

Attn: Washtenaw County Apportionment Commission

Via upload @ <https://www.washtenaw.org/formcenter/clerk-25/washtenaw-county--apportionment-commiss-199>

Dear Commission Members:

I am writing in support of the proposed map a copy of which is attached and identified as (Current Districts Modified by Clerk/Register Lawrence Kestenbaum) and shown on: <https://washtenaw.maps.arcgis.com/apps/View/index.html?appid=c1a72b7c88aa4fad80cb4147dd84e83d> .

The current structure of a nine member Board of Commissioners serves the residents of Washtenaw County well and should not be changed.

I support maintaining the current structure based in part on the following:

1. Effective Government
  - a. Increasing the number of Commissioners will:
    - i. Cause a dilution of each Commissioner's vote resulting in minority opinions having less influence.
    - ii. Increase factionalism as a result of each Commissioner representing less diverse communities.
    - iii. Leave less room for consensus.
    - iv. Within each district less diversity of interest will result in increasing divisiveness and extremism where majority opinion will dominate without listening or negotiating with minority views.
    - v. Result in longer meetings and more grandstanding.
    - vi. Result in less time for public comment and physical space for the public in the meeting room.
2. Increasing the number of Commissioners is a poor use of limited County resources.
  - a. The County Administrator estimates the cost of each additional commissioner will result in a recurring cost of approximately \$50,000 for each new commissioner every year.
  - b. The County Administrator estimates the cost of increasing the number of Commissioners will result in a one-time cost of more than \$220,000 for such things as to modify the physical space, and to provide working tools such as laptops and mobile phones.
  - c. Every penny spent on Commissioners takes away from the County's core focus on providing for the wellbeing of its residents, including the most vulnerable.

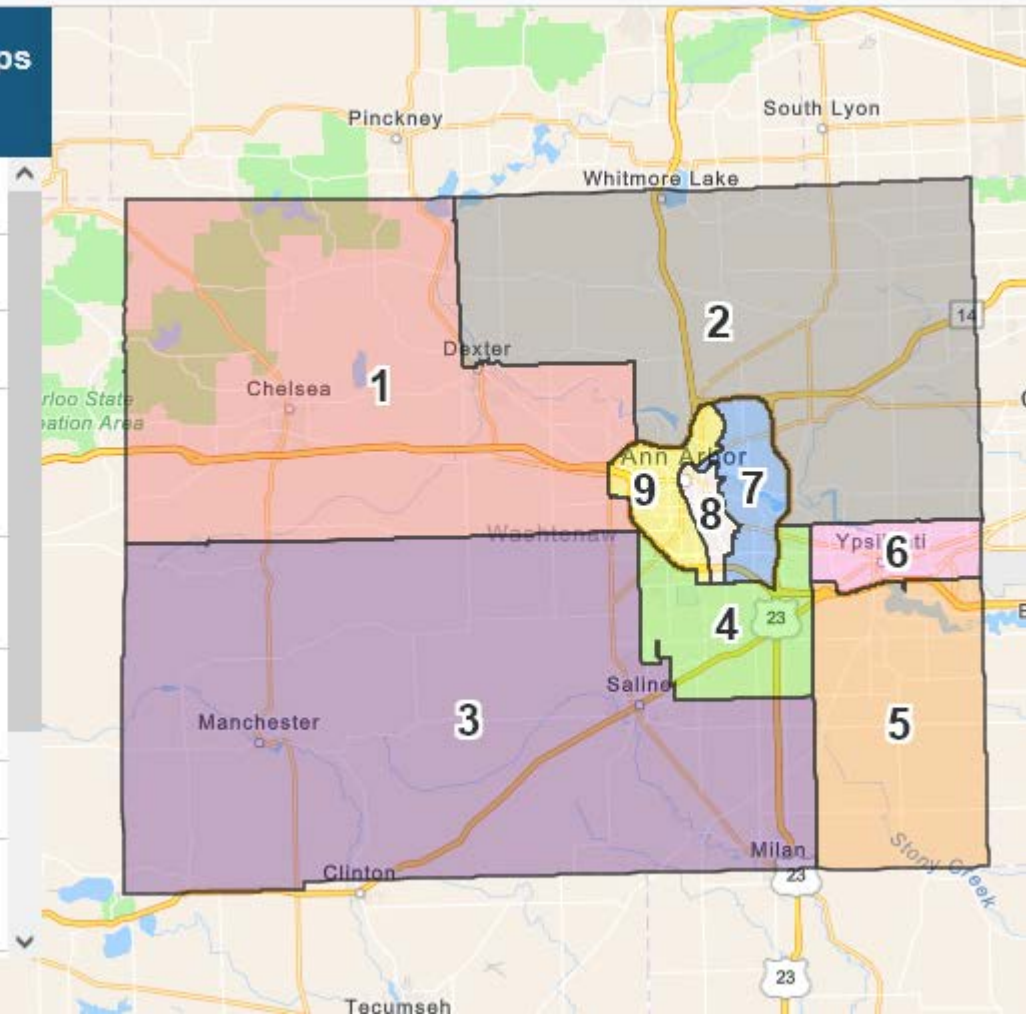
- d. Money spent on additional Commissioners will not be available to the County wide departments such as the Prosecutor and the Treasurer's offices.
3. Increasing the number of Commissioners will result in more Bureaucratic power and authority.
  - a. Increasing factionalism and the greater difficulty in the Board acting by consensus will weaken the direction the Board gives the Bureaucracy.
  - b. With less clear oversight the Bureaucracy will take the responsibility and authority to make decisions without effective oversight.
  - c. Commissioners are directly accountable to the residents and with less authority they will be less able to provide outcomes for the benefit of their respective constituents.
4. Increasing the number of Commissioners will result in less responsiveness.
  - a. There will be less time for public comment and space for the public in the meeting room.
  - b. There will be less money for public communication as funds are diverted to pay for the costs associate with additional Commissioners.
  - c. The ability of each Commissioner to communicate with Administration will be reduced.
5. The current structure is effective and responsive.
  - a. Commissioners report no issue responding to constituents inquiries.
6. An increase in the number of Commissioners would be out of the norm when comparing Washtenaw to its peers (*see attached*).
  - a. 47,531 is the average number of residents per commissioner for Michigan counties with more than 200,000 residents.
  - b. 41,333 is the Washtenaw average with 9 commissioners.
  - c. 21,882 would be the Washtenaw average with 15 commissioners.
7. L. Kestenbaum's Redrawn 9 Commissioner Map is an improvement.
  - a. This map balances population taking into consideration changes over time.
  - b. It also addresses some communities of interest issues present in the current map.

Sincerely,

Washtenaw County Resident

# Submitted Apportionment Maps

- Municipalities
- Voting Precincts
- 9 District Map (Current Districts)
- 9 District Map (Current Districts Modified by Clerk/Register Lawrence Kestenbaum)**
- 11 District Map (Prosecutor Eli Savit)
- 13 District Map (A) (Margaret Schankler & Desirae Simmons)
- 13 District (B) (Dirk Mayhew)
- 13 District Map (C) (Carrie Rheingans)



## Number of Commissioners per Resident

<u>County</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Residents per Commissioner</u>
Wayne	1,800,000	15	120,000
Oakland	1,275,000	21	60,714
Macomb	881,000	13	67,769
Kent	657,000	19	34,579
Genesee	406,000	9	45,111
Washtenaw	372,000	9	41,333
Ottawa	296,000	21	14,095
Ingham	285,000	14	20,357
Kalamazoo	262,000	11	23,818

**Average** 47,531

Average without highest and lowest 40,566

**Washtenaw @15** 21,882

Washtenaw @13 28,615

Washtenaw @11 33,818

*Listing of Michigan Counties with Population in Excess of 200,000*