378 residents; of that number, 4820 (23%) are Latino.

6. The total population of Madelia, Minnesota is 2308. Latino community members make up 27% of that total—a substantial number.
7. In March 2018, the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) published a report on the Changing Faces of Southwest Minnesota. *See* <https://mn.gov/deed/newscenter/publications/review/march-2018/changing-faces-southwest.jsp>. In its report, DEED noted that after experiencing a loss of just over 3,400 people since 2010, Southwest Minnesota is now home to about 392,000 residents and, in recent years, welcomed a net influx of nearly 4,000 foreign-born Minnesotans. Over half (8,951 people) of the region's total foreign-born population is from Latin America, including a substantial number of immigrants from Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras.
8. Many public policy issues unite the Latino communities of Southwest Minnesota, including affordable housing, education, economic development, workplace safety issues and transportation. As the demographics of Southwest Minnesota have become more diverse, the political representation has not kept pace. In fact, our Latino and other persons of color communities have not had adequate political representation of shared concerns or issues that we face in Southwestern Minnesota.
9. Under current voting district lines, the influence of Latino and other persons of color communities in Southwestern Minnesota have been diluted. We have been unsuccessful at getting the support of state or congressional elected officials. Latino Minnesotans suffer from a lack of resources. Companies take advantage of workers by not paying equitably and otherwise discriminating against them, either in the form of disparate employment benefits (e.g., vacation or sick leave), or in the form of substandard housing conditions. Many Latino residents lack health insurance and access to local resources.
10. Keeping Latino and other persons of color communities together in Congressional District 7 will give us a better opportunity for unified representation.
11. Keeping these same communities together in Senate District 22—Worthington in House District 22A, and St. James and Madelia in House District 22B—and combining them with the 6 counties to the west and north of Nobles County (Lincon, Lyon, Murray, Pipestone, Redwood, and Rock) in forming Congressional District 7 makes a lot of sense. Many Latino and persons of color community members in this region receive social

services from a single collaborative group known as Southwest MN Health and Human Services (as well as Cottonwood and Jackson Counties between Worthington and St James/Madelia, which call themselves Des Moines Valley Health and Human services), which also provide social services as a collaborative. We want all 8 of these counties—with Nobles and Watonwan—to be kept within the same congressional district, because we utilize the same crucial services provide by the same providers.

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 6, 2021

jovita f.m
jovita f.m (Dec 6, 2021 11:09 CST)

Jovita Francisco

Final Jovita Francisco Declarant - Southwest MN

Final Audit Report

2021-12-06

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Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAANKhtJYknulRaB39wZ7LxEu8s5WGi5K1v

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